★ Morning Star

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Heath, Wilson, Callaghan try to split miners

McGAHEY HITS BACK AT ATTACKERS

We say

THE onslaught on miners' leader Mick McGahey has been instigated by Tory leaders and Fleet Street in an attempt to divide the miners on the eve of their strike ballot.

It is part of the red scare effort launched by the Tories in their pre-election campaign, with which they hope to defeat Labour.

For Labour leaders to join in with ill-founded criticisms of Mick McGahey and other members of the miners' union executive plays the Tory game.

The Commons motion tabled by the shadow cabinet alleges that Mick McGahey wants to change "an elected government other than through a democratic election."

This is completely untrue. He has fought, along with other Communist and Labour Party members, far harder for a general election to defeat the Tories than many Labour leaders.

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Some of them are much more concerned to damp down the struggles of trade unionists, tenants and other victims of Heath's policies than to develop a real campaign to clear him out.

Mr. Wilson's motion also reproves Mick McGahey for "foreshadowing an appeal to the forces of the crown." Why doesn't the opposition leader attack the Tories for preparing to use troops in an industrial dispute?

Only last week Labour MP Frank Allaun asked Mr. Carr, the Home Secretary, for "a firm undertaking that there would be no combined military and police operation in industrial disputes, or against peaceful political demonstrations."

Far from giving any such assurance, Mr. Carr said that police and troops might have to be used together in industrial disputes. This is what Mr. Wilson should be denouncing—not Mick McGahey's suggestion that the facts about the miners' case should be put to the troops if they were so used.

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Keir Hardie's slashing attack on Churchill's use of troops against the miners in 1910, which we print on page 3, is the Labour tradition which Wilson has abandoned, but McGahey upholds.

There will also be many miners who will think that he, after 34 years in the industry and election to office within the union on many occasions, has more qualification to voice their feelings than a good many Labour leaders.

And what is wrong with McGahey's aim of a short, sharp struggle? Its length will depend a good deal on the solidarity shown by the labour movement with the miners. It is this that Labour leaders should be organising.

As for the miners' battle being one for a proper wage, of course this is true. But it is also, and cannot help but be, a political battle, since it is the Tory government which is preventing them from getting such a wage.

This is Heath's responsibility, and not McGahey's. And it is against the common enemy, the Tories, that the labour movement should unite, and refuse to be divided by red scares and witch-hunts.

Morning Star Reporter

MICK McGAHEY, vice-president of the National Union of Mineworkers, yesterday replied forcefully to a combined attack upon him by Mr. Heath, the Tory press, and some Labour leaders.

On a Labour Party statement which talked about him using Phase 3 as a battering ram to overthrow the government, Mr. McGahey said: "The Parliamentary Labour Party is against Phase 3, the TUC is against Phase 3 and so are the miners and when I talk about defeating the government I am in good company.

DENIED

"Harold Wilson wants a change of government and even Jeremy Thorpe wants a change of government, so why should I be denied the right to express these things?"

He continued: "I completely reject those who say I want to overthrow the government. What I do want is the defeat of the government at the ballot box. That's our solution."

Answering Mr. Heath, Mr. McGahey said: "After seeing the prime minister's broadcast on television, I feel it necessary to reply to the distortions which have emerged over what I have said.

STATEMENT

"I made a statement in Aberdeen in reply to a question about bringing in the troops for the distribution of coal and what my attitude would be. I want to make it clear," he said. "I would not ask one single soldier to countermand an instruction he received.

"What I did say was that we would try and illustrate to the soldiers why the miners were on strike and why they were being asked to do the job normally done by transport workers as well as miners.

"Miners are peaceful men," he said, "and we act in a peaceful way, and the Prime Minister is wrong."

The miners' wage claim was endorsed at the annual conference. It was not politically motivated, but was a reasonable demand for miners in hazardous conditions to produce the coal this country needed.

