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23rd June, 1971

Ref. A09897

At the meeting Sir Burke Trend held on 24th May it was agreed that papers should be prepared on Subversion in Industry and the Mass Media, and on Counter Subversion in the United Kingdom, and I now write to send copies of these papers, prepared respectively by the Security Service and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Sir Burke Trend would like to discuss these papers at the meeting arranged for Monday, 28th June at 4.30 pm.

Copies of this letter go to Reddaway (FCO) and to the Private Secretaries to those also invited to the meeting (Sir Denis Barnes, the Intelligence Co-ordinator and Sir Martin Furnival Jones).

B. M. NORBURY

(B. M. Norbury)

Mrs. J. M. Eden

04 1/6/71



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I am invited to attend this meeting.

With the Compliments
of the
Private Secretary
to the
Secretary of the Cabinet

G. F. N. Reddaway, Esq., CBE

1 Sir S. C. [unclear] 24/6
2 Mr. [unclear] (R)

J.F. 25/6
N. Reddaway

25/6

Mr. Reddaway

Cabinet Office,
London, S.W.1.

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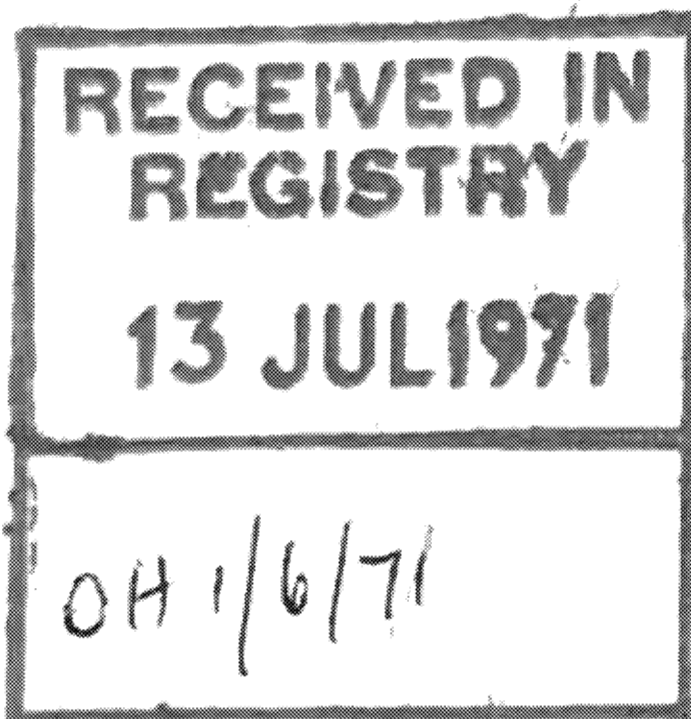


BOX No. 500,
PARLIAMENT STREET B.O.,
LONDON, S.W.1.

Our Ref.: POL F 299-13/FIB/I

Your Ref.:

John Tyrer Esq.,
I.R.D.



23rd June 1971

Dear John,

When we spoke about the paper "Subversion in Industry and the Mass Media, 1965 - 1971" today it became apparent that the version you have is different in length from the one we are finally to present, and I therefore attach a copy of our revised version.

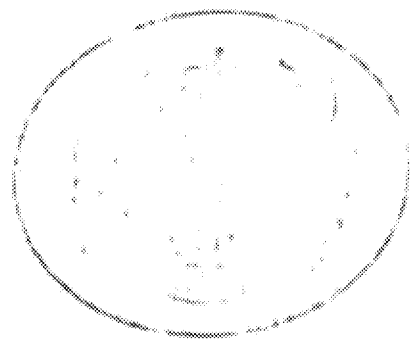
Yours sincerely,

R. T. Reed
R. T. Reed.

FIB/I
RTR/MEW

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SUBVERSION IN INDUSTRY
AND THE MASS MEDIA, 1965 - 1971

INTRODUCTION

The Security Service approach to the study of subversion in industry and the mass media is to work outwards through its central study of identified subversive organisations. Reports have been supplied to Government at intervals over the past six years on the subversive content of industrial unrest and disputes; so that some comparison of developments within that period can be made. Reports on some aspects of subversion in the mass media were made in 1962 and 1969; but only a limited comparison of developments in this field is possible. Security Service coverage of subversion in industry is fairly comprehensive; subversion in the mass media is not investigated in the same depth and conclusions about it must be more tentative.

