

Why are these men silent?

By MICHAEL BANDA

DESPITE intimidation by police, a vicious campaign of slander and distortion in the capitalist press—and the treacherous retreat of the TUC—the miners' audacity and determination continues to grow.

What we think



Scanlon retreats on pits backing

MINERS on strike against the Tory government and its pay policy were snubbed this week when the TUC Finance and General Purposes Committee refused to organize co-ordinated solidarity action. Some miners might have expected different action from a committee containing such self-proclaimed 'lefts' as Hugh Scanlon, president of the Engineers, and transport-union chief Jack Jones. Scanlon certainly had a great opportunity. His own members had their wage claim rejected by the employers, procedure was exhausted and his national committee met the same day as the TUC committee—its 'inner cabinet'. A miners-engineers alliance could have paved the way for the defeat of the Tory government. But Scanlon was absent from the 'inner cabinet' on the ground that he had to attend his national committee in the same building. Scanlon helped lead this committee into a decision to abandon any national action or negotiation on their pay claim, and enter only plant action for higher wages. The Fleet Street press then held out hopes that Scanlon was about to attend Wednesday's meeting of the TUC Economic Committee, where joint action with the power workers, who also have a wage claim pending, was to be discussed. Again he failed to turn up. Yesterday the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions endorsed Scanlon's abandonment of national claims, a decision which will affect some 3 million workers. Scanlon's actions are against the interests of engineers as well as miners. He abandons his own members to isolated disputes and at the same time helps TUC secretary Feather isolate the strikers in the coalfields. The CSEU has a long-standing plan which proposes the nationalization of the

engineering industry under workers' control. At a time of 1 million unemployed with major redundancies occurring every week in engineering surely this was the time to start a national struggle for this plan—and to link it with the miners who need workers' control in mining and the end of compensation payments. We have heard many brave words from Scanlon on the subject of workers' control. He has grasped the platforms of the self-styled Institute for Workers' Control and written in their publications. Now, however, we have had the real test. This same Scanlon was advocating industrial action to defeat the anti-union laws, and he warned that after they were carried we would have bitter industrial strife. Can we now avoid the conclusion that this was merely notice of his intention to retreat once the Industrial Relations Act came into force? The Stalinists of the British Communist Party and the 'Morning Star' continue to build up Scanlon and his union's executive as some sort of fighting leadership. But everyone knows that his decision to break off negotiations on the national pay claim was a result of the declaration by the engineering employers themselves in April 1971; that they would give no further all-round increases. The miners' strike and the engineering wage claim drive home the most essential lesson of all for the working class. There is no substitute—no matter what the 'left' phrases—for the building of Marxist leadership which fights against the reformist and Stalinist traitors and tells the working class in unmistakable terms what is involved: a unified struggle to make the Tories resign and return a Labour government to carry out nationalization under workers' control and without compensation.

PATHE LAO forces said yesterday they had overrun the Meo guerrilla headquarters at Long Cheng in Laos. The Pathe Lao news agency said the flag of the Lao Patriotic Liberation Army was now fluttering over the base. It described the Long Cheng base as the last stronghold of Gen Van Pao's guerrilla army and Thai mercenaries in the Plain of Jars region. It added that all resistance by the pro-government forces in the centre of Long Cheng was at an end.



MOST powerful position in the trade union movement in Britain is held by Victor Feather. On Monday, his 'inner cabinet' of the TUC issued a terse statement offering the miners 'great sympathy'. But instead of offering fighting leadership Feather and the union chiefs announced they were actually abdicating—NO summit meeting of transport unions would be called to co-ordinate the miners' struggle. Even right-wing miners' leader, Joe Gormley, had to tell the press he was 'disappointed' by this failure to give support, and in the pit towns miners began to say: 'The TUC is trying to do another 1926.'



THIS is the ambiguous statement of Jack Jones, leader of Britain's largest union, the Transport and General Workers: 'Our members are being asked to assist the miners in any way they can. Clearly, no picket lines will be crossed and there will be opposition to any abnormal movement of coal or other fuels in order to try and break the strike.' But what does he mean by 'abnormal movement'? Why isn't his call to his 1.6 million members absolutely precise—support the miners, no strike-breaking, no movement of ANY coal or other fuel?



ELECTRICIANS' union doesn't have a press officer, we were told when we phoned yesterday. When we pressed for a comment on the miners' strike the word was that 'the man who usually deals with the press says we have nothing to say'. The union is led by Frank Chapple, who is president of the Joint Industrial Council which bargains over wages and conditions in the power industry. Power stations now become the focus of attention in the miners' battle. But from Chapple so far only silence. No circular had been issued from the union headquarters giving any direction on the strike.



ONE of the key unions involved is the General and Municipal Workers' Union—but you wouldn't know it. More than 30,000 members of the G&MWU work in the power supply industry. The union's mansion headquarters, Ruxley Towers, said yesterday the members were working normally. One of the senior officials in the union is Jack Biggin, also secretary of the Joint Industrial Council. No statement has yet been made by Biggin or anyone else in the G&MWU on the miners' strike. President of the union is Lord Cooper, last year's TUC president, who proposes to register his union under the Industrial Relations Act.

Scottish miners' leader calls for General Strike



Pickets out with a message ignored by union leaders at Ferrybridge power station, Yorkshire, yesterday

