

SECRET

BOX NO. 500
PARLIAMENT STREET B.O.
LONDON S.W.1

Pol.F.299-13/DG

21st July 1971

CABINET OFFICE
A 2249
23 JUL 1971
FILING INSTRUCTIONS
FILE No.

For Burke.

At a meeting on 30 June to discuss subversion in industry reference was made to groups of trouble-makers moving around building sites and other trouble spots. In fact there is no evidence for the existence of a large body of itinerant agitators; the misapprehension may have arisen from our current assessment of about 200 Trotskyist "activists" in industry, a figure which we have used in briefings and lectures.

2. I thought, therefore, it might be useful if I let you have the enclosed note. This does not cover intimidation because, although we are in no doubt that it goes on, we have no direct intelligence about it and cannot assess its extent.

3. Please use the note, which has been cleared with the Department of Employment, as you see fit. I have sent a copy to Philip Allen.

For Burke.
E.M.

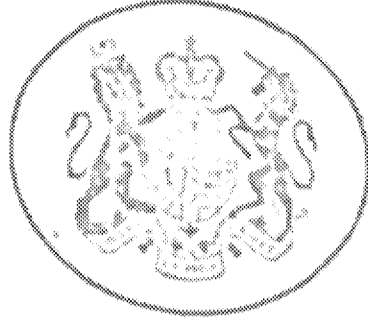
E.M. Furnival Jones

Sir Burke Trend, GCB, CVO,
Cabinet Office

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ORGANISED DISRUPTION IN INDUSTRY

General

Local grievances have almost invariably been the root cause of the type of unofficial strikes such as have occurred on building sites and at Pilkingtons. These grievances should be and often have been resolved by the normal processes of negotiation and union machinery. These methods may sometimes prove too cumbersome for local activists, particularly at shop steward level, who are tempted to resort to militant unofficial action. These activists are not necessarily members of subversive organisations, though the latter are quick to recognise the possibility of exploiting such situations.

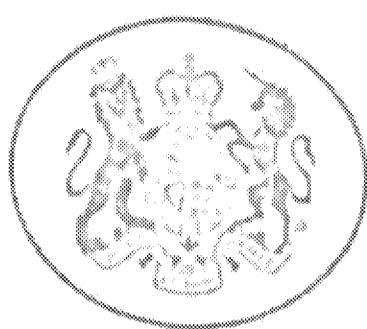
The attitude of the Communist Party towards Industrial Unrest

2. The instinctive approach of the Communist Party, particularly of its rank and file members, to any industrial dispute is militant. It is assumed that the employer is in the wrong and there is a natural tendency to seek militant solutions. Although the Party both nationally and locally is always ready to exploit opportunities for the display of militancy its approach is not unthinking and is tempered by the overriding aim of achieving political power through the trade union movement. The Party leadership is concerned to protect its investment in the leadership of the trade union movement and must therefore seek to exercise control over unofficial activities by shop stewards and others. It is at its most effective when it can co-ordinate the exercise of its influence in the trade union movement with the activities of its unofficial supporters in shop steward movements and similar organisations.

Communist.../

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Communist Organisation

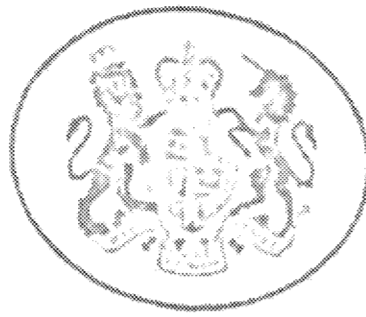
3. The Communist Party concentrates on a system of advisory committees to co-ordinate its activities in the official trade union movement. Its industrial leadership however also maintains organisations which work through unofficial shop steward movements. The leadership tries to keep these two organisations in step. Although the best known of the unofficial bodies is the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions (L.C.D.T.U.) which has played a prominent part in the campaign against the Industrial Relations Bill, bodies limited to particular industries make a more significant contribution towards exploiting opportunities for industrial action which arise in those industries. The London Building Workers Joint Sites Committee played such a role in the Barbican disputes in the 1960s, and the degree of Communist influence in these disputes was unusually high. In multi-plant firms in the motor and engineering industries the Party prefers to rely on the infiltration of shop stewards combines which can exert pressure on both employers and the unions. Where the Party is well placed in a union, official and unofficial tactics can be co-ordinated.

4. The Party does not employ paid itinerant agitators. Bert RAMELSON, its Chief Industrial Organiser, occasionally tours the country visiting Party branches and addressing private and public meetings. However, he usually stays away from the locality of industrial disputes, preferring to remain in London in touch with national union leaders. In trade union elections, however, the Party has been known to make available the services of either a full-time official of the Party or a Communist worker in the union concerned by meeting his expenses.

Trotskyist.../

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Trotskyist attitude towards Industrial Unrest

5. Trotskyist philosophy leads its adherents to exploit all industrial disputes as a means of hastening a political confrontation with the power of the State. Militancy is therefore encouraged, often contrary to the interests of the men involved and of the trade union movement, which Trotskyists see as a bureaucratic device to curb the natural militancy of the workers.

