'THE DRAUGHTSMEN'S AND ALLIED TECHNICIANS' ASSOCIATION, 1958-70: AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS'

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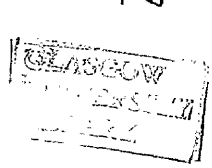

C O N T E N T S

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SUMMARY

This thesis seeks to explore, with reference to the phenomenon of wage militancy, the relationships between a national union leadership, the membership of that union and the influence within it of radical or revolutionary politics.

The method chosen to explore these relationships is that of a historical study of a noted 'leftwing' union, the Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Section of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, formerly the Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians' Association. The historical material is drawn, in the main, from published union sources such as the shorthand transcripts of the annual policy-making conference and the monthly union journal.

Certain questions are posed with respect to the role of revolutionary politics in the development of the union, e.g. what circumstances allowed the union to promote and sustain a 'leftwing' leadership in the 1950s when almost all other 'leftwing' national leaderships were eroded? In answering these questions, attention is concentrated on what are seen as central issues - the development of the union's wages and industrial policies and practices and its responses to incomes policy and industrial relations legislation, particularly for the decade of the 1960s.

The material thereby generated, and the conclusions drawn on the questions specific to the case-study union, are used to explore the more general relationships between wage militancy and revolutionary politics by way of a review and analysis of three areas of controversy in academic industrial relations literature, the 'blue-collar/white-collar' debate, the 'pluralist/marxist' debate and the 'Ross/Dunlop trade union wage policy' debate.

The conclusions drawn on the general relationships are somewhat tentative. It is suggested that the 'blue-collar/white-collar' debate as it is usually rehearsed in the literature is not helpful in explaining the case-study union's experience, in particular that the definition of class consciousness used by the major theorists is of limited usefulness and differs sharply from that adopted by the union's leadership, class consciousness being held by the latter to be the primary aim of their trade unionism. On the 'pluralist/marxist' debate, attention is drawn to a convergence between one school of marxist thought and certain pluralist hypotheses. On the basis of certain features of the development of the case-study union it is argued that the classical marxist postulates rather than those of the convergence school have greater empirical support. With respect to the 'Ross/Dunlop' debate both sides offer insights into the formation of trade union wage policy but it is suggested that neither fit completely the wage aims of the case-study union.

Finally, and included as an Appendix, is a preliminary statistical analysis of a time-series of wage rates pertaining to the union's membership which allows the inferences that both aggregate demand and trade union pushfulness are causal factors in the wages paid to this union's membership.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

In the history of the British trade union movement the period 1945 to 1975 is characterised, inter alia, by rising wage militancy.(1) The period includes the massive upsurge of strike activity in 1969-1970, the violent strikes of miners and building trade workers in 1972, and culminates in the dramatic strike actions of 1973-74.(2) The years 1969 to 1974 are further characterised by the first widespread use of strike action for political ends since 1926.(3)

Study of this militancy has been very uneven. Thus there has been much interest in wage militancy at union membership level, whilst much less attention has been given to the role of national union leaderships with respect to militancy, and in particular to the relationships between leadership and membership, and almost no consideration of the influence within the trade union movement of those who see the role of unions as going beyond collective bargaining to the revolutionary transformation of society, in particular of the influence of 'leftwing' national leaderships.

This thesis sets out to explore, with reference to wage militancy, the relationships between a national union leadership, the membership of

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(1) For a useful review of the evidence for the period up to 1965, see the 'Royal Commission on Trades Unions and Employers' Associations: Report, 1968'. The Report emphasises the emergence of shop steward-led shopfloor militancy. For later years, see footnotes 2 and 3.

(2) The years 1969-70 and 1973-74 are often referred to as years of wage or pay "explosions". See, for example, 'A non-monetarist view of the pay explosion', Phelps Brown, Three Banks Review, March 1975. At least one writer has characterised the few years up to 1971 as years of "wage and strike 'explosions'"; See Hyman, 'Marxism and the Sociology of Trade Unionism', p.28, 1971.

(3) The following can be viewed as disputes with political objectives though some scholars might disagree: the NUPE members' strikes over Health Service pay-beds; the UCS work-in; the stoppages over the Industrial Relations Act, 1971, e.g. the 'Pentonville-5' stoppages; the 1973-74 miners' strike.

that union and the influence within it of radical or revolutionary politics.

The union is the Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Section (TASS) of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. Because of its particular development from 1945 to the early 1970s, this union provides an immense amount of data and a number of features which facilitate some study of national leadership, politics and membership wage militancy.(4) For example, the union experienced changing levels of wage militancy resulting in a strike record in the latter half of the period unmatched by any other British white-collar union in the same period; it operated what was probably the highest strike-pay policy among its contemporaries and had almost no unofficial strikes; it was led for most of the period by a 'leftwing' national leadership which came to power out of a battle over wages policy in which the 'left' defeated a 'rightwing'(5) leadership; the union actively campaigned against all Governmental proposals in the incomes policy and industrial relations fields from 1964 onwards and the leadership openly exhorted the membership to break the law in the period 1965 to 1969; the union's present General Secretary was the first Communist for many years to be elected to the General Council of the TUC; and its amalgamation with the Amalgamated Engineering Union, ten times its size, to form what was seen by the TASS leadership as the core of a 'class-based' industrial union in engineering represents the only major case of a white-collar union voluntarily joining with a blue-collar union.