A SCOTTISH miners' leader called yesterday for a General Strike to prevent the miners from being defeated. James Tennyson, agent for 10,000 Lothian miners, said he wanted to see engineers, power workers and transport men—who all had pay claims—striking alongside the miners, writes Stephen Johns. Speaking after an Edinburgh

meeting of strike committees from the Lothians area, Mr Tennyson said: 'I would rather have a General Strike and finish quickly than see starvation. With this government in much longer we will have a position of near starvation. And I would like to get this government out rather than see this. It is the view of everyone including our delegates that we have started a battle and it is the government we are

fighting,' said Mr Tennyson, a member of the Scottish miners' executive. Despite these militant words, however, demands for a central organized strike committee to mount solidarity action were ignored by the platform who argued that the power to do this lay with the local strike committees and union branches. The meeting, at which all branch committees and strike committees in the Lothians area were represented, called

on the National Union of Mineworkers' executive to keep the strike going until the claim was met in full. IAN YEATS reports from S Wales: Miners mounted round-the-clock pickets at 20 open-cast pits yesterday to halt coal supplies to local power stations and prevent oil being taken in. The move followed lodge meetings throughout the coalfield. Busloads of men are also planning to picket Cardiff's Roath dock where the French carrier Alain L D is scheduled to off-load 22,000 tons of US coal. Last year Cardiff, Swansea and Newport imported 1.6m tons of US and Australian coal with ships docking at the rate of about one per port every fortnight. Five further loads are expected at S Wales ports in the next ten days. The arrival yesterday of the Alain at Cardiff was being seen as a test of the miners' strength, but NUM officials were confident dockers would refuse to unload the cargo. They aimed to stop coal supplies being shifted to power stations from big coal feeder depots at Tilbury and Fulham. The stations have very small stocks on the ground and depend on daily supplies, said NUM president Joe Gormley yesterday. He added that pickets had already secured agreement that 1 million tons of continental coal stocked at Kingsnorth power station on the Isle of Grain would not be moved. Shop stewards on the Kingsnorth site yesterday met the picketing miners and pledged 100 per cent support. The Kingsnorth men also offered to take a collection to finance the picketing.

Tories plan clamp on students

TORY education chief Margaret Thatcher is now almost certainly considering registration as the means of politically controlling student-union finances. A Private Member's Bill entitled 'A Bill to Provide for the Registration of Student Unions and the Purposes Connected Therewith' is coming up for a second reading in parliament on February 25. In charge of it is Sir Gilbert Longden, Tory MP for Hereford SW. Longden is also the honorary secretary of the National Advisory Council on Education. Among those supporting the Bill is Tory MP Norman St John Stevas, secretary of the Federation of Conservative Students. Earlier this week when Mrs Thatcher announced her postponement of the changes in student-union financing for a year, Stevas announced that this move was 'particularly encouraging' for his federation. It meant, he said, that there was now ample legislative time for the government to intro-

duce a registrar which lack of parliamentary time had previously made infeasible. Stevas has been the leading advocate for 'the introduction of a registrar and objects to the present consultative document on the basis that it is awkward to put into operation. The postponement, which Wednesday's 'Morning Star' called an 'initial victory' for the opposition to Thatcher's proposals, was also welcomed by the Conservative students' chairman, Andrew Neil. It shows 'the government is responsive to responsible student pressure', was his comment. Also supporting registration for student unions is Angus Maude, Tory MP for Stratford-on-Avon. Maude is perhaps best-known for his regular weekly column in the right-wing 'Sunday Express'. 'Take for example, his contribution on Sunday, January 2: '...freedom cannot survive without authority. There must be an accepted central authority charged with the making and enforcement of acceptable laws.' (Emphasis in the original.) Commenting on the BBC's recent debate on N Ireland, Maude continued:



'What is going on now can no longer be tolerated. In the end, it is our freedom that is at stake. A tiny minority cannot be allowed to undermine the civilization that gives us our right to live in peace and without fear.' (Maude's emphasis.) This is what he says about the BBC! All students should now take note. The Tory government is not going to retreat on its proposals for attack on miners' engineers, for driving unemployment or for its attack on student unions. NUS president Digby Jacks and the Communist Party, by continuing the illusion that students will be able to gain a victory over the Tories on their own, are preparing a betrayal of students' interests.

Mujib keeps left out of new assembly

SHEIKH MUJIBUR Rahman intends to take a firm grip on power in Bangla Desh and exclude the left-wing parties from his government.

BY TOM KEMP

This was shown when he stepped down from the presidency and took office as Prime Minister in a government composed entirely of members of his Awami League party.

All nine Ministers were members of the previous government, which functioned during the conflict with Pakistan.

Mujib announced that a Constitutional Assembly would be set up composed of the elected members of the national and provincial assemblies.

This confines it to those who took part in the elections held while the country was part of Pakistan. It excludes the National Awami Party, which boycotted the elections.

The assembly will be certainly more to the right than it would be if elections were held today.

Mujib's aim is a British-style parliamentary system in which 'the President shall in the exercise of all his functions act in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister'.

A new Chief Justice has been sworn in wearing a British-type wig. Later he administered the oath of office to the new President, Dr Abu Sayeed Choudhury.

PAKISTAN has severed diplomatic relations with Bulgaria following that country's recognition of Bangla Desh.

Five other countries have so far recognized Bangla Desh and others are expected to do so shortly, including the Soviet Union. In the United States Senator Hubert Humphrey has also called for recognition.

The Pakistan government has stated that there can be no meaningful talks with Sheikh Mujib while Indian troops remain in Bangla Desh, while the Indian representative at the UN said that troops would be withdrawn as soon as both countries considered it practicable.

What this means is that the Indian troops will ensure that the left-wing guerrillas are disarmed so that Sheikh Mujib's government can be firmly established.

Mass picket for Bendix plant

A MEETING of Merseyside shop stewards called by the Liverpool Trades Council to discuss the Fisher-Bendix occupation decided to hold a mass picket tomorrow at 11 a.m. outside the factory.

It decided on a 24-hour town strike to be organized by the Merseyside Trades Councils Unemployment Committee and stewards in the area.

The meeting also demanded the TUC back all goods of the Thorn combine which owns Fisher-Bendix and call a 24-hour General Strike against unemployment.

workers press

AND THE MINERS



WE ARE SURE regular readers will agree that our coverage of the miners' strike over the last week has outstripped that of any other newspaper, including those with enormous resources for slandering and attacking the strikers. And we're keeping up the pressure. Today—besides the second part of an exclusive interview with miners' secretary Lawrence Daly on page two—we have staff reporters Stephen Johns, Ian Yeats and Philip Wade all filing up-to-the-minute news and features from the coalfields. ON PAGE 4 we carry a special investigation of the great 'safety' scare—and miners' reaction to it.

£1,250 Fund rises to £479.60

YESTERDAY'S post raised £141.74, bringing January's total up to £479.60. A great effort.

