

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This is a pre-production edition of Arnold Wesker's new play, *The Journalists*. Wesker's plays have never been published (in English) before being performed. But the legal controversy in which *The Journalists* is presently involved has altered the author's normal publication procedure.

Although the Royal Shakespeare Company had the play under option, back in 1972, a public performance never materialised. (The press was issued a production date for *The Journalists* by the Royal Court Theatre together with the latter's announcement of the first performance of Wesker's *The Old Ones* in 1972.) Wesker has filed a lawsuit against the Royal Shakespeare Company.

However, since the case is now pending and must therefore be considered *sub judice*, the Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative finds itself under responsibility not to risk revealing any further information which might jeopardize Wesker's case or place him in contempt of court.

Interested members of the press seeking any further, precise statement may put their enquiries to the author's solicitor, Bryan Lipson, at Cowan, Lipson and Rumney, Solicitors, Audley House, 12 Margaret Street, London W1N 8BX.

Wesker is allowing the play to be printed in order to launch *Fireweed*, a new literary quarterly.

To obtain background material for his play, Wesker got permission to study at first-hand all the departments of *The Sunday Times*. An unforeseen offshoot of this two month period of research was a long essay called *Journey into Journalism*, written

in December 1971. But repeated attempts by the author this time to gain permission from *The Sunday Times* to publish the essay led to one further significant confrontation. Certain journalists on *The Sunday Times* objected strongly to its appearance, and after an embattled, sometimes acrimonious correspondence which added some 10,000 words to the original slim document, Wesker felt honour-bound to withdraw his essay from publication.

About this second misadventure, Wesker has stated, "My journey into journalism was an unhappy one - an affectionate excursion which went sour . . . It's sad since I'd been very impressed with what I'd encountered in my eight weeks with them and thought I'd written a fair, serious and, though critical, yet affectionate piece. They didn't agree and so, since I'd obtained their cooperation for a play, I couldn't abuse it by publishing something they felt unfairly represented them."

*The Journalists* is a fictional, dramatic account of the workings of a present-day Sunday newspaper. It is of course based on personal observation; but it is not a *pièce-à-clef* or simple documentary of *The Sunday Times* - nor is it the author's purpose that the play be misread as such.

*The Journalists* is indeed real, not in any narrow sense, but on the scale of social and work relations - the elements of stage rhythm in the best Wesker tradition already familiar to playgoers who applauded *The Kitchen* and the epic *Their Very Own and Golden City*. In short, the Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative is convinced there is nothing else like it.