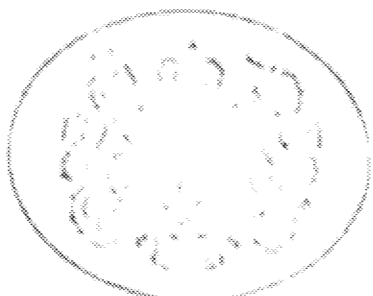
INDUSTRY

General

2. There has been some increase in industrial disputes, officially recognised and conducted at a national level, during the second half of the period under review; but there has been a marked increase of disruption and militancy, mainly unofficial in the early stages, at the shop floor level. This latter development, although it may be exploited by subversive organisations, has not been created by them. Its extent is variable and may be affected by a large number of factors operating on both sides of industry, for example, the decline in the quality of the national leadership of the trade unions, the erosion of trade union disciplinary procedures, and the tendency to move from national agreements to shop floor bargaining. Particular industrial and geographical traditions play their part - the "Merseyside Militant" who enjoys local solidarity and is independent of political pressures or economic reality. The operation of the welfare state, the tax system and employers' agreements made to encourage the stability of the labour force can reduce the disincentives to strike action and temper at least the immediate impact of unemployment. The apathy of the rank and file trade

/unionist

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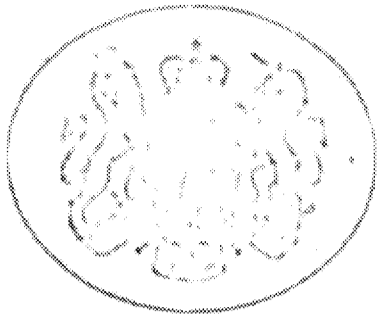
unionist and his gratitude to shop stewards for their welfare work, making him normally ready to follow the leadership of the minority prepared to devote time and trouble to trade union affairs are other factors. The situation is exacerbated when shop stewards lacking negotiating skill have allowed themselves to be driven into untenable positions which more experienced full-time officials would have avoided.

Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.)

3. The object of the C.P.G.B.'s activities in industry is to win political power. The importance of the trade union movement to the C.P.G.B. lies primarily in the political influence which it could exercise on the Labour Party through the trade unions' collective voting strength at Labour Party Conferences and their substantial contribution to its funds. Its principal aim is to exploit any positions of strength it can acquire in the trade unions as an indirect means of influencing Labour Party policy; any industrial unrest which may result from its activity in the trade union movement the C.P.G.B. tends to regard as a bonus. The Party's activities in industry and the trade unions are co-ordinated by its Industrial Department which operates largely through secret Party Advisory Committees set up for most of the major unions and industries. These endeavour - usually successfully - to provide an effective electoral machine for candidates supported by the Party and seek to secure the reflection of C.P.G.B. aims in trade union policy.

4. Through this machinery over the period under review, the Party has more than re-established its position of influence in the official trade union movement which had been threatened by the exposure in 1961 of the Party's illicit activities in the then Electrical Trades Union (E.T.U.). After these disclosures the number of Party members and sympathisers amongst the leading officials and Executive Committee members of the 40 largest unions fell from a ratio of about 1 in 10 to 1 in 13. Today Party members and sympathisers hold 1 in 8 of these posts - a position last reached in the early fifties. The ending of the ban on Communists holding office in the Transport and General Workers Union (T.G.W.U.) has contributed to the increase in the Party's strength. The abolition of similar bans in other unions following the enactment of the Industrial Relations Bill is likely further to strengthen the Party's position. This strength at executive level should be set against the facts that at the most 1 in 500 of all trade unionists is a Communist and that there is no union in which the Party could at present be said to exert controlling influence.

