

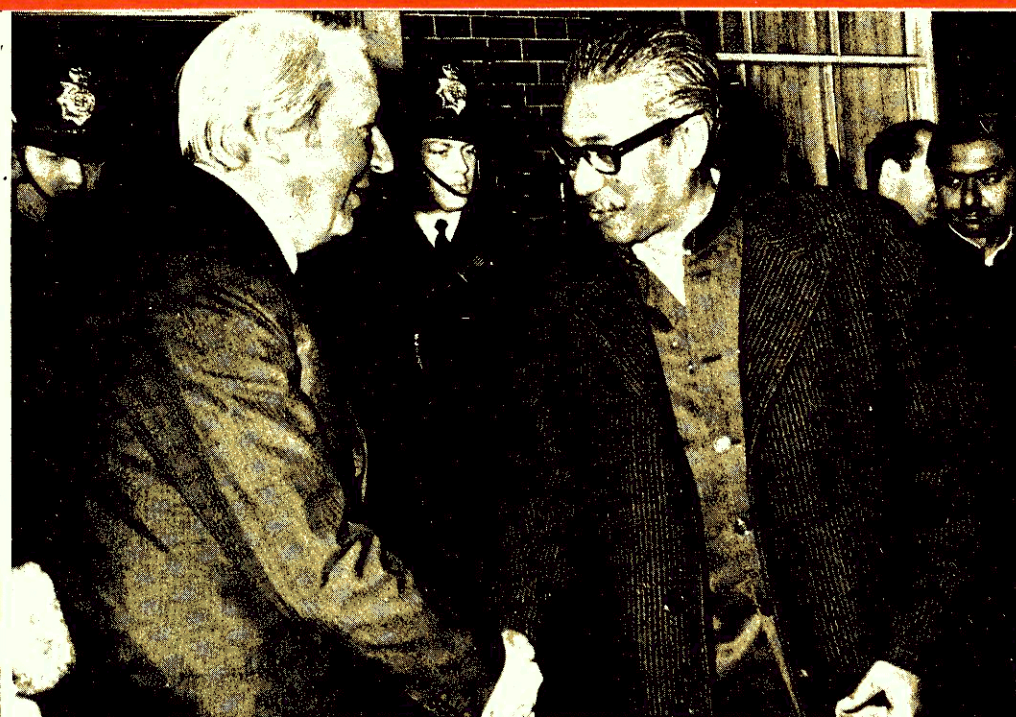
Coal Board offer withdrawn Tories declare war on miners

£1,250 Fund now £202.61

AS MINERS give their answer to the Tories, they speak out for thousands of workers everywhere.

Workers Press must reach out to miners and all those involved in this struggle. Help us expand our circulation, particularly amongst the coalfields. Take copies yourself to sell.

Immediately let's have a big effort to raise as much as possible of January's Fund. Post all donations to: Workers Press Appeal Fund, 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4.



NO GOLDEN HANDSHAKE. THIS: Heath told Mujib recognition of Bangla Desh would depend on the new government being 'firmly in control and having the popular support of the people'. The question immediately arises whether on these criteria Bangla Desh should recognize Heath's government?

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Now, on the verge of weekly publication as an eight-page newspaper, 'Keep Left' has a circulation of 21,000—twice its circulation eight years ago.

It is in the forefront of the struggle to force the Tory government to resign, spearheading the Young Socialists' national campaign for the basic right of the working class—the Right to Work.

Retiring editor Aileen Jennings stressed at Saturday's meeting the struggle waged by 'Keep Left' against the treachery of the Labour leadership.

She pointed out that from the very start the paper campaigned against the payment of compensation to the old coal barons, who were handsomely rewarded by the Attlee government for the loss of their right to exploit miners directly.

The demand for workers' control of the mines and an end to the £600m interest payments laid on the miners' backs by the Labour leaders is right at the heart of today's miners' strike.

The Tory government of Heath is stripping the miners of everything they gained as a result of nationalization in 1947.

The Coal Board bureaucracy has now taken the place of the hated coal-owners of a quarter of a century ago. And it was the Labour leaders whose reformist policies opened the door for this attack.

From 1951 to 1964, 'Keep Left' fought inside the Labour Party to change its policy so that nationalization under workers' control would become official Labour policy.

For this struggle, the paper was witch-hunted and its supporters finally expelled by Harold Wilson's leadership.

Then in 1964, with the aid of the police and the support of the revisionists, the Trotskyist majority were bureaucratically expelled from the Party.

'Keep Left's' crime was to say that the Labour government would betray just as the Attlee government had betrayed 13 years before.

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We wish 'Keep Left' every success in this task.

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BY MICHAEL BANDA

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As the 'Daily Mail'—no friend of the miners today or in 1926—explained:

'The tactics of Mr Heath and his Cabinet will be to let the 280,000 miners sweat it out...'

'If the strike develops into the bitter struggle now feared by both sides, the government will take powers to move the 10 millions tons of coal already mined and stocked at the pits and to ship coal and oil supplies from overseas.'

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The government's arrogance and hatred for the miners is also clearly expressed in the decision of Coal Board chairman Derek Ezra to withdraw his miserable wage offer once the strike began.

The reactionary bureaucrats of the NCB obviously base their pipe-dreams on the precedent of 1926, when the miners were isolated and defeated after a terrific resistance lasting over six months.

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His allegation should be pasted up in every miners' lodge and studied by every striker. There must be no illusion in the TUC this time.

The greatest mistake of the Miners' Federation in 1926 was to place its case unreservedly in the hands of the TUC General Council.

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In October NUM president Joe Gormley refused to commit himself when asked by our correspondent about whether the NCB's decision was influenced by the government.

Now he tries to draw an invidious distinction between the government and the NCB: 'We are convinced that the board are inhibited by the inflexible government directive to conform to the norm... which prevents the board from dealing fairly with our claim.'

Let us recall that a similar tactic of trying to play off the government against the Post Office management by Jackson in 1971 led to the disastrous retreat and the acceptance of arbitration. Is this what Gormley wants?

The miners must and can win this strike against the Tories, but only on the condition that they treat it as a political strike which requires the active co-operation and support of the entire trade union movement.

The only way it can be won is by creating the political conditions for the resignation of the government and the election of a Labour government pledged to introduce workers' control in the mines, the immediate cessation of interest payments and the dismantling of the reactionary coal boards.

Gormley has said that 'no one section of workers can bear this government on its own.'

This is a truism which hardly needs repetition. In fact it was the theme of Hugh Scanlon, president of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, when he addressed his union's women's conference in March last year.

Yet when the crunch comes and the engineers' leaders are faced with the prospect of standing by the miners in a united struggle against the Tories—they quit.

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If this decision is endorsed by the section's policy-making national committee at its meeting today it will be a black day for engineers and a stab in the back for the miners.

