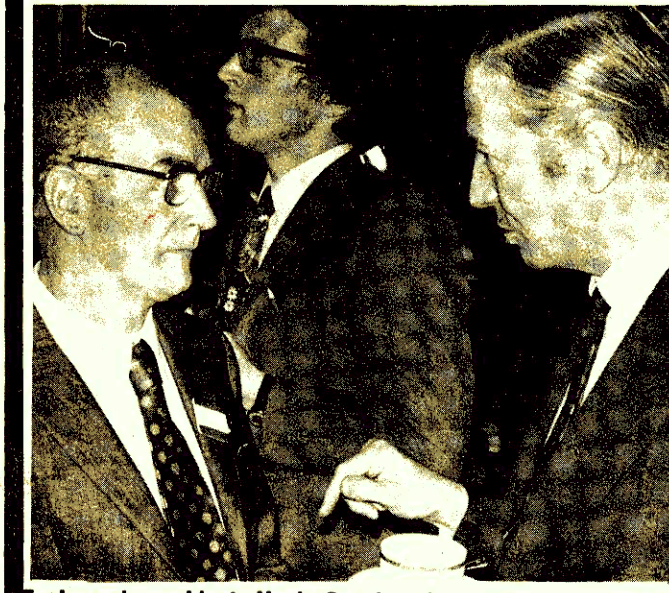


To defeat Tories

Engineer miner alliance is needed



Miners' leaders Joe Gormley, president (left) and secretary Lawrence Daly.



Engineers' president Hugh Scanlon in pensive mood with Employment Secretary Robert Carr.

BY DAVID MAUDE

A FIGHTING alliance between Britain's miners and engineering workers could decide the fate of the Tory government next month.

London protest over jailed seamen

'Slur' on scared Bengalis

BY IAN YEATS

THE FATE of 22 Bengalis who jumped their ships at Rochester and Dundee rather than return to W Pakistan has 'shocked and saddened' Bangla Desh officials in London.

Guerrillas hold politicians in contempt

BY A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

EIGHT leading Bangla Desh politicians—including the acting president and the prime minister—made a triumphant entry into Dacca—the capital of their new nation—yesterday.

However, the upsurge of the mass movement frightens the official Bangla Desh government as well as the Indians. It wants to see the guerrilla movement disarmed and its leaders neutralized. At present the guerrillas still hold a key position because they have close ties with the masses of the people who want to see collaborators punished.

According to Henry Bradshaw reporting from Dacca for 'The Washington Post', the bulk of the young guerrillas hold the Bangla Desh politicians in contempt. 'They feel the politicians who formed the exile regime in April should have been fighting inside Pakistan instead of sitting comfortably and safely in India,' he commented.

The most radical wing of the guerrilla forces call themselves the 'Mujib Bahini' to distinguish themselves from the larger and more official body, the 'Mukti Bahini'. Although claiming allegiance to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, they actually stand for a programme which is much more radical than his. Most of them are university students.

Even the Mukti Bahini feel themselves independent of the politicians sitting it out in Calcutta. As Bradshaw puts it: 'The Bangla Desh regime are conservative in orientation, as was the Sheikh. The university students had always pushed him to the left to

I was under the impression they would be treated as honourable and law-abiding citizens', Mr M. Ahmad, second secretary at the Bangla Desh Mission told me yesterday.

'Why should they be taken into custody and sent to prison? It is a slur on their characters.' Eleven Bengali seamen left the 6,148 ton cargo vessel 'Bagh E Karachi' in Dundee and another 11 walked off the BP tanker 'British Vision' at the Isle of Grain, near Rochester.

Mr Ahmad said the captain and officers of the 'Bagh E Karachi' were W Pakistani and relations between them and the Bengali crew were strained to breaking point when they tried to drum up a cash collection to aid Pakistan.

The crew also feared what would happen to them when they returned to W Pakistan, where the safety of over 400,000 Bengalis is in jeopardy following the victory in Bangla Desh.

The tanker crew felt the same way, but BP agreed to fly them back to Bangla Desh as soon as circumstances permitted.

Both groups of seamen reported to Bangla authorities when they landed and the matter was referred in good faith to the Home Office.