Mr. McGahey added: "I heard Heath say last night that the miners did not understand the wage offer to them. I would like to inform our prime minister that after a national advertising campaign over the past four or five weeks by the National Coal Board the miners fully understand the offer.

"May I also inform the prime minister that this union has been explaining the offer not only to miners' conferences and at branch meetings, but to miners at pithead meetings and to miners individually. And every time we have explained it, the miners have decided: 'We are not accepting it.'

"Mr. Heath should get his facts right."

ELECTED

On the question of calling out safety men Mr. McGahey said, "The conference on Monday of delegates and branch secretaries from the Scottish coalfields did not recommend, as has been suggested, that there should be no safety cover in the pits during the strike."

Miners did not want to see pits being flooded.

The Labour Party statement, issued by chairman James Callaghan and secretary Ron Hayward, was also criticised by National Union of Mineworkers' secretary Lawrence Daly.

He said it "would be better if people like James Callaghan, instead of attacking democratically elected members of our executive, whether they be Communists or not, would confine themselves to supporting our wage claim.

"All our full-time officials are elected by an individual secret ballot of the miners. They are elected under the union's rules and are answerable only to members of the union."

Kent miners' secretary Jack Dunn commented: "Our union very strongly urges its members to pay the political levy to the Labour Party, and people like Mick McGahey and myself have been paying it ever since we have been in the industry.

"The NUM's Rule 3 pledges the union to get rid of capitalism and Mick is only honouring the rules of the union."

M Ps DISMAYED

Mr. Dunn said an area delegate conference had decided unanimously to support every call for strike action. There had also been complete unanimity at mass meetings at the collieries.

But Mr. McGahey was criticised by other miners' leaders in the Midlands and Lancashire, and by NUM president Joe Gormley.

The executive of the NUM will meet next Tuesday to discuss and act on the results of the strike ballot.

Peter Zinkin writes:

Many Labour MPs were dismayed by the bitterly anti-Communist statements issued by Labour leaders with Mick McGahey as the main target.

Their actions coincided with motions tabled by Tory MPs, the first of which deplored Mr. McGahey's speech in which they claimed he was "threatening to call on troops to disobey orders." Mr. Edward Du Cann, Tory backbench 1922 committee chairman, headed the list of 38 signatories.

A second Tory motion with 23 names attached wanted a permanent blackleg force of people "prepared to offer their services on a free and voluntary basis to assist in maintaining essential services."

Mr. Wilson tabled a House of Commons motion after talks with Mr. Callaghan. Neither the shadow cabinet nor the national executive committee were consulted before these divisive moves, which will cause dismay in the coalfields, were taken.

In his motion Mr. Wilson called on the House to repudiate Mr. McGahey's statement "foreshadowing an appeal to the forces of the crown and earlier statements seeking to invoke the strike weapon as a means of changing an elected government other than through a democratic general election."

ENDORSED

It went on to regret Mr. Heath's use of the coalmining dispute "as an instrument for securing political party advantage by inflaming public opinion against the mineworkers."

It concluded by calling on him to use the Relativities Report or other means "to work toward an honourable settlement, and speed the process of getting Britain back to work." His action was endorsed by Mr. Edward Short, deputy leader, Mr. James Callaghan, Mr. Douglas Houghton, Mr. Bob Mellish and Mr. Eric Varley.

In their statement Mr. Callaghan and Mr. Hayward set out to separate the mineworkers from the Communists. They said NUM president Gormley had made clear that the NUM was fighting for a proper wage, and "nothing else," but "Communists and other extremist leaders of the NUM" said they had "wider political objectives." No names were mentioned.

They repudiated attempts to use the miners as a political "battering ram" to bring about a general strike or to call on troops to disobey lawful orders in the event of a strike.

They went on to say that Communist NUM executive members misled the mineworkers when they said that a strike would be a short, sharp struggle when it was more likely to be long and bitter. That was likely to confuse the mineworkers in the midst of their ballot.