We urge the whole trade union movement to rally to the miners and build the maximum unity against the Tories now.

The only guarantee against a return to 1926 is to expose the traitors in the TUC and build the alternative Trotskyist leadership in the unions.

See page 4 for coalfield reports.

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The other side of this, he said, was reflected in the victories of the Pathet Lao, the Cambodian freedom fighters, the National Liberation Front of Vietnam and the Bangla Desh people.

Commending the election of Gary Gurmeet as 'Keep Left' editor, comrade Banda added that the best guarantee of working-class victory lay in the expansion of the paper and of Workers Press.

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STRANGE WORDS

Behind Rahman's strange words of friendship for a country which butchered millions of Bengalis is the knowledge that without rapid social and economic progress the bourgeoisie of both countries could be swept aside.

Right from the start Rahman has warned that he was the only man who could save Bangladesh from communism.

In Pakistan as well as Bangladesh it is a race against time.

At his first public appearance since his release, Rahman brushed aside any suggestion that there should be new elections in Bangladesh.

The Awami League represents the bourgeoisie almost to a man and Rahman is not prepared to let anything stand in the way of consolidating its grip on the new republic.

GIVEN LIVES

Disarming the guerrillas and restoring law and order requires immediate gestures to the Bengali workers and peasants, who have given their lives in millions to be free of the yoke of exploitation and poverty.

Significantly, and without waiting for Rahman's return to Dhacca, the Bangla Desh government announced on Saturday that they intended to 'nationalize' banking, insurance and foreign trade.

By concentrating scarce development funds into government hands, the Awami League obviously hopes to build quickly the climate in which capitalism can flourish unthreatened by popular revolt.

But the world recession plus the gigantic task of post-war reconstruction will make their efforts more than difficult.

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YOUNG SOCIALISTS

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WANTED URGENTLY

Loan of vehicles—road-worthy vans, cars (reasonable hire will be considered)

Accommodation

Cooking equipment

Tinned food

Finance

Brass/jazz bands

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Please complete above form and post to: Clive Morris, national secretary Right-to-Work campaign 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4. Or phone 01-822 7029.

New dangers face UCS jobs fight

BY STEPHEN JOHNS

STALINIST leaders at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders are likely to face a new test this week when the liquidator demands delivery of a ship from the Clydebank yard.

In December, James Reid, leading Stalinist on the UCS shop stewards' coordinating committee, led three ships out of the yards. He claimed these would be the last to be released in the absence of any firm guarantee over the future of the consortium's four divisions and their entire labour force.

According to the liquidator's office, the next ship—a Clyde-class carrier—is due for delivery from Clydebank around the middle of this week.

Meanwhile there is no

agreement on the future of Clydebank. And a feasibility study, which will give a verdict on the Scotstoun yard, is unlikely to be published until next week.

Don Tonner, secretary of the Clydeside Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, said yesterday that union officials including Danny McGarvey would meet shop stewards on Friday.

'They will have to take a very responsible attitude,' warned Tonner. 'At some time the executives of the unions will have to be involved at UCS.'

This was a reference to a statement made by McGarvey, president of the Boilermakers' Society, last Friday after a meeting with UCS stewards.

He warned that if his

negotiations with Breaksea Tankships, which begin today in Houston, Texas, did not solve the Clydebank problem, discussion with Govan Shipbuilders on wages and conditions would have to begin.

If the stewards agree to this it would be a break from their own stated position that no 'meaningful discussions' can start until the future of all the division and jobs is guaranteed.

The only comment from the stewards after Friday's meeting came from James Reid. He said things 'looked good,' but they would await McGarvey's return from Texas.

See tomorrow's Workers Press for an analysis of the present stage of the struggle at UCS.

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Bendix blacked

BRITAIN'S dockers have blacked Thorn electrical products as a solidarity gesture with workers occupying the group's Fisher-Bendix plant at Kirby, near Liverpool.

The black was imposed on Saturday when the national port stewards committee met in London.

On Wednesday, shop stewards throughout Merseyside will be asked to call a one-day strike and demonstration throughout the Liverpool area on January 19.

The call, from the Kirby stewards' liaison committee, includes a demand that the TUC and the union leaders—especially those of the miners and the engineers—come together in one industrial action to force the Tory government to resign.

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Car pay causes chaos

PAY BATTLES in the car industry continue this week with over 13,000 Scottish, Merseyside and Midlands workers laid-off.

The new wave of militancy is affecting production at Chrysler's Linwood works in Renfrewshire. There 6,500 workers walked out and amazed the combine's managing director Gilbert Hunt by rejecting a £3 no-strings pay offer.

Also in Scotland, production at British-Leyland's truck and tractor plant came to a standstill when 3,500 shop-floor workers carried out their threat to strike on Friday night after the firm turned down demands for an £8-a-week pay rise.

Deliveries of Triumph's new Dolomite car—only announced on Thursday—will be further hit by a dispute at the body works at Speke, Liverpool.

Press-shop workers there have been laid off indefinitely after a stoppage of about 900 workers in the body-assembly section

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ULSTER

A special report by Stephen Johns

POLITICS in Ireland at first appear to be a welter of confusion and contradiction. The most coherent reply on the future for workers N and S is often a shrug of the shoulders.

Yet people who are rendered speechless can also fight and die to give expression to the political forces they feel. And everyone will admit that 1972 will be the most decisive year in the country's modern history.

With the uprising of the Catholic working class in the N against army terror, the collapse of the traditional Ulster Unionist rule and the extreme instability of the 'green' Tory regime in the S, the political 'settlement' reached in 1922 has outlived its use for British imperialism.

A new 'solution' must be found to guarantee colonial rule in Britain's oldest colony.

This bid to preserve property throughout the 32 counties will reach its first climax when political parties and governments from Eire, Ulster and Britain meet for talks on the crisis in the N, possibly at the end of the month.

Handmaidens

The ring-master of the drama will be the Tory government. Its ministers have decided that a new alliance of forces is needed to guarantee their oppressive grip on the Irish working class.

The Tories are witnessing the dissolution of their old handmaidens, the Ulster Unionist government. The reactionary squires of Stormont are rapidly losing their grip on the Protestant working class to street demagogues like the Rev Ian Paisley and Desmond Boal.

In the S, Eire premier Jack Lynch is increasingly losing ground to the forces of militant Republicanism. Even the hint of internment and a campaign against the IRA is enough to cause immediate riots in towns and villages.

So to their mutual advantage the Heath and Lynch administrations have decided some agreement on the future of capitalist Ireland must be reached.

Indications are that the solution envisaged by the Tory leaders will involve a period of direct Westminster rule over the N, the appointment of a commission and some eventual federal arrangement between N and S with full Irish unity relegated to a vague rumour.

Thorny

Of course, this would not satisfy workers in the N or the S and therefore the key elements in erecting this new fabric of oppression are the middle-class politicians, the reformist and right-wing variety.