The Tory response was to commit 21 of the men to Pentonville prison and to clap one youth into Ashford remand centre. They will be kept there until arrangements are made to return them to Bangla Desh, a Home Office spokesman said.

'I am terribly sad the government has done this,' said Mr Ahmad. 'They have treated the seamen as illegal immigrants but there was never any question of that. They asked only for a limited time to stay.'

Leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers now appear convinced that their members are being forced inexorably towards strike action on January 9, over their £5 to £9 pay claim.

At their meeting with the union executive earlier this week, the Coal Board insisted that their £1.90 to £2 pay offer was the upper limit of what they could afford.

Contingency plans for a strike are already under discussion between industrialists, coal-industry officials and electricity-board chiefs all over the country.

All the blandishments of TUC secretary Victor Feather after his meeting with the NUM top brass yesterday cannot disguise the fact that Heath and his ministers want the scalps of 280,000 miners to hang on their belts.

The Tories badly need a repeat of last year's Post Office defeat in order to ram the Common Market, plus the effects of US President Nixon's trade war, down the throats of the working class.

FOUR DAYS before the miners are due to strike, leaders of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers will start a three-day meeting on the rejection of their pay claim.

The Engineering Employers' Federation—like the NCB—exudes smug complacency that the Tories will back to the hilt their hard line against the 2.8 million engineers.

A measure of their arrogance is that they have replied to just one aspect of the claim, for minimum-rate increases of £3 to £6, with an offer of just £1.50.

Yet the leaders of both sections of workers still talk in vague, guarded tones about 'suspecting' possible government intervention behind the scenes—without ever saying how they propose to combat it.

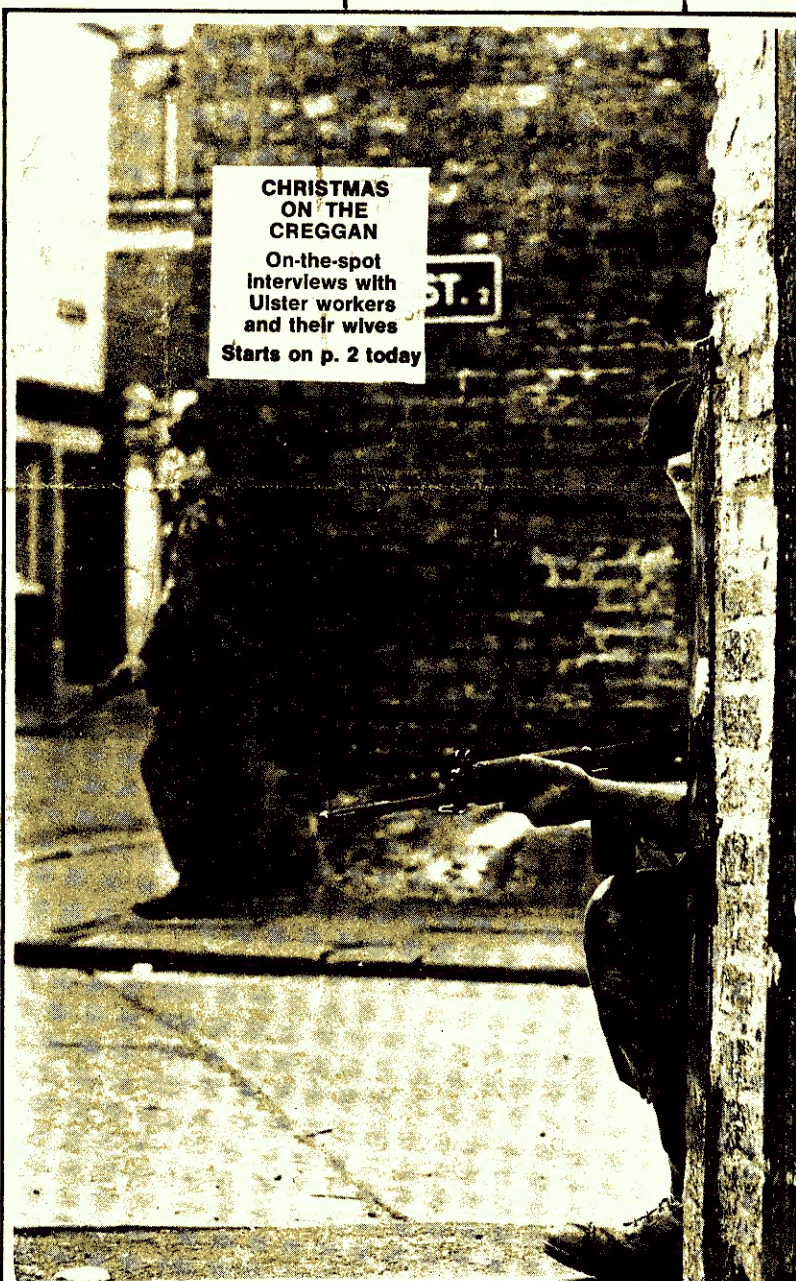
The one question that really scares hell out of the miners' and engineers' chiefs is: Do you think you can beat the Tories alone?