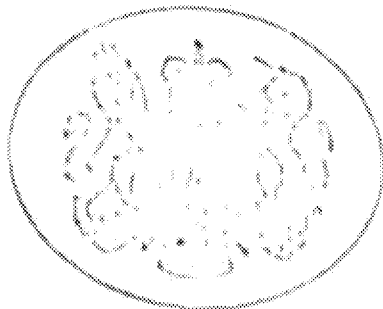
/5. Two



5. Two significant developments have been the shift in trade union attitudes towards the industrial policies supported by the Party and the realisation of one of the Party's long standing ambitions - that the leadership of the two largest unions, the T.G.W.U. and the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (A.U.E.W.) should pass into left wing hands. Jack JONES and Hugh SCANLON both have Communist records, are prepared to work closely with the Communist Party on particular issues and stand well to the left of the trade union movement. Neither, however, is a puppet of the Communist Party as both are responsive to the needs of their unions and indeed are at present in some disfavour with the Party over their conduct in the Fords dispute and the campaign against the Industrial Relations Bill.

6. As a result of its national campaign to resist reform of the trade unions begun in 1968 the Party found its leadership becoming more acceptable and criticism of its activities in the trade union movement less pronounced. It had successes in the campaign both through its creature, the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions (L.C.D.T.U.) and through its position of influence in the official trade union machinery. However, the failure to carry the Special Congress of the T.U.C. on 18th March, 1971, into outright opposition to registration under the Industrial Relations Bill, and into backing national industrial action, was a setback for the Party, although the C.P.G.B. still hopes to organise effective protest once the Bill is enacted.

7. In recent years, the Communist Party as such has had little direct influence on the outcome of major national industrial disputes. This was partly because the leadership of the major unions tended, for their own reasons, to adopt tactics in industrial disputes which were in line with Party policy, and the Party consequently did not feel it necessary to exercise the pressure which was needed in the past when unions were under "right-wing" leadership. The Party has also been preoccupied with the campaign against trade union reform. It has never had the capacity to initiate industrial unrest, and can merely respond to opportunities presented to it. The 1966 Seamen's strike was the last occasion when the Party had a decisive influence on an official strike of national importance, although a somewhat inept attempt was made to influence the Miners' strike at the end of 1970. With the dismantling of the unofficial liaison committee in the London docks, the Party has tended to have less direct influence on dock strikes, and even in areas where it is traditionally well established, e.g. among shop stewards at Fords and in the unofficial leadership of the power industry, it has had decreasing direct influence over the conduct of disputes.



8. The Party's activity in trade union affairs is now on the whole discreetly conducted and since most Communist trade union officials, who are not always publicly known or recognised as Communists, discharge their union responsibilities conscientiously, C.P.G.B. involvement in trade union affairs is less subject to the suspicion and criticism which at one time it used to attract. Even when the trade union leadership is less well disposed towards it, the Party's need to protect its investment in the union bureaucracy tends to limit its involvement in unthinking militancy.

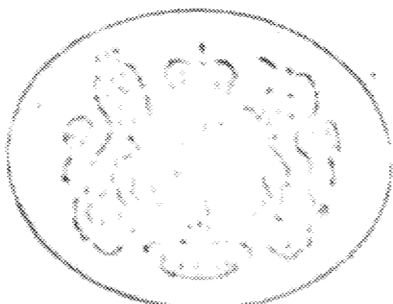
Trotskyists

9. There has been an increase in the extent of Trotskyist influence on industrial relations. With the exception of certain members of the International Socialism group (I.S.) Trotskyists have shown little interest in infiltrating the trade union bureaucracy and have concentrated their activities on the shop floor. Here their influence has affected workers' attitudes and on occasion injected an element of violence into disputes; but it would be difficult to identify any particular major dispute as having been directly and effectively exploited by Trotskyist groups. Even in the Pilkington dispute Trotskyist influence was marginal. Influence in smaller local disputes (e.g. the Hull Docks and the threatened occupation of G.E.C. factories on Merseyside) has been more direct. The growing circulation of the organ of the Socialist Labour League (S.L.L.), the "Workers' Press", has had a noticeable influence on shop floor attitudes; it makes union leaders like JONES and SCANLON and the Communist Party itself responsive to criticism from the extreme militant left. The S.L.L. leadership, both directly and through its creature the All Trades Union Alliance (A.T.U.A.), is developing a capacity to exert militant pressures selectively on non-Trotskyists. At a higher level the Institute for Workers' Control (I.W.C.), which was involved in an advisory capacity with the G.E.C. occupation, exercises similar pressures. Trotskyist influence could also make younger workers even less responsive to efforts to re-establish union discipline than they already are. Unlike the Communist Party, none of the Trotskyist groups has even a limited interest in preserving the economy as they cannot foresee the achievement of power except through revolution.