The determination of the miners, the mass movement in Merseyside against unemployment and the growing support for the Right-to-Work campaign shows that everywhere, more and more trade unionists are joining the fight to defeat the Tory government.

This is why sales of Workers Press are increasing and your magnificent support for our Fund gets better each day. But the Tories leave us no time for sitting back. We must push ahead as never before. Raise extra if you can for January's Fund and let's make it a record month. Post all donations immediately to:

Workers Press
January Appeal Fund,
186a Clapham High Street,
London SW4

YOUNG SOCIALISTS

Right to work campaign begins

We will be marching from GLASGOW FEBRUARY 14 to LIVERPOOL FEBRUARY 19 and SWANSEA FEBRUARY 19. To a mass rally at EMPIRE POOL, WEMBLEY on MARCH 12

WANTED URGENTLY

Loan of vehicles—road-worthy vans, cars (reasonable hire will be considered)
Accommodation
Cooking equipment
Tinned food
Finance
Brass/jazz bands
Please tick box where applicable.
NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE NUMBER
Please complete above form and post to:
Clive Norris, national secretary
Right-to-Work campaign
186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4.
Or phone 01-822 7023.

THE DAILY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Why are these men silent?

By MICHAEL BANDA

DESPITE intimidation by police, a vicious campaign of slander and distortion in the capitalist press—and the treacherous retreat of the TUC—the miners' audacity and determination continues to grow.

What we think

Scanlon retreats on pits backing

MINERS on strike against the Tory government and its pay policy were snubbed this week when the TUC Finance and General Purposes Committee refused to organize co-ordinated solidarity action. Some miners might have expected different action from a committee containing such self-proclaimed 'lefts' as Hugh Scanlon, president of the Engineers, and transport-union chief Jack Jones. Scanlon certainly had a great opportunity. His own members had their wage claim rejected by the employers, procedure was exhausted and his national committee met the same day as the TUC committee—its 'inner cabinet' A miners-engineers alliance could have paved the way for the defeat of the Tory government. But Scanlon was absent from the 'inner cabinet' on the ground that he had to attend his national committee in the same building. Scanlon helped lead this committee into a decision to abandon any national action or negotiation on their pay claim, and enter only plant action for higher wages. The Fleet Street press then held out hopes that Scanlon was about to attend Wednesday's meeting of the TUC Economic Committee, where joint action with the power workers, who also have a wage claim pending, was to be discussed. Again he failed to turn up. Yesterday the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions endorsed Scanlon's abandonment of national claims, a decision which will affect some 3 million workers. Scanlon's actions are against the interests of engineers as well as miners. He abandons his own members to isolated disputes and at the same time helps TUC secretary Feather isolate the strikers in the coalfields. The CSEU has a long-standing plan which proposes the nationalization of the

engineering industry under workers' control. At a time of 1 million unemployed with major redundancies occurring every week in engineering, surely this was the time to start a national struggle for this plan—and to link it with the miners who need workers' control in mining and the end of compensation payments. We have heard many brave words from Scanlon on the subject of workers' control. He has graced the platforms of the self-styled Institute for Workers' Control and written in their publications. Now, however, we have had the real test. This same Scanlon was advocating industrial action to defeat the anti-union laws, and he warned that after they were carried we would have bitter industrial strife. Can we now avoid the conclusion that this was merely notice of his intention to retreat once the Industrial Relations Act came into force? The Stalinists of the British Communist Party and the 'Morning Star' continue to build up Scanlon and his union's executive as some sort of fighting leadership. But everyone knows that his decision to break off negotiations on the national pay claim was a result of the declaration by the engineering employers themselves in April 1971; that they would give no further all-round increases. The miners' strike and the engineering wage claim drive home the most essential lesson of all for the working class. There is no substitute—no matter what the 'left' phrases—for the building of Marxist leadership which fights against the reformist and Stalinist traitors and tells the working class in unmistakable terms what is involved: a unified struggle to make the Tories resign and return a Labour government to carry out nationalization under workers' control and without compensation.

PATHEE LAO forces said yesterday they had overrun the Meo guerrilla headquarters at Long Cheng in N Laos. The Pathee Lao news agency said the flag of the Lao Patriotic Liberation Army was now fluttering over the base. It described the Long Cheng base as the last stronghold of Gen Van Pao's guerrilla army and Thai mercenaries in the Plain of Jars region. It added that all resistance by the pro-government forces in the centre of Long Cheng was at an end.



MOST powerful position in the trade union movement in Britain is held by Victor Feather. On Monday, his 'inner cabinet' of the TUC issued a terse statement offering the miners 'great sympathy'. But instead of offering fighting leadership Feather and the union chiefs announced they were actually abdicating—NO summit meeting of transport unions would be called to co-ordinate the miners' struggle. Even right-wing miners' leader, Joe Gormley, had to tell the press he was 'disappointed' by this failure to give support, and in the pit towns miners began to say: 'The TUC is trying to do another 1926.'



THIS is the ambiguous statement of Jack Jones, leader of Britain's largest union, the Transport and General Workers:

'Our members are being asked to assist the miners in any way they can. Clearly, no picket lines will be crossed and there will be opposition to any abnormal movement of coal or other fuels in order to try and break the strike.'

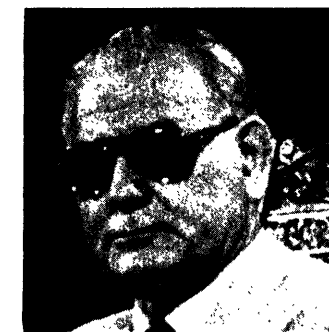
But what does he mean by 'abnormal movement'? Why isn't his call to his 1.6 million members absolutely precise—support the miners, no strike-breaking, no movement of ANY coal or other fuel?



ELECTRICIANS' union doesn't have a press officer, we were told when we phoned yesterday. When we pressed for a comment on the miners' strike the word was that 'the man who usually deals with the press says we have nothing to say.'

The union is led by Frank Chapple, who is president of the Joint Industrial Council which bargains over wages and conditions in the power industry. Power stations now become the focus of attention in the miners' battle. But from Chapple so far only silence.