But the Tories can be defeated by joint mobilization of engineers and miners.

On January 22 the Tories propose to sign the Treaty of Accession to the Common Market sight unseen by those who will be expected to suffer its effects: the British working class.

Yet neither Lawrence Daly, the miners' secretary, nor AUEW president Hugh Scanlon has lifted a finger to whip right-wing Labour MPs into line.

Daly and Scanlon must be forced to do so. Much more even than the fate of their own pay claims depends on it.



SIXTEEN men were arrested by troops in Ulster yesterday in the 24 hours to 8 a.m. Most were from the Belfast area. Since internment on August 9, 1,950 people have been arrested under the Special Powers Act. At present 620 are being held in detention centres. Only 18 of these have been charged with offences.

Mr Geoffrey Johnson Smith, Defence under-Secretary (army), has admitted in the Commons that two boys, aged 13 and 15, were taken from their homes in Belfast by British soldiers. He said the boys were taken into custody by the army and then handed over to the RUC. The Minister also revealed that both boys had been photographed and fingerprinted before being released. 'I do not intend to set up an inquiry,' he added. 'This is a matter for the N Ireland government.'

THE INCREASE in family income supplements (FIS) announced on Tuesday is no more than a cheap gimmick by the Tory government and a fraud from beginning to end.

From its inception in October 1970, the FIS system has been used by the Tories to drive another nail into the welfare state and the free health service.

Allegedly catering for the needs of Britain's poorest 150,000 families, it is instead a 'poor-law' system based on the holding down of wages and the most vicious means test.

Ultimatums fly on Clyde

Davies gets tough with UCS stewards

TORY INDUSTRY Secretary John Davies warned Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' workers yesterday—co-operate or shipbuilding on the upper Clyde could collapse.

Speaking after a meeting with UCS stewards, he made it clear that the future of the Tory-appointed company Govan Shipbuilders Ltd would be grim if negotiations to establish 'agreed procedures and co-operation of the workforce' did not immediately begin.

Davies admitted that the main problem was the shop stewards' official policy of insisting on 'cumulative proposals' covering four yards before talks could start.

He warned that there was no 'active buyer for the Clydebank yard'. 'There is now a danger of not seeing discussions that would make Govan Shipbuilders a viable concern,' he said. 'There is no time to lose, there is really no time to lose, we really must get on with this task.'

He said that there was 'a real danger of Govan Shipbuilders running out of work'. 'If they run out of work this will be a big problem for the company and the whole of the Clyde for that matter.'

At a press conference the stewards, led by James Reid and James Airlie reiterated their formula that there could be no discussions with Govan Shipbuilders except unless there were 'cumulative proposals covering the four divisions'.

CONFRONTATION

Said Airlie: 'If this drags on into the new year there will be some form of confrontation sooner or later and the way things are going it looks like being sooner.'

He was referring to the shop stewards' threat not to allow any more ships out of the yards.

The next one is due for delivery from Govan in mid-January.

There is, however, one way the CP Stalinists can still avoid a battle with the Tory government.

If union leaders like Danny McGarvey, boilermakers' president, can persuade Breaksea Tankships, a company 'interested' in Clydebank, they could argue that their 'cumulative proposals' ultimatum had been met.