This is why the presence of the so-called Ulster 'left' and men like Paisley is essential at the talks.

It is with the politicians of the Catholic-backed Social Democratic Labour Party and the Protestant Democratic Unionist

Party that the two Tory governments hope to steer round the thorny issues of internment, the brutal suppression of the IRA and the border issue.

Labour leader Harold Wilson acted as catalyst and it is he who at present is cajoling the apparently reluctant SDLP leaders to talk.

So far the SDLP worthies, like Gerry Fitt, Paddy Devlin, John Hulme, Ivan Cooper, Austin Currie and Paddy O'Hanlon, have held to their posture that no talks can proceed without the release of every single internee.

Untenable

But this is a surface appearance from a movement born out of the most rotten opportunism. The SDLP is a bastard organization formed from a merger of Stormont's 'independent' MPs decided to form a parliamentary opposition to outflank the old Nationalist Party in the N.

The spur to this development was the tremendous upsurge and resistance to Unionist rule by the Catholic working class.

Men like Fitt — originally Republican Labour, Hulme (independent) Civil Rights, Paddy Devlin (ex-N Ireland Labour Party), came together to form the SDLP two years ago.

They had no real programme beyond the vague promises on 'civil rights'. Their policy on key issues like nationalization, workers' control and unemployment was unclear. As an organization the SDLP was untenable, but its main aim, after all, was not political coherence, but to head off the Catholic working class for mutual political benefit.

Now the delicate alliance is beginning to break up and internment is the rock that threatens to wreck the creaking ship.

Fitt — an SDLP Westminster MP — for example is ready to compromise on this issue. His original draft for his recent speech on the BBC Ulster programme last week said this:

Admission

... internment must be ended. If a compromise is offered on this, such as bringing of charges against selected internees, then this too must be quickly granted, for there are many hundreds of people caught up in the present violence now serving long terms of imprisonment.

In other words, 'promise us you will try the guilty IRA men and to release the rest and I Gerald Fitt will talk about a federal solution'.

A whisper that Fitt was about to make such an admission was enough, however, to bring Paddy Devlin out of his corner, categorically denying that there would be any talks before all internees were released.

But still the odds are that the SDLP will come to the conference table.

They are waiting for some Tory bone (some pledge on

The politics of Ulster



1922: IRA section moves down Grafton Street.

Which way for Irish workers?

internment or the Special Powers Act) that they can throw to their constituents to 'prove' that a significant 'concession' has been forced out of the political masters at Westminster.

Then the oppression can continue — perhaps under direct Westminster control — with emergency regulations giving the authorities dictatorial powers to arrest and jail the IRA. Meanwhile the boys in the SDLP get round the table and sort out Ireland's future with the Tories.

Treachery

The greatest political ally of these opportunists is the Civil Rights Association — now dominated by the Communist Party of Ireland — which, in the great name of 'left' unity, provides a platform for Fitt and company.

The great aim is to shift these MPs further to the left; in fact the CRA always ends up tailoring its policies to suit the parliamentarians.

The CP has been desperate for a political role in the CRA since its inception. Its desire for office can be judged by the fact that when Republican executive members of the CRA were interned in August last year, the CP's first move was to fly out new cadres to be co-opted onto the committee, in place of the fallen comrades.

The Irish Communist Party's policy is the most well-developed programme of political treachery.

Coalition

The recent edition of its northern area journal, 'Unity', contains the strategy for 1972 in an article written by one James Stewart.

Stewart charts the drift towards coalition between the ruling class of the N and S, and the gradual acceptance by the British government that the Unionist Party has lost its grip of the situation.

If the capitalists are moving

for unity, he argues, so should the workers. Hence he writes:

'Sectorial divisions among the working class at this stage serve only to weaken our bargaining position as a class in the negotiations for new political solutions, when in actual fact the entire progressive movement should be in a strong position.'

After all internees are released and internment is ended... Talks can begin at which the representatives of all the political parties in the N, plus the people's organizations, can sit down with the British and Irish governments to work out a political solution in the interests of the working people of this island.'

One must pause here and understand what the Stalinists are proposing.

Peddling

They say that the Tory government — which has filled Ulster with 15,000 troops, killed over 100 men, women and children, interned ten times that number — are going to sit down and award 'progressive organizations' a solution 'in the interests of the working people of this island'.

This programme, peddled by the miserable N Ireland Stalinists makes no mention of troop withdrawals, socialism or a united Ireland. Of all the political platforms it must be the most reactionary in Ulster.

It is a measure of the depth of the crisis of capitalism in Ireland that the middle class and the Stalinists must sink to embrace such rotten formulas in the name of the working class.

But will the working people of Ulster fall into this trap and repeat 1922 on a much more disastrous scale?

Here is the nub of Ulster politics.

The Catholics now follow the IRA, both official and provisional wings. They do this for the most part out of self defence.

Links

Apart from a necessarily limited armed resistance to army brutality, the Provos offer no political perspective or way forward. Most of their cadre don't begin to answer the key question — 'how can the Protestant workers be unified in the struggle against British imperialism?'

The Officials pay lip-service to workers' unity. Their important policy statement, issued last week, contains these lines:

'Talks must be opened between the Catholic and Protestant working class, between trade unionists and farmers, between the labour movement and the Republican movement, between N and S.'

'It is here that the foundations of unity of the Irish people can be laid and not in talks with Britain, nor in talks between Tory establishments in Dublin and Belfast.'

'... We have realized that armed struggle on its own, or as an end in itself, is doomed to failure. Armed struggle must be linked with, must be integrated with, all other forms of struggle.'

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Unite to Fight!

Call or write to: The Secretary,
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A modern recruiting leaflet for the political wing of the 'Official' IRA.

It must be related to the needs of the people.'

What the Officials are proposing is turning the IRA into the army of the working class. In Ireland — where one faces the most brutal oppression — this is certainly necessary.

But doing it, and not just saying it, is the problem the Officials face.

They fail to realize their plans for two reasons.

First, their activity is based entirely upon the Catholic working class — from this position they cannot hope to win that essential Protestant support.

Secondly the programme they envisage contains what are revolutionary demands. But British imperialism could not tolerate the victory of the IRA, and, in isolation from the British working class, the IRA would be defeated.

upon the Tories that go to the root of the Irish question.

British capital is old, uncompetitive and doomed. How much more is this true for British capital in her oldest colony. The facts need no elaboration — there are places in the N where 50 per cent of all men are out of work — in the S unemployment is averaging 8 per cent; double the British figure.

Hard road

The same hard road, therefore, faces Ulster workers.

There can be no solution to their bitter oppression as long as the Tories rule, as long as men like Fitt and Paisley, Lynch and the right-wing Republicans are allowed to play their game.