No circular has been issued from the union headquarters giving any direction on the strike.



ONE of the key unions involved is the General and Municipal Workers' Union—but you wouldn't know it. More than 30,000 members of the G&MWU work in the power supply industry. The union's mansion headquarters, Ruxley Towers, said yesterday the members were working normally.

One of the senior officials in the union is Jack Biggin, also secretary of the Joint Industrial Council. No statement has yet been made by Biggin or anyone else in the G&MWU on the miners' strike.

President of the union is Lord Cooper, last year's TUC president, who proposes to register his union under the Industrial Relations Act.

Scottish miners' leader calls for General Strike



Pickets out with a message ignored by union leaders at Ferrybridge power station, Yorkshire, yesterday

A SCOTTISH miners' leader called yesterday for a General Strike to prevent the miners from being defeated.

James Tennyson, agent for 10,000 Lothian miners, said he wanted to see engineers, power workers and transport men—who all had pay claims—striking alongside the miners, writes Stephen Johns. Speaking after an Edinburgh

meeting of strike committees from the Lothians area, Mr Tennyson said: 'I would rather have a General Strike and finish quickly than see starvation.'

'With this government in much longer we will have a position of near starvation. And I would like to get this government out rather than see this.'

'It is the view of everyone including our delegates that we have started a battle and it is the government we are

fighting,' said Mr Tennyson, a member of the Scottish miners' executive.

Despite these militant words, however, demands for a central organized strike committee to mount solidarity action were ignored by the platform who argued that the power to do this lay with the local strike committees and union branches.

The meeting, at which all branch committees and strike committees in the Lothians area were represented, called

on the National Union of Mineworkers' executive to keep the strike going until the claim was met in full.

IAN YEATS reports from S Wales: Miners' mounted round-the-clock pickets at 20 open-cast pits yesterday to halt coal supplies to local power stations and prevent oil being taken in.

The move followed lodge meetings throughout the coalfield.

Busloads of men are also planning to picket Cardiff's Royal dock where the French carrier Alain L D is scheduled to off-load 22,000 tons of US coal.

Last year Cardiff, Swansea and Newport imported 1.6m tons of US and Australian coal with ships docking at the rate of about one per port every fortnight.

Five further loads are expected at S Wales ports in the next ten days.

The arrival yesterday of the Alain at Cardiff was being seen as a test of the miners' strength, but NUM officials were confident dockers would refuse to unload the cargo.

PICKETS also arrived in the London area for the first time yesterday.

They aimed to stop coal supplies being shifted to power stations from big coal feeder depots at Tilbury and Fulham.

The stations have very small stocks on the ground and depend on daily supplies, said NUM president Joe Gormley yesterday.

He added that pickets had already secured agreement that 1 million tons of continental coal stocked at Kingsnorth power station on the Isle of Grain would not be moved.

Shop stewards on the Kingsnorth site yesterday met the picketing miners and pledged 100 per cent support. The Kingsnorth men also offered to take a collection to finance the picketing.

Tories plan clamp on students

TORY education chief Margaret Thatcher is now almost certainly considering registration as the means of politically controlling student-union finances.

A Private Member's Bill entitled 'A Bill to Provide for the Registration of Student Unions and the Purposes Connected Therewith' is coming up for a second reading in parliament on February 25.

In charge of it is Sir Gilbert Longden, Tory MP for Hereford SW. Longden is also the Federation secretary of the National Advisory Council on Education.

Among those supporting the Bill is Tory MP Norman St John Stevas, secretary of the Federation of Conservative Students. 'Take for example, his contribution on Sunday, January 2: "...freedom cannot survive without authority. There must be an accepted central authority charged with the making and enforcement of acceptable laws.' (Emphasis in the original.)

Commenting on the BBC's recent debate on N Ireland, Maude continued:

duce a registrar which lack of parliamentary time had previously made infeasible.

Stevas has been the leading advocate for 'the introduction of a registrar and objects to the present consultative document on the basis that it is awkward to put into operation.

The postponement, which Wednesday's 'Morning Star' called an 'initial victory' for the opposition to Thatcher's proposals, was also welcomed by the Conservative students' chairman, Andrew Neil. It shows 'the government is responsive to responsible student pressure', was his comment.

All students should now take note. The Tory government is not going to retreat on its proposals for attack on miners, engineers, for driving up unemployment or for its attack on student unions. NUS president Digby Jacks and the Communist Party, by continuing the illusion that students will be able to gain a victory over the Tories on their own, are preparing a betrayal of students' interests.



Thatcher

'What is going on now can no longer be tolerated.

'In the end, it is our freedom that is at stake. A tiny minority cannot be allowed to undermine the civilization that gives us our right to live in peace and without fear.' (Maude's emphasis.)

This is what he says about the BBC.

All students should now take note. The Tory government is not going to retreat on its proposals for attack on miners, engineers, for driving up unemployment or for its attack on student unions.

Mujib keeps left out of new assembly

SHEIKH MUJIBUR Rahman intends to take a firm grip on power in Bangla Desh and exclude the left-wing parties from his government.

BY TOM KEMP

This was shown when he stepped down from the presidency and took office as Prime Minister in a government composed entirely of members of his Awami League party.

All nine Ministers were members of the previous government, which functioned during the conflict with Pakistan.

Mujib announced that a Constitutional Assembly would be set up composed of the elected members of the national and provincial assemblies.

This confines it to those who took part in the elections held while the country was part of Pakistan. It excludes the National Awami Party, which boycotted the elections.

The assembly will be certainly more to the right than it would be if elections were held today.

Mujib's aim is a British-style parliamentary system in which 'the President shall in the exercise of all his functions act in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister'.

A new Chief Justice has been sworn in wearing a British-type wig. Later he administered the oath of office to the new President, Dr Abu Sayeed Choudhury.

PAKISTAN has severed diplomatic relations with Bulgaria following that country's recognition of Bangla Desh.

Five other countries have so far recognized Bangla Desh and others are expected to do so shortly, including the Soviet Union. In the United States Senator Hubert Humphrey has also called for recognition.