Other Subversive Groups

10. The pro-Chinese groups operating in the trade union movement (mainly confined to the A.U.E.W.) are as yet of minor significance. There is little prospect that they will make much headway against the entrenched interest of the C.P.G.B. unless there is a revolutionary change in the outlook of the majority of C.P.G.B. members.

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THE MASS MEDIA

11. The cinema, theatre and large circulation newspapers and periodicals are not included in this survey, as the professional and economic controls operating in them are likely to inhibit clandestine efforts of employees and contributors to propagate subversive ideas. Political newspapers and periodicals in which the ideals of subversive organisations are openly propagated are also omitted.

12. Anxiety is often expressed at possible subversive manipulation of the mass media and in particular broadcasting but the subversive organisations of the left regard television, radio and the press generally in this country as lying in the control of the capitalist system and as being devoted to its class interests.

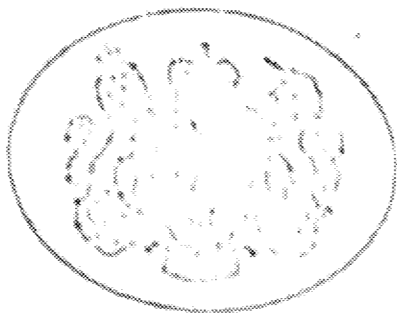
13. The C.P.G.B. formerly ran a number of cultural groups concerned with the Party's role and interests in various media. Its Film and T.V. Group, however, has not come to notice since 1965 and is believed to be extinct. The Party maintains a press and publicity department at its headquarters, which, among other duties, considers requests for interviews on T.V. and radio and by the press. This department does not appear to apply itself actively to opening up the mass media to the Party - indeed it suffers from anxieties over the possibility of adverse publicity and it gives offers of programmes featuring the C.P.G.B. most careful consideration, sometimes turning them down.

14. In two B.B.C. T.V. current affairs programmes broadcast in 1971, Communist Party members who outnumbered the rest on opinion panels were represented only as rank and file members of a trade union involved in a particular industrial dispute. In both programmes they appeared to dominate the scene and their views were heard to the exclusion of others. A number of individual trade unionists known to the Security Service as Communists or sympathisers have from time to time been interviewed as representatives of their unions during wage negotiations without reference to their political views. There is no evidence that this reflects the connivance of producers of the programmes in question.

15. There is no indication that the C.P.G.B. is making much effort to influence T.V. or broadcasting for its own purposes or that it is exercising any central direction over its members who work in or contribute to these media with a view to the covert introduction of Communist ideas.

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16. There is no indication that any Trotskyist organisation is pursuing a calculated policy of penetrating television or any of the mass media for subversive purposes, but a dozen or so persons with Trotskyist associations have come to notice during the past few years.

17. The influence of a Trotskyist editor on Granada's "World in Action" is thought to have been responsible for a decline in objectivity in that programme in early 1969. The editor in question has said that he is "allergic to the Establishment and to governments" and that he was "fortunate in being able to use television as a kind of therapy for his indignation".

18. A Production Assistant with Trotskyist inclinations who was employed by the B.B.C. in 1969 and posted to the Overseas Service, is said to have admitted that he proposed to use this opportunity to collect material with which to expose the B.B.C. as a dangerous neo-colonial institution when he leaves the Corporation.

19. A small cohesive group of writers and producers, mostly with Trotskyist sympathies has emerged in television. They have achieved some success with their quasi documentary plays, notably on social issues of the day. "Cathy Come Home" shown by the B.B.C. in 1966 was the precursor of the series while more recently two plays portraying strikes of dockers and at a glass factory seen from the strikers' viewpoint have been broadcast. The two plays about strikers have contained a political message consistent with Trotskyism. Gerry HEALY, the National Secretary of the Trotskyist Socialist Labour League was in close touch with the producer, Kenneth LOACH, over the latter's production of the play about the striking glass workers. The members of this group are competent technicians - LOACH made the award-winning film "Kes" - and it is because of their professional reputation that they are used by the B.B.C. and I.T.V.