Trotskyist Organisation

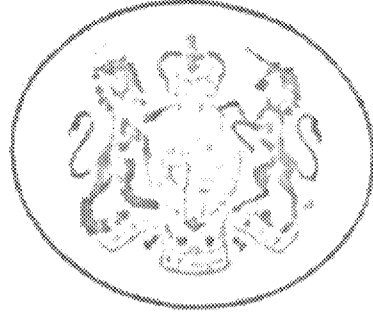
6. It is doubtful whether there are more than 200 Trotskyist activists located throughout industry in this country. There is no strong centralised controlling system reaching out to them on the C.P.G.B. pattern; and the immediate exploitation of individual situations is left to the initiative of such Trotskyists as there may be on the spot. None of the Trotskyist groups has sufficient funds to enable it to employ full time itinerant agitators available to exploit industrial disputes wherever they may occur.

7. The Trotskyist counterpart to the I.C.D.T.U. is the Socialist Labour League's (S.L.L.) All Trade Union Alliance. Although this holds national conferences it is probably more important in providing a meeting ground for local militants, not all of whom are necessarily Trotskyists. Leading Trotskyists, particularly HEALY and SLAUGHTER of the S.L.L. and CLIFF of International Socialism keep themselves well informed regarding the progress of industrial disputes and visit sites where they consider there is an opportunity to exacerbate the situation. The number

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from all Trotskyist groups acting in this way does not exceed ten. At certain sites, particularly those within reach of a University town, they may sometimes be able to enlist a substantial number of Trotskyists and sympathisers to assist in handing out inflammatory literature.

Special Considerations relating to the Building Industry

8. Some disputes in the building industry during recent years have been characterised by an unusual degree of militancy, the origins of which lie in factors peculiar to the industry. It is under-organised from the union standpoint and the unions rely on organising the larger sites to offset their weakness in the industry. The mobility of the labour force encourages the employers to use non-union labour which can in disputes lead to violent picketing and the practice of negotiating fresh rates for each new site tends to encourage militancy. The appearance of leading militants on the larger sites notorious for poor industrial relations is in part a consequence of the mobility of the work force and in part because these are more susceptible to their tactics. A proportion of these militant workers belong to subversive parties but they are not always responsive to control by the leadership.

Pilkingtons

9. Although the dispute at Pilkingtons has acquired importance in Trotskyist mythology, at no stage was any Trotskyist group in control of the strike.

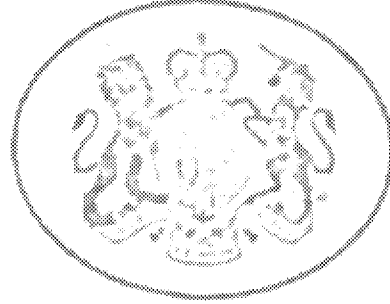
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OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT
In so far as the strike was as much against the union concerned as the management, it was one to which the Trotskyist groups, notably the S.L.L., were particularly sympathetic; it has

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since been exploited on T.V. and in their own propaganda by the Trotskyists. The most violent picketing at Pilkingtons was carried out by a group of employees at an adjacent building site, most of whom were Communists, to show solidarity with the Pilkington strikers. Their actions, however, were not in line with the policy of the Communist Party, which deplored not only the violence but also the anti-union element in the s trike.

Conclusions

10. None of the subversive groups active in the United Kingdom has the resources in money or staff to make available itinerant full-time agitators in any significant numbers. This is not to say that the major subversive groups do not aspire to exploit industrial unrest to suit their own national purposes. The Communist Party's purpose is to strengthen its position in the trade unions; the Trotskyist groups' purpose is to foment industrial unrest so as to bring nearer the achievement of a revolutionary situation.

SECURITY SERVICE.

July 1971.

SECRET

File

CABINET OFFICE
Ref. A0153
A
PRIME MINISTER
27 JUL 1971
ACTING INSTRUCTIONS
C/S No.

Copy No. 3 of 3 Copies

Subversion in Industry

As against our discussion of this subject you may like to see the two additional notes by the Security Service which are attached - the first discussing (and dismissing) the concept that there is an organised body of itinerant agitators who move from one spot to another deliberately fermenting trouble; the second analysing the position of Mr. Jack Jones.

BURKE TREND,

27th July, 1971



CABINET OFFICE
 A 2366
 29 JUL 1971
 FILING INSTRUCTIONS
 FILE No.

Copy No. 1 of 2 Copies

10 Downing Street
 Whitehall

TOP SECRET AND STRICTLY PERSONAL

SIR BURKE TREND

Subversion in Industry

You discussed with the Prime Minister this evening your minutes of 2 and 27 July on this subject.

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The Prime Minister said that he thought that in some respects the analysis that had been provided was rather naive. You explained the limitations put on the activities of the Security Service in this area, and undertook to look again at the rules within which they operate.

The Prime Minister agreed that you should proceed on the lines which you had suggested in your minute of 2 July; but you agreed with him that it would be better not to proceed in this matter until after the Recess. My understanding is that you will be submitting the matter to him again in September with a view to some informal discussion with those concerned at that time.

RTA

28 July 1971