**Get the law on our side**

FREELANCE WORKERS should be better protected in law and their needs must drive more public policy discussion – that is the claim from the Freelance Industrial Council that will be put to the NUJ’s Delegate Meeting. The motion, which will be considered when NUJ activists gather in Southport in April, would commit the NUJ to bringing together a new coalition of unions and other progressive bodies to force free-lance issues onto the mainstream political agenda. It builds on the emphasis on self-employed workers by Jeremy Corbyn in one of his earliest speeches as Labour leader.

“The NUJ needs to work with politicians across the political spectrum in all the countries where we organise”, said Tim Dawson, who represents freelance members on the NUJ’s National Executive. “But we also need fresh alliances in civic society. In the popular imagination, building tradesmen epitomise the ‘self-employed’, but freelancers know that their world encompasses far more than just plumbing and electrics. Equity (the actors’ union) for example, now has a freelance dancers’ network,”. The motion also calls for the NUJ to push for the International Labour Organization to adopt a “convention” on “atypical workers”, as freelancers are sometimes called. This could require governments to ensure that freelances are fairly treated.

**Stirrings on Authors’ Rights**

THERE WERE interesting developments for creators at the World Intellectual Property Organization’s Standing Committee on Copyright and Related rights (WIPO SCCR), which met in Geneva from 7 December to 11 December.

In the long run, the most significant for journalists is a call from Brazil for future discussions on a wide-ranging review of how authors’ rights work online, which appeared as a call for authors and – more particularly – musical performers to give up our right to authorise who uses our work, in return for “equitable remuneration” administered through collecting societies.

The International Federation of Journalists raised this with the Brazilian delegation, who replied that they understood the importance of this “exclusive right” to journalists in maintaining our reputations and ethical practice, and they would not in fact seek to undermine it. Yes, they suggested, the initiative could and should lead to discussion on how authors and performers are forced to sign exploitative contracts.

For creators more widely, Senegal and other countries got ahead in a queue by proposing that the organisations open talks on a treaty to make the Artists Resale Right (“droit de suite”) apply worldwide – to make the Artists Resale Right in a queue by proposing that the ethical practice, and they would not in maintaining our reputations and links. Equity (the actors’ union) for example, now has a freelance dancers’ network,”. The motion also calls for the NUJ to push for the International Labour Organization to adopt a “convention” on “atypical workers”, as freelancers are sometimes called. This could require governments to ensure that freelances are fairly treated.

Members can find full text of all motions for Delegate Meeting on the NUJ’s website near www.nuj.org.uk/about/union-democracy/

**Public service TV at HoC**

What with the proposed privatisation of Channel 4, the potential sale of ITV, the BBC’s charter renewal and issues around the funding of S46, the NUJ’s cross-party Parliamentary Group – which now includes some very prominent Labour Shadow Cabinet people – is hosting a meeting on the future of public service broadcasting.

“Don’t let them pull the plug on public service TV” is on Monday 22 February in Committee Room 10, House of Commons. Kick off is at 6pm, so be in the queue for the St Stephen’s Green Entrance security scanner at least 45 minutes before that. It should be all over within two and half hours. Details: www.nuj.org.uk/events/dont-let-them-pull-the-plug-on-public-service-broadcasting

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