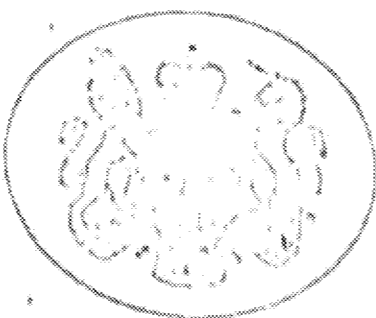
20. The recently formed Free Communications Group, which comprises authors, playwrights, producers, technicians and executives of various kinds employed not only in television but in all branches of the mass media, is influenced by a number of Trotskyists within it and advocates the control of communications media by writers and producers. It is not at the moment an effective or cohesive body.

21. Two of the Penguin editorial staff concerned with political publications hold left wing revolutionary views. This is probably fortuitous and not the result of deliberate policy by any particular revolutionary group. Persons with such

/sympathies

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sympathies may select and possibly prefer certain revolutionary works for publication at the expense of other more objective material. There is, however, significant public demand for works of social protest and books about revolutionary philosophy. It is good business for publishers to issue such books.

22. The magazine Private Eye is a satirical journal which specialises in deriding institutions and the personalities of what it considers to be the Establishment. It has developed an outlook which is largely destructive and which is often aimed at reducing public confidence in national institutions. It is distinguished from the so-called Underground Press by having in general competent and experienced journalists on its staff with reasonably well informed sources. Paul FOOT, a regular contributor, is a close associate of Trotskyists.

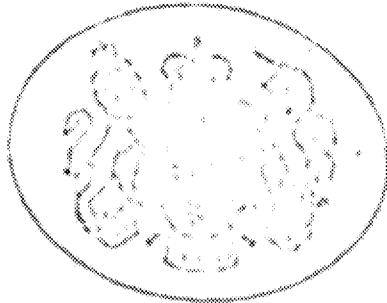
23. The Underground Press consists of such periodicals as Oz, IT, Friends, Rolling Stone and the latest to appear - Ink. These are aimed at the teenager and those in their early 20's, many of whom are students. Issues contain sections on pop music, drugs and on the problems of liberation from some form or other of real or imagined oppression - varying from sexual or racial prejudice and the tyranny of data banks on the one hand, to economic exploitation and police brutality on the other. Obscene language and graphics are commonplace. The political content of these papers is revolutionary but no one revolutionary or subversive group is preferred; Mao, Castro, Guevara, Eldridge Cleaver and the Black or White Panthers are all seen as folk heroes.

CONCLUSION

24. The nature and scale of the threat of Communist subversion in industry have not changed substantially over the past six years, though the situation has to some extent developed in a way favourable to the Party's aims, while its penetration of leading trade unions is now back at its 1950's level. Militancy in industrial relations has increased and has proved particularly troublesome at shop floor level, though its origins lie elsewhere than in the activities of subversive organisations. Trotskyist groups have shown themselves increasingly able to take advantage of shop floor militancy and to exploit disputes which arise at that level, though their influence should not be over-rated. The long-term subversive threat remains the C.P.G.B. with its aim of achieving political power through control of the unions. The impending industrial relations legislation should have a stabilising effect on labour relations by strengthening union organisation and limiting opportunities for unofficial industrial action though it may facilitate open Communist

/penetration

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penetration of some union executives.

25. The Communist subversive threat within the mass media appears to be slight and the threat from the activities of individual Trotskyists cannot be regarded as substantial. Their efforts are subject to the normal restraints of a free society and their ability to propagate subversive ideas undetected is probably limited. They can compensate for this by pursuing an easier but perhaps equally subversive policy of destroying confidence in society. The subversive threat from the Underground Press is similar but so far is limited by the small size of its circulation.

SECURITY SERVICE

10th June, 1971.

Pol F 299-13

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(7)

Handwritten: 24/6

Mr. Tucker

Mr. Reddaway

MEETING IN SIR BURKE TREND'S ROOM ON 28 JUNE 1971

FLAG A
FLAG B

1. We spoke. As promised, I attach copies of the two papers prepared at Sir Burke Trend's request by ourselves and by the Security Service on home front affairs, together with a covering brief.