(What Keir Hardie said: p. 3)

Transport union backing pledge

Morning Star Reporters

NO. 1 REGION of the transport workers' union, the largest region in the country covering a quarter of a million workers, unanimously passed a resolution last night in London fully supporting the wage claim of the miners and pledged that whatever aid is requested by the miners will be given in full.

In Edinburgh, officials of the major transport unions pledged that they would respond to any call for support from the miners once they go on strike.

The pledges came at a meeting between Scottish miners' leaders and Scottish officials of the Transport and General Workers' Union and the locomen's union, ASLEF.

National Union of Railwaymen's officials who were not at the meeting sent apologies and conveyed their full support for the miners.

In a statement after the meeting Mr. Michael McGahey, president of the Scottish miners and vice-president of the NUM, said: "ASLEF has given its assurance that there will be no movement of coal or oil when we are on strike."

Not committed

He said the TGWU had said that the miners could use their offices to liaise with transport workers and discuss the problems which would arise during the strike.

The TGWU had also stated that it would give financial support to the miners if it was necessary.

Mr. McGahey stressed however that no one was committed at this stage, and before any union took action it would have to consult its members.

Midland friendships made in the miners' battle of 1972, culminating in the famous Saltley Gates victory, will be renewed in the next two days with a visit by Mr. Arthur Scargill, now Yorkshire NUM president.

Declarations of active solidarity with the miners and a pledge that no lorry driver in the region will cross a picket line have been made. Most of Midland power stations are coal-fed but they need road-borne oil for "lighting up" purposes and warming generators.

Mr. Alan Law, TGWU regional commercial transport secretary, himself active outside Saltley Gates on the day of victory, has pledged: "If the miners go on strike we will support them up to the hilt. We are on their side all the way along the line and no lorry driver will cross their picket lines."

During his visit Mr. Scargill

★ *continued on p. 3*

Inside today
DAI FRANCIS
general secretary South Wales area NUM says why the miners' fight is your fight.

Tomorrow
LAWRENCE DALY
general secretary NUM says why the miners will win.

Arfon Evans, young South Wales miner and secretary of the Maerdy branch of the Communist Party, has a determined and confident look as he comes up from a shift on the coalface.

He's sure the miners can win their fight, and he's pleased, too, because ten people have joined the Communist Party in his Rhondda Valley village over the past ten days.

"Most of them were sympathisers before," he says, "but with the tactics of this government and the campaign of the mass media the picture is even plainer for them to see."

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As Bert Pearce, Welsh secretary of the Communist Party, puts it: "The miners of Maerdy are giving the best answer to Heath's red smear. The lesson is widespread in the coalfield that a complete change of political direction is the only answer to people's basic needs."

Near the Rhondda, in the pit village of Tonyrefail, where six Communist candidates are contesting community council elections on February 7, three new members joined the party this week.

Throughout Wales there have been more than 50 applications for membership since January 1 — five times the rate for the previous two months.

798,000 JOBLESS

A total of 798,000 people registered as temporarily unemployed on Monday — 49,000 fewer than on Monday last week. Northern 38,000; Yorkshire and Humberside 90,000; Eastern and Southern 67,000; London and South-Eastern 69,000; South-West 22,000; West 22,000; Midlands 293,000; North-West 144,000; Scotland 53,000.

SARDINIA STRIKES

A general strike was held in Sardinia yesterday to support demands for improved social and economic development of the island. Over 50,000 people attended a mass parade in Cagliari.

Judge tells Nixon to testify

A LOS ANGELES Superior Court judge yesterday ordered President Nixon to appear in court to testify at the trial of his former Domestic Affairs aide, John Ehrlichman, on February 25.

Judge Gordon Ringer noted that it was the first time ever that a California court had ordered a president to appear.

Mr. Ehrlichman and two other former White House aides are on trial for allegedly ordering a burglary of the office of the psychiatrist of Pentagon papers trial defendant Daniel Ellsberg, in September 1971.

