



**B** BRITISH ONLINE  
ARCHIVES

+44 (0)1924 825700

[info@britishonlinearchives.digital](mailto:info@britishonlinearchives.digital)

[www.britishonlinearchives.digital](http://www.britishonlinearchives.digital)



TRADE UNIONS IN CRISIS:  
THE 1961 ETU BALLOT-RIGGING

**B** BRITISH ONLINE  
ARCHIVES

## Study the extent of communist...

The ETU ballot-rigging trial was a case brought to the English High Court by prominent union members John Thomas Byrne and Frank Chapple in 1961.

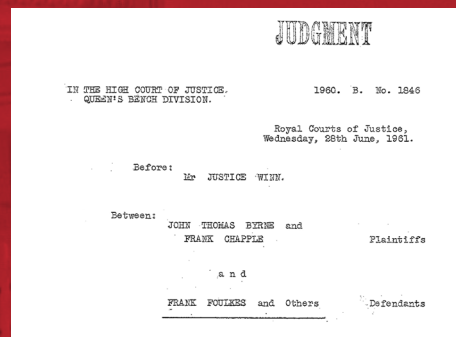
The pair alleged that members of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) had engaged in “a conspiracy to defraud” in the 1959 elections of the Electrical Trades Union (ETU), a relatively successful body that represented electricians, wire fitters, and telephone engineers.



The collection is part of the wide-ranging *British Communism, At Home and Abroad* series.

*Trade Unions in Crisis: the 1961 ETU Ballot-Rigging Scandal* contains verbatim transcripts of the court case which detail the intricacies of union rules and the arguments of the prosecution and defence.

The transcripts also include examination and cross-examination of those key witnesses that were intimately tied to the scandal.



It encompasses more than 2,700 unique images.

Together, these materials provide a unique insight into the CPGB's influence in the post-war trade union movement.

The scandal offered a flavour of future controversial CPGB involvement in trade union affairs. This influence would reach its height in the 1970s during trade union conflicts with the Labour government during the Winter of Discontent.

Sources include: Archive Trust of the Communist Party of Great Britain

## ...influence in post-war British trade unions



According to Guardian journalist Geoffrey Goodman, the ETU scandal represented “a historic...landmark in British trade unionism.”



Professor Kevin Morgan from the University of Manchester has written 3 contextual essays to accompany the collection.

I N D E X		Page
A	KILL, Mr Richard Cecil, Examined	2
	Cross-examined	2
	Re-examined	7
	KILL, Mrs Elsie May, Examined	10
	Cross-examined	10
B	LENNAN, Mr Robert, Examined	11
	Cross-examined	12
	SINGLAIR, Mr Alexander, Examined	14
	Cross-examined	16
	Further Examined	21
	WARTY, Mr John Eric, Examined	21
	Cross-examined	22
C	WELCH, Mr Ernest, Examined	27
	Cross-examined	29
	Re-examined	31a

Key witness testimony from those with first-hand experience of the scandal is included.

Over 4 million records covering 1000 years of world history: from politics & warfare, to slavery & revolution.



[www.britishonlinearchives.digital](http://www.britishonlinearchives.digital)