J.E. Tyrer
J.E. Tyrer

24 June, 1971

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Meeting to be held in Sir Burke Trend's Room
in the Cabinet Office on Monday, 28 June, 1971.

- References: A. FCO paper on Counter Subversion
- B. Security Service paper on Subversion in Industry
 and the Mass Media, 1965-71

1. The Security Service paper concludes that
 - (a) the CPGB, although an electorally negligible force, remains the main subversive threat to our society by virtue of its size and relative cohesion;
 - (b) the Party's main challenge is on the industrial front, where it has gained ground in recent years and is now, in general, back to the level of the 1950s (para 4);
 - (c) contrary to popular belief, the Party's industrial complex serves a long-term political end, however remote from practical politics (the domination of the TUC and through it the Labour Party Annual Conference) and is not used for merely disruptive purposes (para 3);
 - (d) the Trotskyists, who are in business as wreckers, are too fissiparous to compete with the Party (para 9);
 - (e) in the mass media, where the subversive element is slight, it is the Trotskyists who pose the greater threat, albeit not a substantial one (para 16).
2. On the industrial front, we should not underestimate the longstanding

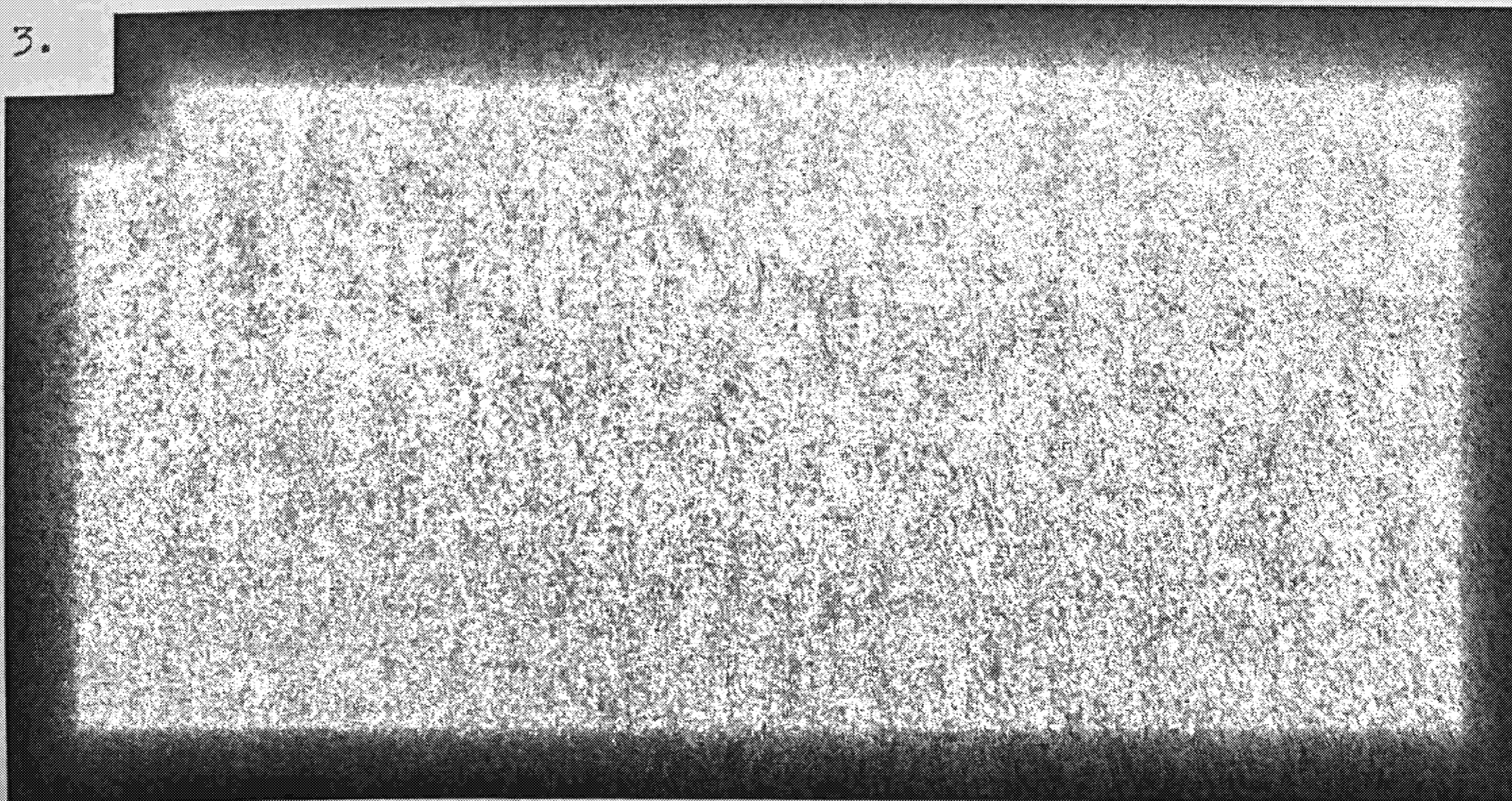
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anti-Communist operation mounted by IRIS Ltd., little of which receives publicity. Although IRIS' record over 15 years is one of disappointment as well as success, the organisation is highly regarded by the Security Service, the Department of Employment and indeed by Sir Burke Trend, as well as by ourselves. This year, for instance, they have two major successes to their credit; rebuffing the Party (and its TGWU allies) inside the National Union of Seamen, at a time when the militants seemed poised for a take-over, and securing the election of an anti-Communist as president of the National Union of Mineworkers, despite a major effort by the CPGB Industrial Department which the Party was confident would succeed. The Security Service has recently placed on record the view that IRIS is