The answer for Irish workers lies with their own organization — the trade unions, the factories, on the estates. There a revolutionary unity of workers can be forged. But in Ulster it will be politics, politics first time.

The paradox is that where the split between workers seems widest the greatest opportunities for revolutionary development exists. But while confusion clouds the mind, the Tories can rule on.

TOMORROW we begin a series by Jack Gale on the history of Ireland.

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This seven part series by MICHAEL BANDA was first appeared in the Workers Press is now available as a pamphlet. Order from New Park Publications, 186A Clapham High Street, London SW4. Price 18p including postage.

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Two backers for Numeiry —Moscow and Peking

New Stage in Friendly Relation Between China and the Sudan

IT HAS not taken Moscow long to follow Peking with a tribute to the Sudan's reactionary military dictatorship and an attack on the left-wingers, murdered, hunted and jailed by the regime.

Chinese premier Chou En-lai sent an extremely effusive telegram of support for Gen Jaafar Numeiry on the 16th anniversary of Sudan's independence from Anglo-Egyptian rule.

Deaths

The message specifically attacked 'subversives' who were trying to undermine the regime.

This was a clear reference to the communists, trade unionists and left-wing officers who tried unsuccessfully to overthrow Numeiry last July. Many of them, including Abdel Mahgoub, general secretary of Sudan's Communist Party, have since been put to death after perfunctory military 'trials'.

Hundreds of others are still held in prisons and concentration camps. China's support for Numeiry has been strengthened rather than weakened by his brutal suppression of the CP.

Congratulatory

Chou's message was more congratulatory than any of the previous declarations of support for Numeiry.

The Moscow Stalinists, who were at pains after the July coup attempt to dissociate themselves from the left-wing 'plotters', have now dropped even the formal protests against the repression which they made at the time.



Abdel Mahgoub general secretary of the Communist Party of Sudan, murdered by Numeiry last July.

In its 'Sudan Corner', broadcast on the National Day, Moscow Radio referred in veiled terms to enemies of the Sudanese people who are 'fabricating social and economic difficulties within Sudanese society, particularly in the villages'.

This is certainly not a reference to the Numeiry government, which operates from the capital, Khartoum, and makes no secret of its desire to break the back of the trade unions and imprison all communists.

It can only refer to the outlawed left-wingers who are now working underground against the Numeiry dictatorship.

But according to Moscow Radio, this falls in the category of 'provocations and manoeuvres' with the object of splitting and putting the various factions of the Sudanese society against one another.

More treacherous still is Moscow's attempt to blacken Numeiry's opponents as agents of imperialism.

According to the radio broadcast, it is the imperialists and not the reactionary military dictators, who are sowing discord in order to disrupt the friendship between the Soviet and Sudanese people and thus weakening Sudan's position...

Crushing

The Soviet commentator boasted of the bureaucracy's consistent support for Numeiry and his predecessors in their fight to 'make their state independent and democratic'!

He laid particular stress on the role of Soviet aid in building up the Sudan's armed forces:

'With the active participation of the Soviet Union and other countries of socialist camp, the government economic sector grew and developed as did the country's defence ability.'

It was, of course, the Sudanese army which installed the Numeiry dictatorship and provided the judges and firing squads for his repression of the Communist Party.

Here, at least, is a frank admission that the Soviet Stalinists paved the way for Numeiry's military repression and bear a lion's share of the responsibility for the crushing of the Sudanese Communist Party.



Mao with Numeiry—picture and caption from 'China Pictorial' No 10, 1970.

John Spencer looks at

The Stalinist Crisis



CHRISTMAS DAY in the workhouse had nothing on this description of the festivities in one unfortunate village of 'socialist' Poland. The description comes verbatim from a Warsaw Television broadcast on January 3.

'Until now we have had no advice to offer our friends who like to indulge in Christmas fare without regard to their expanding waistlines. But now we have a sensational bit of advice for fashion-conscious ladies and figure-conscious gentlemen: the best way to avoid getting fat is to spend your Christmas in Szklarska Poreba.

'We are not advocating skiing or any other kind of sport; we are simply talking about provisions. We say this because the Szklarska Poreba commercial people with persistence worthy of a better cause, every Christmas time and at other holidays subject both the locals and the visitors to a reducing diet.

'It seems to us that the joke has gone far enough when people who come for a few days' rest cannot buy any bread in Szklarska Poreba, as happened on New Year's Eve, and when there was no butter, meat or tinned goods, not to mention citrus fruit. How is it possible that the same thing happens every year?

'From year to year things do not change or get better and what is worse no one has been punished for the way things go on. . . . We have discovered that the supplies in Szklarska Poreba are the responsibility or at least should be the responsibility of the Board of the village cooperative in Jalenia Gora.

'To them we address this question. When will it be possible to travel to Szklarska Poreba without having to take one's own provisions? When will we hear that those responsible for the mess have been found and that they have changed their jobs?'

Trimming the Polish waistline



December 1970: Food riots in Gdansk.

The rivals in uneasy coalition



Banzer

BOLIVIA

BOLIVIA'S military junta—headed by Col Hugo Banzer since he seized power last August — is deeply divided and opposition in the country is growing.

Threat

The dismissal of the Minister of the Interior, Col Andres Selich, who helped organize the coup, came because Banzer considered him a threat to his personal power.

He has been replaced by a less well-known figure, Col Mario Zamora.

Both colonels represent the extreme right-wing Socialist Falange.

While at the Ministry of the Interior, Selich acquired a great deal of power and turned into a strong man inside the govern-

ment. After his dismissal there were rumours that he was preparing another coup to oust Banzer.

In any case, the Banzer government rests on an uneasy coalition between the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR) of former president Dr Paz Estensoro and the fascist Socialist Falange.

The Falange shock-troops wear white shirts, give the fascist salute and parade in military order. It finds its mass support largely in the urban petty bourgeoisie—like the classic European fascist movements. Its financial backers are drawn from the big landowners.

Enemy

The Falange was at one time the sworn enemy of Paz Estensoro's movement, which promised agrarian reform and had the support of peasants and tin-miners in the 1950s.

The government contains five ministers from each party and this proportion was respected when the recent changes were made.

At the local level the MNR and Falange representatives are often rivals for power. Many of the officers who back Banzer are hostile to the MNR.

Paz Estensoro, who was himself deposed by a military coup in 1964 and forced into exile, threw in his lot with the army officers opposed to the Torres government. He found, however, that prior to the August coup, they had already reached an understanding with the Falange.

His only hope of returning to Bolivia and seeing the MNR back in the government was to accept the alliance with the Falange.