The Pakistan government has stated that there can be no meaningful talks with Sheikh Mujib, while Indian troops remain in Bangla Desh, while the Indian representative at the UN said that troops would be withdrawn as soon as both countries considered it practicable.

What this means is that the Indian troops will ensure that the left-wing guerrillas are disarmed so that Sheikh Mujib's government can be firmly established.

Mass picket for Bendix plant

A MEETING of Merseyside shop stewards called by the Liverpool Trades Council to discuss the Fisher-Bendix occupation decided to hold a mass picket tomorrow at 11 a.m. outside the factory.

It decided on a 24-hour token strike to be organized by the Merseyside Trades Councils Unemployment Committee and stewards in the area.

The meeting also demanded the TUC back all goods of the Thorn combine which owns Fisher-Bendix and call a 24-hour General Strike against unemployment.

workers press

AND THE MINERS



WE ARE SURE regular readers will agree that our coverage of the miners' strike over the last week has outstripped that of any other newspaper, including those with enormous resources for slandering and attacking the strikers.

And we're keeping up the pressure.

Today—besides the second part of an exclusive interview with miners' secretary Lawrence Daly on page two we have staff reporters Stephen Johns, Ian Yeats and Phil W. Wade all filing up-to-the-minute news and features from the coalfields.

ON PAGE 4 we carry a special investigation of the great 'safety' scare—and miners' reaction to it.

£1,250 Fund rises to £479.60

YESTERDAY'S post raised £141.74, bringing January's total up to £479.60. A great effort.

The determination of the miners, the mass movement in Merseyside against unemployment and the growing support for the Right-to-Work campaign shows that everywhere, more and more trade unionists are joining the fight to defeat the Tory government.

This is why sales of Workers Press are increasing and your magnificent support for our Fund gets better each day. But the Tories leave us no time for sitting back. We must push ahead as never before.

Raise extra if you can for January's Fund and let's make it a record month. Post all donations immediately to:

Workers Press
January Appeal Fund,
166a Clapham High Street,
London SW4

YOUNG SOCIALISTS

Right to work campaign begins

We will be marching from GLASGOW FEBRUARY 5 — LIVERPOOL FEBRUARY 19 SWANSEA FEBRUARY 19
To a mass rally at EMPIRE POOL, WEMBLEY on MARCH 12

WANTED URGENTLY

- Loan of vehicles—road-worthy vans, cars (reasonable hire will be considered)
 - Accommodation
 - Cooking equipment
 - Tinned food
 - Finance
 - Brass/jazz bands
- Please tick box where applicable.

NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE NUMBER
Please complete above form and post to:
Clive Norris, national secretary
Right-to-Work campaign
166a Clapham High Street, London, SW4.
Or phone 01-822 7023.

IRELAND: BACKGROUND

PART FOUR

JACK GALE continues the history of Irish working-class struggle.

'On Tory principles Ireland must be kept'

PARNELL and some other leaders of the Irish Land League were briefly imprisoned in 1881, but were soon released on promises of good behaviour under the 'Kilmainham Treaty'.

However, the intensified activities of 'Captain Moonlight' (Irish peasant violence against the landlords and their property), the increasing boycott of people taking over from evicted tenants, and finally the Phoenix Park Assassinations led to the Crimes Act—the imposition of what amounted to martial law.

But meanwhile, working-class pressure throughout the United Kingdom for the extension of the vote led to the Franchise Bill of 1884 and this raised the Irish electorate from 222,000 to 740,000.

An immediate effect of this was to increase Parnell's bargaining power in the British parliament. At first alarmed by this, Gladstone seized an opportunity to resign on a minor issue—actually a clause in the budget on taxes on spirits!

The Conservatives returned to power, fully sharing Queen Victoria's view of the Irish as 'uncivilized, unwashed and superstitious,' and thinking of Ireland in terms of coercion, famine relief and protection for the landlords.

Spreading

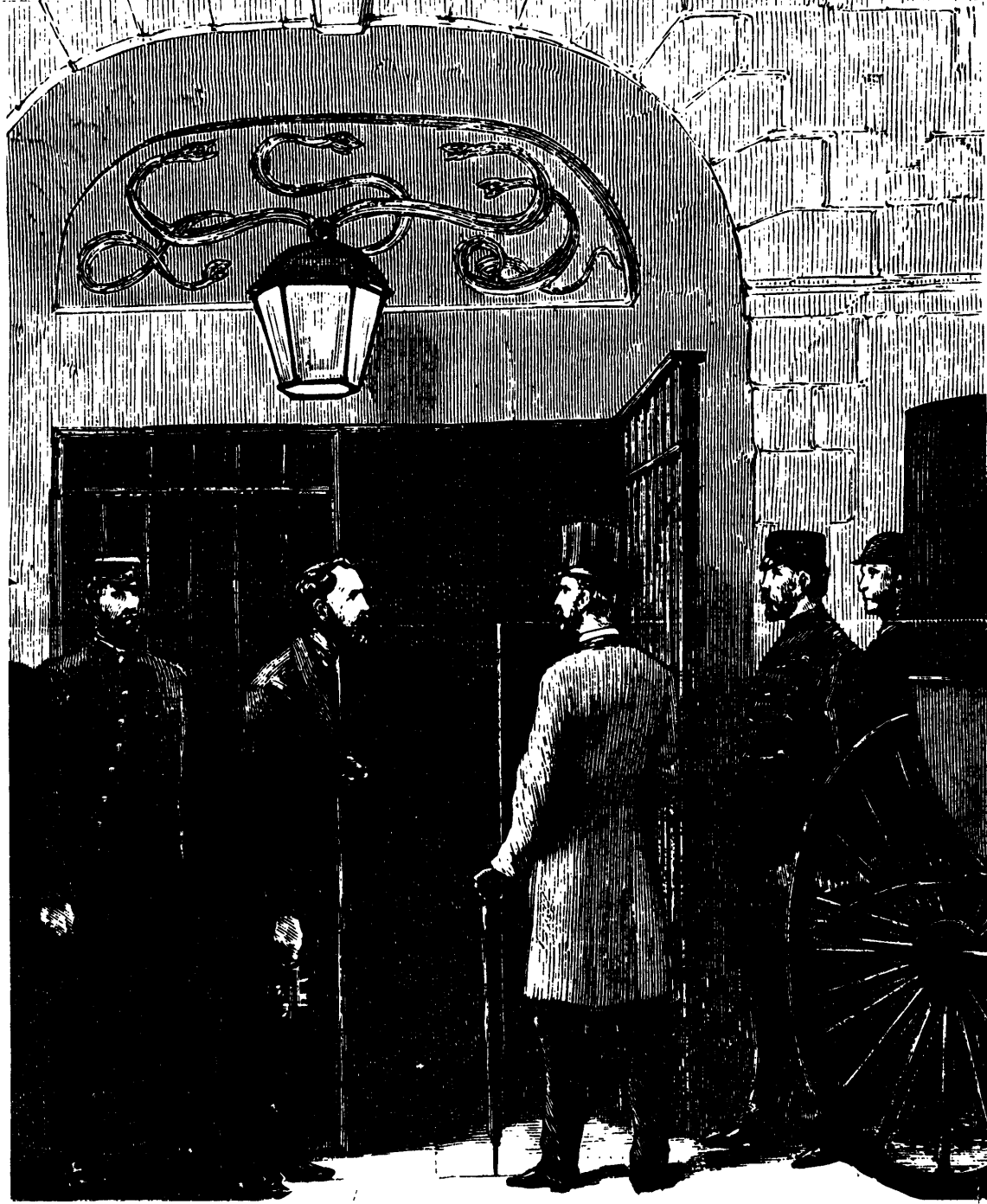
A minority government, the Tories depended on the votes of Parnell and his men. But the Prime Minister, Salisbury, was an English landowner and therefore wished to protect the rights of his class in Ireland and also to prevent tenant agitation from spreading to England.