Features such as these raise a number of questions pertinent to the relationships to be studied:-

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(4) In terms of analysis the thesis treats of the period up to 1970 but as an aid to analysis data is taken up to 1973. Sources for the examples cited in this paragraph are given in later chapters.

(5) Definitions of the 'left' and 'right' concepts are discussed below, p.30.

(a) What conditions or circumstances allowed TASS to promote and sustain a 'leftwing' leadership in the 1950s when almost all other 'leftwing' national leaderships were eroded?(6)

(b) What aims did the 'left' pursue and what place had wage militancy within them? and

(c) What was the 'left' leadership's estimate of its success in pursuing its aims and how far does the estimate accord with the factual record; in particular, how far did the 'left' generate the militancy displayed by the membership and how far did it determine the form of this militancy?

More generally, political scientists see the period 1945 to 1974 as one in which 'class voting' declined, culminating in the Labour vote falling to 38% of votes cast in 1974.(7) On this basis it is argued that the importance of the factors generating a political identification with the Labour Party as the party of the trade unions diminished. Does TASS's record indicate the presence of countervailing factors among some sections of the white-collar labour force? And if so, how would such a development fit into modern theories of trade unionism and industrial relations?

These latter questions notwithstanding, the present work remains exploratory with respect to national leadership, politics and membership wage militancy. Therefore, only questions (a), (b) and (c) are of central concern to the present enquiry though comment will be made on the others.

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(6) Under the impact of, inter alia, the 'cold war' and Khruschev's 'revelations' at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, a number of unions moved away from overt 'leftwing' influence. For example, given the TUC's campaign against Communists in 1948-49, a number of unions including the TGWU excluded Communists from holding office by a rule-change, leading in the case of the TGWU to the removal of Communists from its executive and from among its full-time officers. In relationship to Khruschev's speech, the entire Communist Party membership on the Fire Brigade's Union executive resigned from the Communist Party for example.

(7) This view is well argued for the period up to 1966 by Butler and Stokes, 'Political Change in Britain', 1969.

By way of introduction, attention is turned to a brief survey of recent industrial relations literature on 'left-wing' practice in British unions and this is followed by an outline of the method of the thesis.

1. 'LEFTWING' PRACTICE IN BRITISH UNIONS

Clegg[8] provides a useful description of the 'left' in British unions. He notes that the 'left', whether in leadership or not, is usually an alliance of members of different political groups and indicates the main groups as:

> "Communists along with anyone who is prepared to vote with them. In many unions, this includes leftwing Labour Party supporters."(9)

In an important passage in his Research Paper for the Donovan Commission, Hughes[10] in discussing the role of the Communist Party with respect to democracy in British unions, covers the main views on 'leftwing' activity. Two areas of interest are identifiable. Firstly, statements or assertions on 'leftwing' aims; and secondly, some analysis of the interaction between 'left' oppositions and union memberships out of which the 'left' has achieved some measure of power in unions. Consider both areas in turn.

1.1 'Leftwing aims'

The generally accepted view of 'leftwing' aims is probably encompassed by Wigham's statement that the 'left'

> "are constantly spreading and prolonging strikes, and advocating unreasonable wage demands ... their primary concern is to forward the interests not of the (union) members, except possibly in a vague long-term sort of way, but of the Soviet Union".(11)

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(8) 'The system of industrial relations in Great Britain', Clegg, 1970.

(9) Ibid., p.97.

(10) 'Trade union structure and government', Hughes, Research paper no. 5, (Part 2), HMSO, 1967.

(11) "What's wrong with the unions?", Wigham, p.129, 1961.

Apart from this statement, it is difficult to find further, more concrete statements on 'left' aims in British industrial relations literature. Clegg, for example, in 'The System of Industrial Relations in Great Britain',[12] spends no more than a dozen pages, out of a total of around 450, on 'left' activity in unions and never tackles the question of aims. Flanders, while berating 'leftwing' intellectuals for their work on unions,[13] fails to address himself to the question of the aims of 'leftwing' activists in unions. The same is true for contemporary 'left-wing' theorists. Neither Allen nor Hyman, for example, probe in any depth the aims of the 'left' in British unions.[14] This lack of interest in 'leftwing' aims by industrial relations theorists is not helpful to empirical study in that there are few guidelines to follow and no hypotheses to test.

Hughes notes that any discussion on 'left' activity in unions faces an additional difficulty, namely that 'left' activity

> "is a subject on which there is little likelihood of establishing an area of agreement even as to the vocabulary to be used in describing the situation let alone as to the facts or principles involved."[15]

One interpretation of this statement is that it restates the commonplace that theorising in the social sciences is not value-free and that principles, vocabulary and definitions of facts are often disputed. It goes further than this however. The conflict between 'left' and 'right' can be viewed in practice as well as in theory, as representing for the participants the crucial ever-present struggle based on what are in effect

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(12) Clegg, op.cit.