Savage

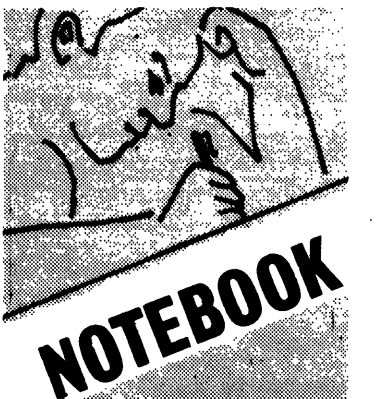
In August, according to Paz Estensoro, 'the people did not fight against the army to back Torres. It was a fight between different sections of the military'.

He claims that his radio speech putting the MNR's position caused the Catavi miners, who were marching to support the Torres government, to turn back.

Whatever Paz Estensoro may say, Bolivia is still a land of crisis and tension.

The universities have not reopened. A savage repression is still being carried on.

Many Bolivian mutants, journalists, intellectuals and students are in hiding or in exile. Those who are captured are sent to concentration camps in remote jungle areas.



NOTEBOOK

Aberdeen—a new Riviera?

ABERDEEN Corporation's director of publicity, Jack Nicholl, has been trying to whip up a bit of team spirit—just in case the thought of a million on the dole this New Year might be leading anyone to think that the post-war boom has come to an end.

'We must all of us,' he urges Aberdeen's business community in the most recent edition of the local 'Chamber of Commerce Journal' 'sell our city and assure it of a confident march into the eighties on the backs of three winning horses—oil, tourists and conferences.'

This will come as a shock to a large section of the city's workers who are employed in fishing, fish-processing, paper-making, engineering and shipbuilding. Aberdeen's unemployment rate has been rising steadily, but—partly because it is distorted by a high level of emigration—it is, at under 4 per cent, low by Scottish standards.

But the threat of world recession, particularly on the shipbuilding and machine tool industries, and of Common Market entry means specifically on fishing and paper-making, lurks menacingly over almost every major section of industry in the area.

Against this the local press—notorious for its parochialism and civic patriotism, and backed up by the Labourites and Stalinists in the labour movement—has been propagating optimistic forecasts of the employment guaranteed by North Sea oil exploitation.

The principal of the local university chipped in recently to suggest that university expansion would mean thousands of extra jobs in the construction industries, over and above those that the 'oil bonanza' is supposed to be going to provide.

The realities of the world crisis of capitalism, or even of the Tory government's education policies, never enter into these calculations of course.

But lest relying on the oil alone for Aberdeen's promised prosperity should seem to over-tax our credulity, PR man Nicholl is offering us a 'tourist bonanza' as well. Aberdeen, with its granite tenements, its high percentage of sub-standard housing, its cold east winds, its uncanny quantity of churches, is to become a cross between Kuwait and Las Vegas.

We can hardly wait!

Satchmo's secret fan

IN HALF an hour, how can you do justice to Beethoven and Bach, Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong? asked guest disc jockey on Radio Four Scotland's 'Autogram' programme last week.

But he did his best, though, only Armstrong of the aforementioned four featured in his selection of jazz, opera and songs by Sarah Vaughan.

One of his favourites was 'I belong to Glasgow' sung by that representative of a genuine contemporary Scottish folk culture, Will Fyfe, and accompanied by a quaint characterization of a Glasgow working man, drunk of course, appealing for understanding to the nobs who can afford to take their pleasures more privately.

Who was this cultivated man of the people, chosen to regale us with the merest taste of his wide-ranging musical interests?

'Already a star of the Jimmy Young Show, 'It's Your Line', and heaven knows what else, it was—you've guessed it—none other than . . . 'the newly appointed Rector of Glasgow University', Jimmy Reid.

'Music,' he explained, is very important to him. It helps him to unwind after a hard day. But the programme wasn't all relaxation—there was a sting in the tail as Reid signed off: 'A happy and peaceful New Year to all of you—and let's hope we're all in work in 1972.'

Biting staff. And he got a fat fee from the BBC too.

READERS' LETTERS WELCOME

The Editor, Workers Press, 1864 Clapham High St, London, SW4

BBC 1

9.38 For Schools. 12.00 English law. 12.50 Malcolm Muggeridge. 1.30 Woodentops. 1.45 News. 2.05 For Schools. 4.15 Play School. 4.40 Jackanory. 4.55 Blue Peter. 5.20 Man Dog. 5.44 Magic Roundabout. 5.50 News. 6.00 LONDON THIS WEEK. 6.20 ENTERTAINING WITH KERR. 6.45 THE MARY TYLER MOORE SHOW. 7.10 Z CARS. 8.00 PANORAMA. 9.00 NEWS, weather. 9.20 MENACE: 'Man with a Misson'. 10.35 24 HOURS. 11.10 SOUNDING OUT. 11.35 Weather.

All Regions as BBC 1 except:

Wales: 1.30-1.45 Ar Lin Man. 6.00-6.20 Wales Today. 6.45-7.10 Heddiw. 11.10-11.35 Croeso! Bont. 11.37 Weather. Scotland: 6.00-6.20 Reporting Scotland. 11.37 News.

N Ireland: 6.00-6.20 Scene Around Six. 6.57-10 Spot on Monday. 11.37 News. England: 6.00-6.20 Look North. Midlands Today. Look East. Points West. South Today. Spotlight South West. Weather. 11.37 News.

BBC 2

11.00 Play School. 8.05 Open University. 7.05 SEVENTY PLUS. 7.30 NEWSROOM. 8.00 ALIAS SMITH AND JONES. 8.50 CALL MY BLUFF. 9.20 HORIZON. Navajo—The Last Red Indians. 10.10 THIRTY-MINUTE THEATRE. 10.40 NEWS, weather. 10.45 LATE NIGHT LINE-UP.

REGIONAL ITV

CHANNEL: 10.20 Schools. 1.40 Schools. 6.05 Once upon a time. 4.20 Puffin's birthday greetings. 4.25 Yoga. 4.50 Rovers. 5.20 Bright's boffins. 5.50 London. 6.00 News, weather. What's On Where. 6.15 Pursuers. 6.45 London. 10.30 Weather. 10.32 University challenge. 11.02 Marty Feldman. 11.55 News, weather. WESTWARD: As Channel except: 3.55 Gus Honeybun. 4.20 News. 6.00 Diary. 6.20 Sports. 10.30 News. 11.55 Faith for life. 12.00 Weather. SOUTHERN: 3.10 Yoga. 3.35 Horoscope. 3.40 Tea break. 4.10 Houseparty. 4.22 Carrion. 4.30 Lucy. 4.55 Richard the Lionheart. 5.20 Bright's boffins. 5.50 News. 6.00 Day by day. 6.45 London. 10.30 Question time. 10.55 Marcus Welby. 11.30 News. 12.00 Weather. HARLECH: 10.20 For schools. 3.45 Women only. 4.15 Tinker-tailor. 4.30 Superman. 4.50 Robin Hood. 5.20 Bright's boffins. 5.50 News. 6.01 Report West. 6.22 Report Wales. 6.45 London. 10.30 Film: 'Psycho'. 12.25 Weather. HTV West as above except: 6.22-6.45 This is the West This Week. HTV Wales as above except: 6.01-6.22 Y Dydd. HTV Cymru/Wales as HTV Wales plus: 8.00-8.30 Yr Wythnos. 10.30 Awdur A'i Fis. 11.15 Danger Man. ANGLIA: 3.55 Newsroom. 4.00 Romper room. 4.25 Tea break. 4.55 Flipper. 5.20 Bright's boffins. 5.50 News. 6.00 About Anglia. 6.45 London. 10.30 Probe. 11.05 Champions. 11.58 Big question. ATV MIDLANDS: 3.10 Yoga. 3.35 Horoscope. 3.45 Women today. 4.10 Nanny. 4.40 Orizami. 4.55 Forest rangers. 5.20 Bright's boffins. 5.50 London. 10.30 University challenge. 11.00 British museum. ULSTER: 10.20 For schools. 1.40 Schools. 4.00 Yoga. 4.30 Romper