This would, of course, break the shop stewards' policy of no meaningful discussions without cast-iron guarantees over Clydebank's future.

But the co-ordinating committee are desperate to contact Breaksea, a mysterious American firm. They have enlisted the support of ex-Clydebank managing director John Rennie.

The possibility of a firm bid for Clydebank now appears remote, however, as Davies hinted yesterday.

Chief Govan Shipbuilders executive Archie Gilchrist said he hoped a feasibility study on the Scotstoun yard would start 'jelling' by the second half of January.

Deputy chairman Ken Douglas warned UCS shop stewards: 'Any factor which tends to bring the thing to a standstill will militate against its eventual success.'

One family not on FIS was awarded £1m. As leader of Tory Symphony Orchestra, Edward Heath got another £6,000. For services to Europe another £37,000. Harold Wilson—a 104 per cent wage increase. MPs 37 per cent etc., etc.

£181.74 needed to complete December Fund £1,250 target

IT REALLY IS fantastic. £163.52 arrived yesterday bringing our total up to the grand figure of £1,068.74. We are overwhelmed by this magnificent response. There is no doubt that if you keep this up we can clear our target in time. We cannot thank you enough.

Immediately in the New Year, our editorial board will be travelling around the areas to discuss plans for the expansion of Workers Press, with you, our readers. So let's press on in the last few days left. Rush all last minute donations to:

Workers Press Appeal Fund, 186a Clapham High St, London, SW4.

Chinese aid for Sudan butcher

THE CHINESE have just signed an economic agreement with Gen Numeiry, Sudan regime, which last summer butchered thousands of communists.

The agreement was signed in Peking by the Deputy President of the Sudan, Maj-Gen Khalid Hasan Abbas, and Li Hsien-nien, Vice-Premier of China.

A big and enthusiastic crowd turned up at the airport to see the visitors off.

The agreement includes a Chinese credit to the Sudan which will be no doubt used to equip the repressive forces to deal with the working class and peasantry in one of the most reactionary Islamic states.

The regime is also carrying on a repressive policy against black peoples in the S.

Talks took place between the visiting representatives of the Sudanese military regime and Li Teh-sheng, who is politically responsible for the Chinese army. Peng Chao-hui, assistant chief of the general staff and Hsiao King-kuang, vice-minister of national defence.

Peking has declared its support for what it describes as 'the anti-imperialist policy' of Khartoum.

Sartre demands justice for Iran students

JEAN-PAUL Sartre has called for action to support political prisoners detained in Iran to ensure they get medical attention and have an open trial which foreigners can attend.

Committee for the Defence of Iranian Political Prisoners, of which he is president, has denounced arbitrary arrests, tortures and violations of the rights of the defence in a letter of protest to Amir Abbas Hoveida, the Iranian prime minister. It has been signed by many prominent French intellectuals.

IN YOUR CHRISTMAS WORKERS PRESS TOMORROW

Tomorrow's edition will be the last before next Tuesday December 28. But we can promise you some entertaining and informative reading for that odd moment during the holidays. For instance: Just how much does Her Majesty and the Burk House crowd really earn? Jack Gale will tell you, penny by penny... stable by stable... limousine by limousine in...

'The Queen is in the counting house...'

Of course, if you're not getting quite as much as the Royals, you can always pop down the Wear against in London to do your shopping. IAN YEATS went among the Christmas crowds during the week. Just your ordinary common or garden shoppers in Bond Street and Burlington Arcade, where the fur-coated ladies slide from their chauffeured Bentleys to 'window gaze' at 2,000 guinea gems—and think nothing of laying out the cash (sorry, they're on credit accounts) for them, either.

ALSO:

'How the revisionists see us and themselves—Comments on the Socialist Labour League by the International Marxist Group and International Socialists.

AND:

Your TV programmes for four days at a glance.

TOPPING THE LIST of a number of other articles will be exciting news about the expansion and enlargement of Workers Press in the New Year.

All in all, an issue to look forward to. So make sure of your copy now by telephoning our circulation department: 01-622 7029.