He and his two co-defendants, convicted Watergate conspirator Gordon Liddy and the head of a so-called White House "plumbers squad" David Young, are asking for dismissal of the case on the grounds that they are victims of discriminatory prosecution.

ARENA OF BATTLE

BACKING HEATH in his struggle with the miners, The Times warns that "surrender" is "a dangerous temptation" to be resisted.

Backing the miners, the Star has entered the battle arena, summoning up all the strength of the labour movement to make sure Heath has to "surrender," not only to the miners and the locomen, but surrender his office and call an election.

The Star is waging the political struggle daily to oust the Tories and replace them with a government pledged to Socialist policies, and entering the battle arena with us to add strength to our fight are the many wonderful Star supporters who are striving so hard to make up our crisis losses.

In yesterday's post of £376.35 came £50 from the Star's own NATSOPA machine chapel; £50 from a Kensington friend; £25 from Sevenoaks CP; £7.50 from Thamesmead builders; £2, exhibition workers, Earls Court; and £2.25 from N. London Division AUEW (TASS).

Thank you all for your efforts to help us recoup the extra £5,000 costs incurred during this crisis period.

As the crisis continues and the battle against the Tories hots up, it looks as if our financial difficulties will increase even more, but we feel sure we can rely on our supporters to see us through and keep us in fighting fitness.

For January we still need

£1,213

PLUS THE £5,000 EXTRA CRISIS COSTS BY WEDNESDAY, FEB. 6

ZELDA CURTIS

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Send donations to Zelda Curtis, PPFF, 75 Farringdon Rd., London, EC1M 3JX

Crisis: Communists will give their answers

Morning Star Reporter

COMMUNISTS are to hold meetings in a number of major West European cities around the theme: "The Communists' answer to the crisis of capitalist Europe." This was one of the decisions at the Conference of Communist Parties of Western Europe which ended in Brussels on Monday.

A political declaration adopted at the end of the conference was endorsed by all 19 parties present except the Communist Party of the Netherlands, which was represented by an observer.

(The Swedish party's rules do not allow it to endorse collective documents of a programmatic character.)

A declaration on energy was also adopted. As well as meetings, the conference proposed a number of discussion conferences and steps to follow up the London conference on international firms.

NOT DISCUSSED

Some papers have claimed to find differences between the various parties, especially of Italy and France, concerning the kind of Western Europe for which they are working.

The political declaration makes it clear that all the parties are striving for an independent, democratic and peaceful Western Europe, having relations with the Socialist countries, the United States, the developing states and other countries. Reports of differences on this are figments of the imagination.

At a press conference after the conference, Communist Party of Great Britain general secretary John Gollan said the conference had not discussed the British miners' dispute, nor the specific situation in any country.

"But," he said, "knowing as I do the labour movement in Western Europe, I am confident that if the British miners were to appeal to them for solidarity, that support would be forthcoming."

(Left unity call: p. 5)

BRITISH AIRWAYS faces a 1974 fuel bill £100 million higher than estimated by the firm.

3 CHILEANS DROP LEGAL ACTIONS

Three of the seven Chileans who brought legal proceedings against the Home Secretary Mr. Robert Carr after he refused to grant them political asylum have now withdrawn the proceedings Mr. Carr said last night.

Mr. Carr, in a letter to Mr. Harold Soref, Conservative MP for Ormskirk, said the three left Britain for Norway on January 16 and he understood they had been admitted for permanent residence. The other four were continuing their action.

Miners' M Ps angry at Times changes

Labour mining MPs are furious with the editor of The Times because of changes in articles in the newspaper about the miners' pay claim, and yesterday tabled a Commons motion regretting his "unethical conduct."

An authoritative report was published on Monday summarising a Cambridge study on mining under the heading "An economic case for giving miners more." In subsequent editions this was altered to, "Independent view—a Cambridge case for giving miners more."

BREZHNEV IN CUBA

Soviet Communist Party general secretary Leonid Brezhnev was in Cuba yesterday on the first full day of his official visit for talks with Cuban leaders.

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