Salisbury's position was clear: 'On Tory principles, Ireland must be kept, like India, at all hazards; by persuasion if possible, if not by force... the greatest single danger lies in the sentimental notion that Ireland ought to be governed in accordance with the desires of disloyal and irresponsible Irishmen.'

In 1885, however, Salisbury was dependent on the Irish vote at Westminster and therefore, against his personal desires, he was unable to renew the Crimes Act.

But another factor in this was

1. C. C. O'Brien, 'Parnell and his Party'.
2. 'The Letters of Queen Victoria', Ed. G. E. Buckle.
3. Article by Salisbury in the 'Quarterly Review', October, 1872, quoted in L. P. Curtis 'Coercion and Conciliation in Ireland', pp. 32-33.



Parnell arrives at Kilmainham prison for his brief confinement there in 1881.

that the more far-sighted Tories—such as Randolph Churchill—knew they could rely on the scoundrel Parnell to 'calm the Irish'.

And Parnell was quite willing to co-operate with the Tories. Randolph Churchill testified: 'I told Parnell... that if the Tories took office I would not consent to renew the Crimes Act. Parnell replied "in that case you will have the Irish vote".'

Parnell issued a manifesto urging the 150,000 Irish voters in England to support the Tories.

Parallel to this 'old chums' Winston S. Churchill, 'Churchill' pp. 390-395.

act with Parnell was the task set to the new Tory Viceroy in Ireland, Lord Caernarvon, to convince the Parnellites, the Catholic hierarchy and, if possible, the Irish tenantry that their best interests lay in co-operating with the Conservative Party.

But this scheme ran into difficulties.

Parnell's National League, with which he had tried to replace the Land League by emphasizing nationalism rather than the land question was not always the tame instrument that he had hoped for.

Caernarvon reported that those branches controlled by younger men 'frequently assumed to revise and judge the relations of landlord and tenant.'

'The ice is thin' moaned the worthy lord. And—mixing his metaphors—I stand on a foothold so narrow that the slightest breath would overthrow me.'

Parnell, needless to say, was selling out all along the line.

He had a private interview with Caernarvon in which he agreed:

1 That no plan which did away with the Act of Union could be accepted by the Tories, but that he would collaborate with them nonetheless.

2 That since the actions of 'extremists' were 'alarming' he would be responsible for keeping all Irish activities 'within the bounds of law'.

3 That private property should be respected everywhere.

4 That the Irish land question was a matter for the imperial (Westminster) parliament.

But failing harvests led to increasing poverty in Ireland and consequently to more and more evictions. And in times of famine, the money lenders (the

5. Curtis op cit.

6. O'Brien op cit.

'gombeen men' charged as much as 58 per cent interest.

In such conditions, despite Parnell, 'moonlighting' and boycotting increased.

So the more timid Tories began to lean towards a limited 'Home Rule' settlement on the lines of the Parnell-Caernarvon interview.

Then Gladstone, the honourable 'Grand Old Man' of historical myth, seeing that the Liberal majority over the Tories in the 1885 election was exactly cancelled out by the number of Parnellite seats, had a sudden conversion to Home Rule.

This remarkable change not only caused consternation in the Liberal ranks and fury amongst the Tories, it led to Queen Victoria denouncing Gladstone as—wait for it—a 'wild fanatic' (!)

Sub-human

(Queen Victoria was convinced, throughout her 60 inglorious years, that anyone not born into the Tory Party was sub-human. Her Gillie—John Brown—was probably one of the first Conservative working men.)

Since the Tories would on no account grant Home Rule, Gladstone could now outbid them for the votes of the unprincipled Parnell.

This was known to both Gladstone and Parnell since these two horse-traders were in constant touch with each other through the intermediary of Mrs O'Shea—a lady who was obviously useful in more ways than one.

The Tories—now Parnell was of no further use to them—swung 180 degrees round to outright coercion, with the erstwhile 'reasonable' Randolph Churchill leading the pack.

Many Liberals went with the Tories, but the combined vote of Gladstone and Parnell won the day and Gladstone was back, less than a year after ducking out of office on the same issue.

But the Conservative Party was already on the path of revolt. The Constitution is only sacred when it is protecting them.

Randolph Churchill openly declared: 'I should not hesitate, if other circumstances were favourable, to agitate Ulster even to resistance beyond constitutional limits.'

Churchill travelled to Ulster to 'play the Orange card', addressing mass meetings under the slogan: 'Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right!'