BBC 1 9.20: Menace: 'Man with a Misson'

ITV

10.20 For Schools. 2.33 Riding. 3.00 Houseparty. 3.10 Tea Break. 3.45 Dangerman. 4.40 Rupert Bear. 4.50 Lost in Space. 5.50 News. 6.00 TODAY. 6.20 CROSSROADS. 6.40 OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS. 7.30 CORONATION STREET. 8.00 WORLD IN ACTION. 8.30 LAST OF THE BASKETS. 9.00 THE CHALLENGERS: 'Who's Been Eating My Porridge?'. 10.00 NEWS. 10.30 FILM: 'GORILLA AT LARGE'. Cameron Mitchell, Anne Bancroft, Lee J. Cobb. 12.00 BLAKE DISCOVERIES.



A striking miner leaves the last shift at Oakdale pit, S Wales.

Miners 'fight for right to live'

'WE'VE got to bring this government down or else we're beaten' was the sharp reaction from the S Wales coalfield yesterday to Heath's no-surrender pledge.

'We'll see who's toughest', said Blaenserchan Lodge chairman Ted Priddle, commenting on coalboard chief Derek Ezra's hardline speech at the weekend.

'If they try closing pits they'll never get us back', he said.

'We're not just fighting for a rise in money we're fighting for the right to live.'

ON DAY ONE of the miners' stoppage, IAN YEATS—filling from the S Wales coalfield—talks to the strikers.

The sacking of 18 men last Friday for refusing to accept a pay cut had already given the 412 Blaenserchan men a taste of what will happen if they are defeated.

'No one on the S Wales coalfield will go back until these 18 men are reinstated', said Mr Priddle.

'They're cutting wages now. If we don't win this claim they'll be sacking and sacking and sacking.'

One of the sacked men, George Hughes (46) who has worked in the pit all his life, told me why they staged their sit-down strike: 'We wanted our money

back. We worked for it. The management today is vicious. 'We're 100 per cent behind the strike. I think it will be tough but we can be tough too. If they don't give us a living wage they can shut all the pits.'

Said Ted Priddle, 'If the miners go down everybody will go down. We want every union to back us to the hilt.'

'We've already got the support of the transport unions. It is virtually a general strike.'

'We work in a nationalized industry and after 1945 it gave us a better chance to work but now it means you are fighting one big boss in-

stead of hundreds of private ones.

'The National Coal Board say they only made £500,000 profit last year but that was after paying the old coal owners.'

'They ought to be down the pits having a go.'

'We've got 100 tons in the yard and we've got 400 men. There's another 300 men over at Glynllifry. They might try to get a private contractor to move coal but I wouldn't like to be the man in the cab.'

From YORKSHIRE Phillip Wade reports: Safety men of all kinds will be pulled out of 14 pits under the Doncaster panel.

The decision was confirmed yesterday by a mass meeting at Brodsworth, the largest pit in the area.

A minority wanted to go further and refuse to take action even if a pit caught fire.

The militant mood in Doncaster was reflected in a separate decision by miners to join the strike. Pickets will be out at all 14 pits today.

'They'll have a hell of a job to get us back'

'EVERY nationalized industry with a pay claim takes on the government', Britannia Lodge secretary Gwylm Burton told me.

'That's what we're doing. That's what the Post Office workers did. This strike is the ultimate. It is very, very important. It is going to determine all future rises in other industries.'

'Everybody laughed when the dustmen came out, but they had a hell of an effect. Even the postmen cost the corporation and the government millions of pounds.'

'I don't think you can ever talk of defeats. If we get the support of the transport unions, the miners could cripple the country.'

Sixty eight per cent of the 1,000 men at Britannia voted for a national strike.

'The Industrial Relations Act will never work', said Burton. 'Similar Acts haven't worked in America or Canada. In any case, they can't put 300,000 men in jail.'

'If men want to come out on strike they'll come out on strike—Act or no Act.'

'If this strike goes on for more than a month they'll have a hell of a job to get the men back. They'll get used to being up on the surface. No one likes working down there. And a lot of miners and their families are going to suffer. They may have to sell their cars, their televisions and even their furniture.'

'But it's not only us who will suffer. It'll be the grocers and the small shopkeepers. If it goes on they won't be able to keep giving credit and the shutters will be going up around here.'

'At this stage we won't settle for less than the full amount of our claim. I don't think we'll have much trouble getting support from other unions against the Tories because if we're chopped up they know they're next.'

'It's going to be a very long strike. We're fighting the whole Tory wages policy. The NCB couldn't improve their offer so they put holidays out as a carrot. But it's no good to us.'

Miner Bryn Gibbons told me, 'The Tories have made it very clear they're going to fight us but I'll tell you now all this talk about the miners crawling back to work in three weeks is rubbish.'

'We're in the front line'

'It's not just a question of wages. It's the whole business of the Tories' 7-per-cent income limit', said Maerdy face captain Ivor England.

'It's terrible, scandalous, living on the wages we get. Some of the jads with families would be better off on social security.'

'The Tories' 7 per cent has got to be broken, and we're in the front line.'

'If the Post Office workers had got the backing of the other unions they could have won. It's this spineless TUC and Labour leadership.'

'If they said we were all going to make a stand we'd topple this government tomorrow. It's not 1926 any more, and there's a huge organized working class in this country that could do it.'

Reg Jones is lodge secretary at Taff Merthyr where the 1,000 men voted 84 per cent for the strike despite the fact that their pit is on the jeopardy list.

