

LIVERPOOL Free Press

SPECIAL EDITION

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FREE

MERSEYSIDE AT A STANDSTILL!

— unless dockers are freed

MERSEYSIDE will come to a complete standstill by the weekend... unless the five gaoled dockers are released.

Thousands of workers yesterday spontaneously came out in support of the first victims of the Industrial Relations Act.

Thousands more are expected to come out today.

And last night the Executive of Liverpool Trades Council gave a lead at a meeting. They decided to:

1. Call on all trade unionists to go on strike until the dockers are released. (This proposal will be put to a meeting of trades council delegates, shop stewards and trade union activists at a meeting in Central Hall, Renshaw Street tomorrow at 7.30).
2. To hold a mass demonstration through the city centre on Friday. This will be followed

by a mass meeting at the Pier Head. Here again, an all-out stoppage will be called for.

Simon Fraser, secretary of the Trades Council told the Free Press late last night: "The feeling was unanimous at the executive meeting. In our fight against the Industrial Relations Act we have always said that if anyone was arrested the country would be stopped."

All over Merseyside yesterday there were demands for a general strike.

The Kirkby and Huyton Trades Council executive have sent a telegram to Vic Feather demanding the TUC call a national strike.

This is the situation on Merseyside:

DOCKERS: 10,500 out, joined by 400 shoregangers and riggers and 800 clerical workers.

BUILDERS: 700 men at Teaching Hospital site out. Mass picket today. 400 builders at Black's and Cubitt's site at Pilkington factory out. Picket of glassworkers planned. Builders on Fidlers Ferry power station and Seaforth Dock to follow Trades Council. Strike committee called for general strike.

FISHER-BENDIX: All 700 out. Open air meetings with other Kirkby workers today.

STANLOW REFINERY: 1,500 on strike. Vote again today.

MOTORS: Ford national convenors have demanded TUC call general strike. Have promised to support dockers.

ENGINEERS: Will probably follow Trades Council.

● Liverpool council's Labour group expressed solidarity with dockers and strikers.

Why we publish

Britain is nearer to a general strike than at any time since 1926. For that reason this special edition of the Free Press has been produced.

Now, more than ever it is essential that groups of workers in different parts of Merseyside know what each other is doing.

The Echo and Daily Post have been silenced as part of a wave of protest at the gaoing of the five dockers. But even if those papers were on the street today they would be presenting their usual coverage of industrial action.

Their editors virtually ignored the Liverpool dock strike last week before the dockers were gaoled. The Post and Echo represent the port employers, the big shipping lines, the very men behind the unregistered container depots that are taking jobs away from the dockers. When the 'responsible' Echo covers the news it has the interests of the shipowners at heart.

The news in this Free Press has been provided with the co-operation of workers throughout Merseyside, and represents their interests.

For rapid distribution, this paper is free, but it has cost money to produce. Contributions towards our printing costs, and donations to the dockers and other people on strike, are all welcome.

Our address is: 24 Wapping, Liverpool 1. Tel: 709 0264.

'It is a political Act' — says ex-judge Devlin. See back page.

Silent Echo

Yesterday's Liverpool Echo was unable to give superficial and distorted coverage to the mounting industrial action — for the simple reason that it didn't hit the streets.

Members of NATSOPA, one of the printing unions, walked out in line with the union's annual conference decision to oppose the Industrial Relations Act.

The NATSOPA members work in the machine room and publishing departments of the Post and Echo and include girl copy holders. Another meeting was being held at 9 o'clock this morning. The Echo's sister paper, the Daily Post is not appearing this morning.

WEATHER

Mostly dry, with some sunny spells after fog patches at first. Possibly isolated showers. Wind mainly northerly, light. Rather warm. Max. temp. 72 deg F.

Strike support grows

Massive industrial action — the most widespread since the 1926 General Strike — has built up rapidly throughout the country in support of the five gaoled dockers.

For the first time since 1926 every port in Britain is on strike. Strike decisions at the major ports of London, Liverpool, Hull, Southampton and Manchester were quickly followed by support from a string of smaller ports. Men walked out at the ports of Preston, Ellesmere Port, Runcorn, Leith, Goole, Grangemouth, Great Yarmouth, Tyneside, Harwich, Ipswich, Aberdeen, Rochester, Sheerness, Sittingbourne, Whitstable, Bristol and Avonmouth, Shoreham, Newhaven, Portsmouth Commercial Docks and Chatham. Dockers at the privately

owned Felixstowe container port — one of Europe's biggest — joined the other ports. National Dock Labour Board 'lumpers' stopped unloading fish from trawlers yesterday in Fleetwood. The 'lumpers' stopped when they heard Grimsby had come out.

Dockers at Weymouth have struck, cutting off shipping bound for the Channel Islands.

In South Wales solidarity has come spontaneously from miners and dockers. Docks at Cardiff, Newport, Swansea, Barry and Port Talbot closed down, and miners at five south Wales collieries walked out. Other pits are expected to follow suit today, and Scottish and Yorkshire miners are already taking action. A call for a general strike is expected at the national executive

meeting of the mineworkers' union on Thursday.

Throughout the rest of Britain engineering, factory and building workers all joined in the attack on Heath's Government and its pawn, the Industrial Relations Court.

A mass meeting of engineering stewards from Manchester and Stockport areas decided to appeal to their men for an all-out stoppage.

Action by NATSOPA has already stopped all the big national newspapers, the Manchester Evening News and the Daily Post and Echo.

Unofficial leader of London's lorry driver Eric Rechnitz said last night that a complete stoppage of road transport was aimed at within the next 24 hours.