Along the same lines, the Tory Primrose League grew to a membership of over 1 million by 1891, building up branches of merchants, manufacturers and frightened petty-bourgeois in Ireland.

To the British bourgeoisie, busy acquiring vast tracts of land and trading rights in Africa and the Far East, Home Rule was a spectre to inspire terror.

If Ireland could go, could the Empire be dismembered? How safe was private property?

No wonder the Liberal manufacturers of the Midlands forged an alliance with the Conservatives against their own Party!

Gladstone's proposal for Home Rule was, in fact, far from revolutionary.

There were to be two separate voting 'orders'—one specially designed to represent the loyalist minority through higher property qualifications—and each of these orders could veto the other's proposals.

Reaction

Matters concerning the Crown, imperial defence, foreign relations, commerce, customs and excise and currency were specifically excluded from Irish control and were to be settled at Westminster.

Irish members were to be excluded from the British parliament, but Ireland was to contribute one-fifth of the cost of the United Kingdom's imperial expenditure.

But it was still too much for the Tories.

Salisbury made a speech in which he listed a racial scale of political maturity, beginning with the English and ending with the Hottentots, and putting the Irish two-thirds of the way down.

The Bill was defeated, amid wild scenes of ruling-class relief, and in the ensuing election the Unionists won a majority of 118.

Reaction, terrorized not only by Irish nationalism but also by working-class riots against unemployment and poverty in London, derry and Cardiff, was in full swing.

'The Times', for instance, published 'A Song for the Unionists' by the decadent poet Swinburne, which denounced the Irish working class as 'thieves and murderers, hands yet red with blood, and tongues yet black with lies.'

The Tories appointed Balfour Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Known as 'Artful Arthur' to his friends and 'Pretty Fanny' to his close friends, Balfour had two qualifications for the job—he knew nothing about Ireland and he was the Prime Minister's nephew. But, like all Tories, he had a deep hatred of the Irish poor.

A letter from him to Salisbury reads:

My dear Uncle Robert, I am here enjoying golf and comparative repose... the proper method of handling the police in the face of a mob appears to be this—they should be divided into two parties.

'One should be armed with batons... (for) dispersing the mob or otherwise enforcing the law. The others, if they are called upon to support the baton party, should not do so by clubbing their rifles, and acting as baton men armed with an interior kind of baton, as they have done, but they should either fire or charge with fixed bayonets.'

7. See Winston S. Churchill, 'Churchill', Vol. 2, pp. 28-29 and 58-66.

8. See Curtis, op cit. p. 103.

9. Appendix 1, 'Coercion and Conciliation in Ireland', Curtis pp. 439,440.



Randolph Churchill: played the 'Orange Card'. Here he leads Lodge members through Belfast in 1886.

Another letter from Balfour to his uncle deals with evictions:

'This elaborate resistance to evictions is becoming intolerable. It is rendered possible largely by the legal fiction that the police have nothing to do but protect the sheriff's officers.'

'Resistance to evictions is part of a regular conspiracy for providing topics to agitators and for showing as far as possible the weakness of the law. Hundreds of persons assemble at these scenes exhibiting every mark of open sympathy with the law-breakers, and cheering whenever the defenders of the elaborately fortified houses succeed in inflicting some injury upon the police.'

'The whole day is not infrequently wasted over a single siege. The police are seriously injured with every sort of missile and weapon in the very presence of the military; and great expense is incurred by the State.'

Balfour therefore issued a memorandum:

10. Curtis, pp. 439-440.

11. Curtis p. 441.

The military forces present on these occasions are not to be regarded as there simply to over-awe the crowd; they are there also to protect the police.

The military forces should therefore be used without hesitation.

The great waste of time which constantly occurs in conducting these sieges is due to the fact that while the besieged have made every preparation for resistance, the sheriff and the landlords have made no preparations for attack... This is not to be tolerated and therefore each divisional magistrate must be provided with such apparatus as may enable him to overcome serious resistance.

In a footnote to his uncle, Balfour makes clear that by 'proper appliances' he means battering rams and the means to set fire to the tenants' houses.

Balfour was as good as his word.

His first act was to intensify coercion through the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, which introduced summary jurisdiction, special courts, and the abolition of the right to a trial.

The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was given special powers to name any area a 'Proclaimed District', which meant he could ban all meetings, prosecute newspapers, and under a 'special proclamation' name any organization or group of people who could then be gaoled under the Act.

The first prosecution under this Act was conducted by a young lawyer named Edward Carson. Carson subsequently conducted prosecution after prosecution and built his political career on them, earning himself the name of 'Coercion Carson'.

Carson was also present when demonstrators were shot down at Mitchelstown, County Cork, in 1887.

Mitchelstown is known in Irish history as 'the Irish Petrol'.

Subsequently the Social Democratic Federation organized a 50,000-strong demonstration in London against the arrest of an Irish leader (William O'Brien) and against rising unemployment and hunger throughout the United Kingdom.

Police violence on this occasion—November 13, 1887—led to it being recorded in working class history as 'Bloody Sunday'.

The Tories' coercion measures were accompanied by meagre reforms in the shape of the Land Acts of 1887 and 1891, but these did nothing to improve the lot of the Irish peasants.

In 1892, Gladstone returned to office with a majority again dependent on the Irish MPs, and the following year his Home Rule Bill was passed by the Commons but rejected by the Lords. The Liberals quietly accepted the right of the aristocracy to overthrow the decisions of the House of Commons and Home Rule was again shelved.

Principles

In 1895 the Conservatives (by now, having fused with the Liberal Unionists, they had become the Conservative and Unionist Party) came in again and remained in office for ten years.

The Liberals returned in 1906 with a majority so large that they did not require the votes of the Irish Nationalists in parliament.