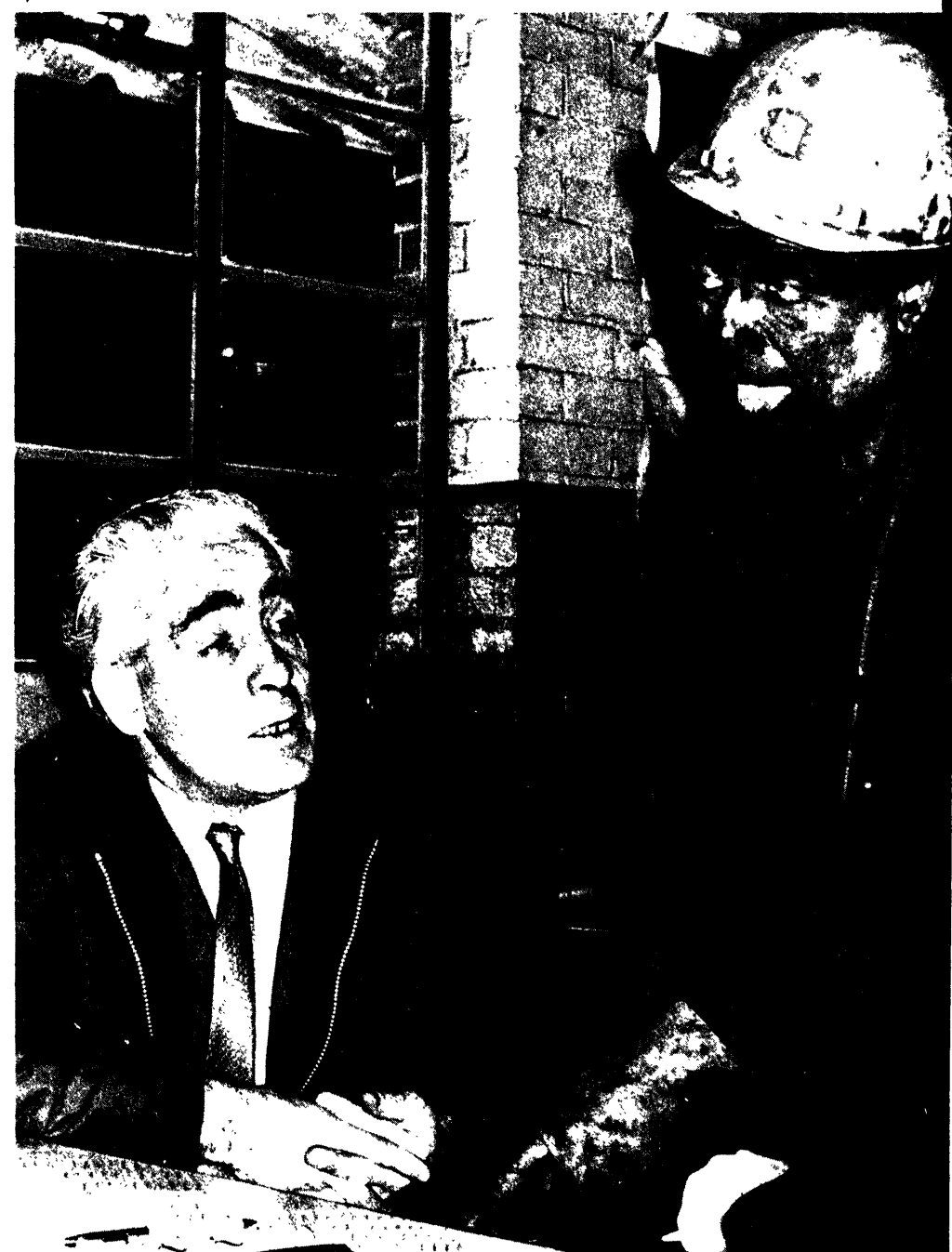
Feeling at the mine is so high that even the safety men will be pulled out, and Jones claims the men won't be satisfied with anything less than the 'maximum'.

'The officials will try and do the work of the safety men', said Jones 'I'll do them good to get down the pit instead of sitting in the offices all day.'

Although everyone is expected to join the strike—including the female canteen staff—pickets will be on duty today.

'It's going to be a very long strike. We're fighting the whole Tory wages policy. The NCB couldn't improve their offer so they put holidays out as a carrot. But it's no good to us.'

Miner Bryn Gibbons told me, 'The Tories have made it very clear they're going to fight us but I'll tell you now all this talk about the miners crawling back to work in three weeks is rubbish.'



Lodge secretary Reg Jones (l) with miner Bryn Gibbons at Merthyr's Taff colliery.

The house of Thorn

RATIONALIZATION is one of Sir Jules Thorn's favourite words, as thousands of workers have discovered to their cost over the past ten years.

Sir Jules has built up over that period a vast industrial empire, following a policy of merger and acquisition to enable the company to grow rapidly.

Since 1967, Thorn Electrical has swallowed up more than 23 other companies in order to achieve his aim of competing on equal terms with major manufacturers in N America, Japan and Europe.

The inevitable sequel to most of these mergers has been sackings and factory closures, aimed at integrating the merged firms with the rest of the empire.

After he had taken over Radio Rentals in 1969, for example, he told the board that 'substantial savings' were expected from the application of his industrial philosophy.

When British Radio Corporation merged with Radio Rentals, he had a similar message: 'Reorganization of production facilities... will reduce production costs in the future thus enabling us to meet competition in the UK and overseas.'

Policies like these have made Thorn Electrical into one of the top 20 British companies, with 74,000 employees and an annual turnover of £343m.

They have also led to a spectacular rise in Thorn's profits. In 1961 the group made a mere £4.1m, but last year's profit figures totalled £71.3m—over 17 times the total ten years before.

Directors' pay went up almost as dramatically over the period. From a life of penury on total emoluments of only £22,000, Thorn's directors now take home a staggering £121,000 each year. There are nine directors.

DOLE QUEUES

Sir Jules Thorn conducts his business activities from a skyscraper office block in London's St Martins Lane.

His chauffeur drives him to work in a black Rolls-Royce and a special executive lift conveys him to his opulent office. It's a far cry from the dole queues of Kirkby, Lancs, where the latest victims of his industrial surgery will land up if their factory occupation does not succeed.

They work at the Fisher-Bendix factory on Kirkby's industrial estate. The town is a notorious unemployment

An investigation by John Spencer of the £300m Thorn electrical empire which owns the now-occupied Fisher-Bendix plant, Merseyside.

blackspot, with jobless rates way above the national average.

Fisher-Bendix was part of the Parkinson Cowan combine which was making heavy losses. Its Kirkby washing-machine and spin-dryer plant was claimed to be losing money heavily, and there is documentary evidence to show that the Parkinson Cowan board was planning to transfer washing-machine production to the CARSA factory in fascist Spain.

In February, Parkinson management tried to ally

shop stewards' suspicions by telling them that washing-machine production still had a future at Kirkby.

Thorn took over in April, and the Investors Chronicle commented: 'Thorn considers the deal as straightforward industrial sense as most of Parkinson's products dovetail in neatly with its own, and there is plenty of scope for rationalization.' (Our emphasis.)