"... the only anti-Communist organisation for which the Party has any respect; all the others (Economic League, Common Cause, etc.) were regarded as derisory".

3.

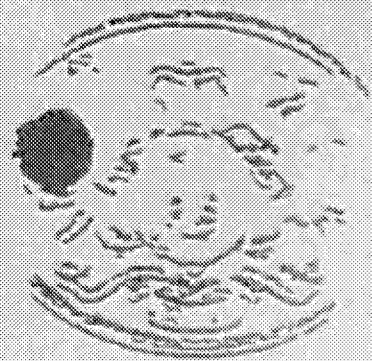


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PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958

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4. In pressing our case for additional liaison on the home front, we should perhaps avoid suggesting that there is any major task of exposure to mount. What is needed is rather the means of ensuring that the most mileage can be made out of any given situation as effectively as possible.

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OH 1/6/71

Sir S. Crawford

I.R.D.

Sir Burke Trend's Meeting on Counter-Subversion (Home)

Sir Burke convened a meeting to consider two papers:

- (a) a Security Service paper on subversion in industry and the mass media, 1965 to 1971;
- (b) a FCO paper suggesting possible means of countering subversion.

2. At the meeting were Sir Philip Allen (H.O.), Sir Denis Barnes and Mr C. F. Heron (D.E.P.), Mr Furnival Jones, Lord Rothschild, Mr Maitland and myself. *S.M.*

3. There was general agreement that in Britain today there ~~was~~ no vast, deliberately engineered subversive conspiracy; but that there was a good deal of subversive activity which was making the country harder to govern and poorer. Subversive people and organisations were considered to be those who did not believe in evolutionary parliamentary government but preferred to work towards a revolutionary situation and a revolutionary/at which the traditional rulers would be unable to govern and the governed would be in a position to overthrow them.

4. Given the abundant knowledge that we had of subversive activity, the question at issue was whether and what action should be taken to exploit it more fully. Sir P. Allen was disinclined to countenance additional positive action. Sir D. Barnes and most of the others were inclined to favour action, though there were differing views of what might be effective and justifiable.

5. It was generally agreed that any action decided upon must involve a few non-governmental people in addition to those officials concerned.

6. Sir Burke said that he would address a note to the Prime Minister suggesting that Mr Whitelaw be asked to consider the problem and perhaps invited to talk to one or two friends and contacts about how to close the gap between knowledge about subversion and action to counter it.

N. Reddaway

(G. F. N. Reddaway)
30 June 1971

COPY

Mr Daunt

Mr. Tucker 8/7
Mr. Crook p.v. 8/7
8/7