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Oslo, Norway

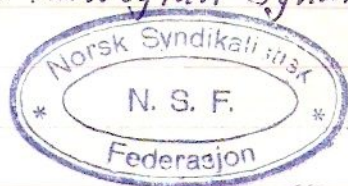
The Editors,
"Direct Action",
London.

Dear Comrades,

We are sending a copy of the enclosed article to you and to the editors of the Industrial Worker, Chicago, and hope you will do what you can to make its contents as well known as possible.

Yours fraternally

for the Norwegian Syndicalist Federation



E. Henningsen

P.S. We have heard with regret of the burglary at your print shop, and hope that D.A. will not be unduly delayed.

If, however, D.A. is much delayed, is there one of you who could make the article available to the IWMA Press Service?

Norway:

Tokke workers demand safety.

Workers on the State hydroelectric development of Tokke have at the annual meeting of the major union concerned demanded the appointment of an independent safety officer on the Tokke site. Seven workers lost their lives in accidents at Tokke last year, and speakers claimed rightly that the Norwegian Watercourse and Electricity Authority's appointment of one of their officials as safety officer for all of the Authority's plants is not an acceptable solution.

This is not the first time that dangerous conditions on State-controlled workplaces have caused concern. Some years ago we had a strike of conscientious objectors on a forced labour camp, against their being given inadequate instruction in the work they were set to do. This action followed a fatal accident.

More recent, and better known, are the events at the notorious Kings Bay coal mine, where the exposure of the technical undermanning, and the breaches of safety regulations, preceding the disaster of 1962, released a political crisis resulting in the fall of the Gerhardsen government last autumn. — Not a popular issue for a Labour Government to lose its majority over.

The Tokke development has now cost the lives² of twenty workers in State and private contractors' employ, and the last two years show an alarming increase in the accident rate in proportion to the number of employees.

At the Tokke workers union meeting this spring, members pointed out that the Watercourse and Electricity Authority had sold machinery to private contractors who often used unorganised labour working excessive overtime, and that this also was a threat to safety on the job.

A recent article by an official of the Watercourse and Electricity Authority, writing in its bulletin, would give the impression that the Authority alone was interested in safety, in spite of the workers causing accidents. There was no mention of the Tokke workers' demand, nor that the one safety officer which the Authority had, was also appointed after a previous initiative from the workers at Tokke. The article did not state who put pressure on workers to work overtime, who sued them for not working overtime, nor that the Inspection of Works (Arbeidstilsyn) had often granted employers exemption from the normal limits of overtime, in connexion with hydroelectric development.

The Oslo branch of the Norwegian Syndicalist Federation distributed on May Day a leaflet advocating Workers' Control, and showing the failure of State institutions to provide safe working conditions at Kings Bay and Tokke. One of our comrades, seventy-six years old, giving out these leaflets together with anti-militarist propoganda, was arrested, and the remainder of his leaflets confiscated. The reason given was that the leaflets did not bear the name and address of the printer, and that no copy had been sent to the police in advance. This arrest followed a report to the police by an informer who gave his name as Jan Erik Lund. We have the impression that the arrest of our comrade was primarily a result of this informer's initiative, because other comrades had distributed ~~they~~ the same leaflets to policemen in uniform who had accepted them without comment.

Norwegian Syndicalist Federation.