Within two months, the Kirkby workers were on the receiving end. On June 25, the new management handed

out redundancy notices to 350 workers at the plant, and promised the sack in the near future to another 150.

Not surprisingly, the workers walked out. Their strike lasted nine weeks with official backing from the engineers' union.

Thorn pressed ahead regardless. On August 12, the following curt communiqué from headquarters set out the company's future plans for the Kirkby workforce:

'In a statement dated June 1, 1971, announcing the cessation of production of Bendix machines and detailing company objectives, it was pointed out that future employment in the company was primarily dependent upon satisfying customers' requirements.

'This we have been unable to achieve. In addition

REDUNDANCIES

'a. There is a continued heavy loss situation at Kirkby.

'b. Various activities of Parkinson Cowan Ltd are being rationalized as a result of the acquisition by Thorn Electrical Industries.

'As a result of the above, the Thorn Parkinson Cowan board has decided with regret that there is no alternative but to discontinue production at Kirkby ultimately closing the factory and integrating the Bendix (sales and service), Constar and Radiator businesses within the existing Thorn organization.

'This inevitably means that there will be considerable redundancies between now and February/March 1972, when production will cease. For this reason, the company is commencing negotiations with the trade unions to conclude to redundancy/closure agreement.'

'The strength and militancy of the strike eventually forced Thorn to make some temporary concessions. They were forced to take back the sacked workers who had not accepted their redundancy pay. But they were still spoiling for a showdown with the Kirkby workers.'

TORY BACKING

The Mersey men have now been forced to occupy their factory to prevent the planned closure from going ahead.

They are determined to oppose Sir Jules' plan with all the force at their command.

Their struggle is part of the fight against the Tory government, which provides men like Sir Jules Thorn with the political sinews of war they need to implement their search for profit.



Gwylm Burton

'I am still under surveillance'

CONROY CASE:

WHEN Miss Conroy's solicitor made inquiries about how much bail would be needed to secure her release, he was unofficially told that it would be a staggering £50,000.

In the event she was granted bail of £200 in her own recognizance with four sureties totalling £20,000.

The sureties were acquired by Miss Conroy's parents with the help also of students at the polytechnic.

SURRENDER

Conditions of bail were that she had to report once a day to the Notting Hill police station, she had to surrender her passport and she had to give an undertaking not to attend political meetings or demonstrations.

Her car was taken away, so she had no means of transport. And £360 she had withdrawn from the bank the day before her arrest—November 23—was kept by the police for five weeks.

The father of Miss Conroy's baby son was also having difficulties. Greek-born Michael Sirros was arrested in Glasgow two days after

PAULINE CONROY, lecturer in social sciences at N London Polytechnic, was acquitted a week ago on charges of conspiracy to cause explosions. In this final article in a three-part series Alex Mitchell describes her release.

Miss Conroy. He was brought to London in handcuffs in the first class compartment of a BEA jet and interrogated by Commander Bond, the so-called Commander 'X' of the Special Branch.

They also knew of his arrest at a demonstration against the Greek military junta in Montreal. (He was discharged at the Montreal hearing.)

Miss Conroy and Mr Sirros are now re-united with their baby, Cormac Jackson, in their basement flat in Notting Hill.

They variously describe the past two-and-a-half months as 'a nightmare' or as being 'quite surreal'.

Miss Conroy is still waiting for the return of the two cases of books and papers removed from her flat.

'DEPLORABLE'

She feels that they are still under constant surveillance by the police. But when her counsel, Lord Gifford, sought a magistrates' order to stop police 'harassment', it was refused.

At the hearing Gifford said it was 'a deplorable case of political persecution'.

On the face of it, there's ample evidence to substantiate Gifford's remark.

...and Sir Jules' fortune

SIR JULES THORN, a multi-millionaire, is one of the richest men in Britain.

Of the 16 million ordinary shares in the company, Thorn's stake totals more than 7 million.

At present day stock values, this represents a holding worth £35m!

The table reproduced below gives an indication of the company's push for more profit.

1967/1968 Acquired:
British Lighting Industries
Metal Industries
Tucana
KMT (Holdings)
Keyswitch Relays
Potters Electrical Repair work

December 1970:
Gothic Electrical
Also merged interests with the Bendix Corporation of USA to form new subsidiary Thorn Bendix—with just over 50 per cent of the holdings.

1968/1969 Acquired:
Wessex Wholesale
Electricity Co
Greenpar Engineering
John L. Green (Engineers' Merchants)
London Electrical Co (Blackfriars)
White and Swales
International Janitor
Westmorland's (Electrical)
L. G. Lathbury

1969/1970:
Merged metal recovery interests with those of George Cohen 600 group to

form jointly owned Holdings Co—comprising George Cohen Sons & Co and subsidiaries.

Cox & Danks
John Allan (Glenpark)
Hughes Bolckow,
Shipbreaking Industries
The last four companies are all subsidiaries of Metal Industries (a subsidiary of Thorns).

Acquired:
Ralph E. Harding
ABR food machinery Co
Tyne and Wear
Electrical Co
Marshall & Taylor (Electrical)

December 1970:
Formed a joint company with General Telephone & Electronics International Inc of New York—the Thorn-General Telephone Co—Thorn subsidiary, with 50 per cent of share owned by GTE International (25 per cent of whose shares are owned by Thorn—therefore Thorn owns 62½ per cent of Thorn-General Telephone Co).

1971 Acquired:
Evershed & Vignoles
Including subsidiaries:
The Record Electrical Co
Evershed & Vignoles France
H. W. Sullivan
Parkinson Cowan and subsidiaries (notably Fisher-Bendix)
J. E. Mercer (fire protection Engineers)

20,000 laid off at Opel

THE W German subsidiary of the American General Motors Corporation has announced that one of its assembly plants will close for a few days this month following a decline in demand for its passenger cars.

The company, Adam Opel AG of Rueltheim near Frankfurt said its plants at Bochum in the industrial Ruhr area employing about 20,000 workers will suspend production for four days from January 24.

It blamed the international monetary crisis for a fall in export business and said domestic sales had dropped.

Volkswagen, W Germany's largest motor manufacturer, closed its car assembly lines during the past week and laid off about 100,000 of its 135,000 workers for similar reasons.

LATE NEWS

NEWS DESK
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CIRCULATION
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WEATHER

WEAKENING trough will remain stationary off E Scotland. A further trough will move NE into Ireland and SW districts during the day. Scotland, apart from the NE, where some rain may fall, will be dry. Fog patches are expected in the S at first.

Northern and eastern England will be dry, but fog, locally dense, may be slow to clear in places. N Ireland, Wales and the remainder of England will be cloudy with rain spreading from the SW during the day.

Temperatures will be normal in NE Scotland, otherwise it will be generally mild.

Outlook for Tuesday and Wednesday: Rain at times in most places. Temperatures near or rather above normal.