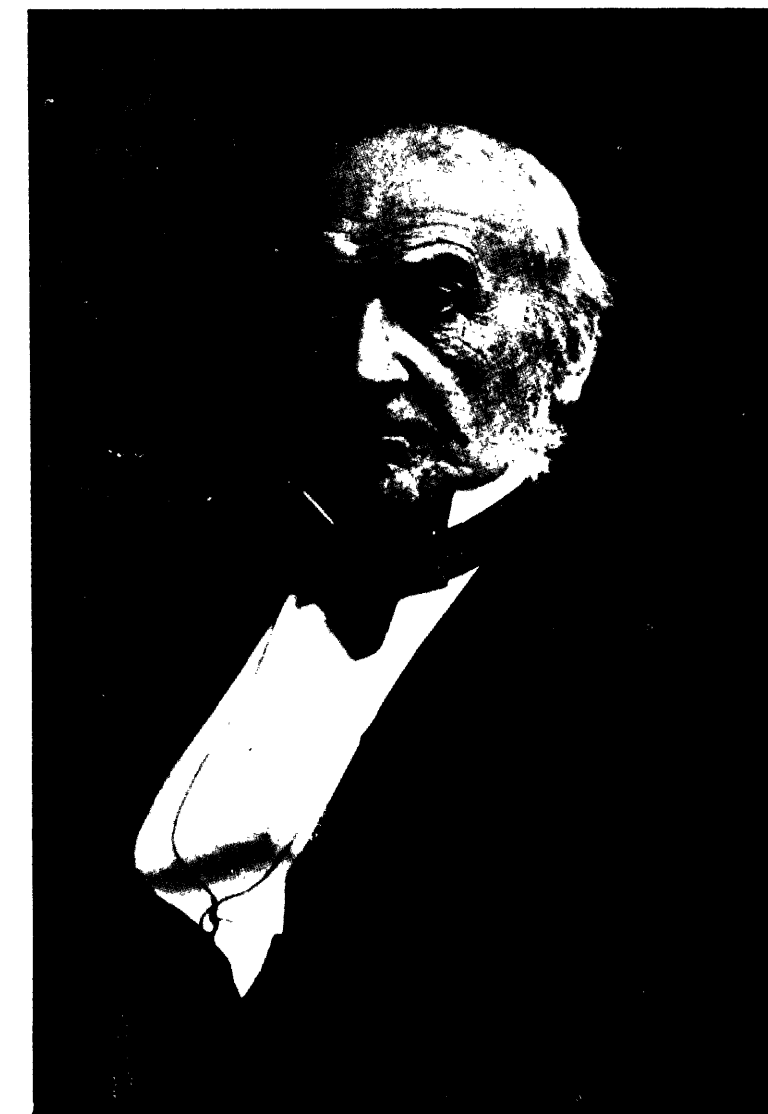
And so—surprise, surprise!—they forgot all about Home Rule for Ireland.

But when, in 1910, a general election again gave the Irish Nationalist MPs (now 80-strong) a decisive position at Westminster, Home Rule again became a great Liberal principle amongst the parliamentary gentlemen, and the Liberal premier Asquith introduced a Home Rule Bill in 1912.

It cannot be stressed too often that the Liberal Party never promoted a Home Rule Bill except when at the mercy of the Irish vote in parliament.

Meanwhile, the Tories in Ulster were preparing to fight, and the Tories in England were preparing to betray.

CONTINUED TOMORROW



Gladstone's proposal for Home Rule was defeated, amid wild scenes of ruling class relief, even though it was far from revolutionary.

Subscribe! The daily paper that leads the fight against the Tories.

workers press

£17.12 for 12 months (312 issues)
£8.56 for 6 months (156 issues)
£4.28 for 3 months (78 issues)

If you want to take Workers Press twice a week the rates are:
£1.32 for 3 months (24 issues)
£5.28 for 12 months (96 issues)

Fill in the form below NOW and send to:
Circulation Dept., Workers Press, 186a Clapham High St., London, SW4.

I would like to take out a subscription to Workers Press.

Days required MONDAY THURSDAY
TUESDAY FRIDAY
WEDNESDAY SATURDAY

Or Full subscription (six days) for months.

Name
Address

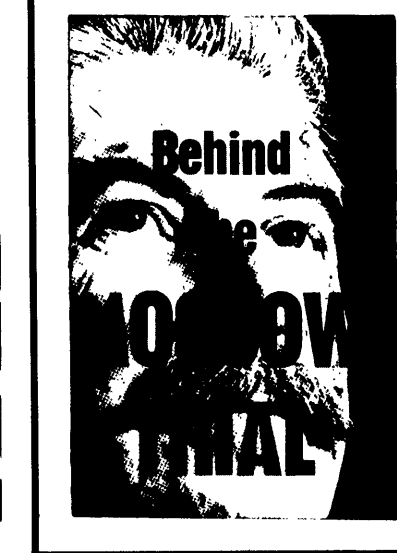
Amount enclosed £

I would like information about

THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Fill in the form below and send to NATIONAL SECRETARY, SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE, 186A CLAPHAM HIGH ST, LONDON, SW4.

Name
Address



BOOKS

L. TROTSKY: GERMANY 1931/1932	cloth	£1.87½
	paperback	£1.25
WHERE IS BRITAIN GOING?		37p
HISTORY OF RUSSIAN REVOLUTION 3 vols		£1.50
AGE OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION		45p
REVOLUTION BETRAYED	cloth	£1.05
	paperback	62½p
PROBLEMS OF CHINESE REVOLUTION	cloth	£1.87½
	paperback	£1.12½
PERMANENT REVOLUTION: RESULTS AND PROSPECTS	paperback	75p
IN DEFENCE OF MARXISM	paperback	75p
LESSONS OF OCTOBER	paperback	60p
R. BLACK: STALINISM IN BRITAIN	cloth	£2.00
	paperback	£1.12½
MAX SHACHTMAN: BEHIND THE MOSCOW TRIAL	paperback	75p

PAMPHLETS

L. TROTSKY: DEATH AGONY OF CAPITALISM (The Transitional Programme)	5p
CLASS NATURE OF THE SOVIET STATE	20p
CROSS AND ART	10p
MARXISM AND THE TRADE UNIONS	17½p
IN DEFENCE OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION	15p

Please tick those books required

NAME
ADDRESS

Amount enclosed £ plus 3p postage for each pamphlet; 10p postage for each book.

Complete form and send money to:
New Park Publications, 186a Clapham High Street, London, SW4.

