

To show something of what it cost me personally to prosecute Peter Hain on a point of principle I include this item from the *Sunday Express*, Town Talk, 24 September 1972.

TOWN TALK

Did Mr Bennion lose his family by prosecuting Peter Hain?

FRANCIS BENNION, 49, the barrister who brought a private prosecution against Young Liberal chairman **Peter Hain**, is living in a one-bedroom flat - apart from his wife **Elisabeth** and three daughters.

Says Mr. Bennion, who has formed an organisation called Freedom Under Law-

A thing like separation has a lot of causes and I can only say that the stress and strain of the case and finances involved in it were not helpful to the stability of my marriage. The case has been one of the factors which caused us to separate. My wife is very much against any sort of argument and conflict. She likes to avoid turmoil. My temperament is to charge into things. There is turmoil wherever I go. We married 20 years ago when Elisabeth was 20. We have three daughters - Alex, who is 18, Carola, 16 and Mary-Rose, 12. We had a Georgian rectory in Surrey with 10 acres of land. We sold it to help finance the case. My wife now has a house with the children on the outskirts of Croydon and I am living in a one-bedroom flat in the area. We have no plans for divorce and I think there is a chance of our getting back together when things have quietened down.

Mr. Bennion brought a prosecution against Mr. Hain for conspiring to disrupt a Davis Cup tennis match in 1969. Mr. Hain was fined £200 but was cleared on three other conspiracy charges. Mr. Bennion was awarded costs from public funds. He says-

I expect to get about £30,000 from public funds. The costs are around £50,000, but some expenses cannot be claimed. There is about £12,000 of donations from the public and the rest will have to come from me. I have put about £14,000 into the prosecution and Freedom Under Law and I hope to get some of it back. I haven't much money left. I haven't been earning much at all. My wife has just taken a job in an antique shop. It is the first job she has had since we married. It is because we need the money and because she fancies doing it.