(13) 'Management and Unions', Flanders, p.38-39, 1970.

(14) See, for example, 'Militant trade unionism', Allen, 1966, and Hyman, op.cit.

(15) Hughes, op.cit.

world-outlooks which, no matter the variations held by individuals or 'schools' within each, are diametrically opposed. This conflict entails attitudes to national and international political, economic and industrial issues[16] as well as to local and union matters, which are derived from the assumptions underlying both world-outlooks which themselves give rise to the disagreement over vocabularies and principles noted by Hughes.

It is not possible to elucidate the detailed nature and scope of this disagreement in this introduction; such elucidation as is required, is given in later sections of this thesis. But at a general political level, the dispute over principle and vocabulary can be seen in many textbooks; see, for example, Popper's 'The Open Society and the Enemies' and one of the replies to it, Cornforth's 'The Open Philosophy'.[17] In industrial relations theory compare, for example, Flanders' 'Management and Unions' with Allen's 'The Sociology of Industrial Relations'.[18]

1.2 'Leftwing' paths to power

The second area of interest identifiable in Hughes' Research Paper deals with analyses of the interaction between 'left' oppositions and union memberships out of which the 'left' has achieved some measure of influence in British unions. Hughes argues that historically the main basis of 'leftwing' influence in unions arises from the 'left's' ability to connect some version of socialist ideology onto spontaneous industrial militancy, but that

> "this does not mean ... that there are not special features attaching to its mode of operation."(19)

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(16) As even a cursory glance at a TUC annual report will reveal.

(17) Popper, 1945, reprinted 1966, and Cornforth, 1968.

(18) Flanders, op.cit, and Allen, 1971.

(19) Hughes, op.cit, p.70.

Hughes indicates three examples in which special features can be seen to affect the operation of the socialist ideology/industrial militancy connection.(20) Firstly, the 'left' have achieved a measure of power

> "where they were able to identify themselves with historical - and often local - militancies specific to particular industries."(21)

The special feature in this example is the historical/local rather than national factor. Hughes points to South Wales, Glasgow, North East England and the factory trades in London as such areas of localised militancy. The relative ease of achieving power based on local militancy is counterposed to the difficulty of doing so nationally; Hughes notes, in paraphrasing Turner, that the period of 'leftwing' control in the Electricians' Union was the one case in which the 'left' were able to exploit an association with the engineering industries' tradition of shop steward militancy to the point of achieving national control.(22)

Secondly, Hughes argues that the 'left' provide a readymade vehicle for canalising rank-and-file protest. In particular he emphasises not simply the subversive manipulation of votes but the provision of policy cum election platforms, thus:

> "Once both publicity and a platform have ... been secured, the low participation of members in union elections only facilitates the capture of union office by fraction methods."(23)

The special feature is the interaction of 'left' platforms and low membership participation.

The third example is where the 'left', by filling a vacuum created by the official trade union leaderships' unwillingness to alter the policy-making machinery of the movement, have gained influence if not in

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(20) Hughes indicates that these examples are drawn from Turner, 'Trade union growth, structure and policy', 1962.

(21) Turner, quoted by Hughes, op.cit, p.70.

(22) Hughes, op.cit, p.70-71.

(23) Turner, quoted by Hughes, ibid, p.71.

fact a real measure of power. Hughes refers to the 'left's' leading role in establishing combine committees of shop stewards, and this can be extended to industry-wide and occasionally national bodies. An example of the latter in the 1920s and 1930s would be the National Minority Movement and in the 1960s and 1970s, the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions.

A fourth example is drawn from the case-study union, TASS, by Roberts, Loveridge and Gennard. They argue that an influx of dilutees into the union during the Second World War, in that they were promoted in the main from the shop floor and had acquired no 'professional' identity, was the basis upon which the 'left' were able to organise an eventually successful challenge to the 'rightwing' leadership. Roberts et al do not argue that the dilutees were militant, only that their lack of a professional identity enabled the 'left' to organise them, though the tenor of the argument suggests that such militancy can be imputed.(24)

One interpretation which can be put on all four examples, or more correctly, on the underlying connection between socialist ideology and industrial militancy, is that the 'left' has a parasitic relationship with union memberships, identifying with and reinforcing but not creating the conditions out of which they, the 'left', achieve power; that the forces generating militancy are unconnected with those generating socialist ideology and that the 'left' emerging from the latter, live off the former.

This separation of the roots of industrial militancy from those of socialist ideology would seem to find a parallel in 'leftwing' literature on trade unions. For example, the most familiar statement of Lenin's position is that

> "the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness ... The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the philosophical, historical and economic theories

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(24) 'Reluctant militants', Roberts, Loveridge and Gennard, p.83, 1972.

elaborated by educated representatives of the propertied classes, by intellectuals".(25)

A more detailed reading of Lenin on trade union consciousness leads however to a more complex relationship. In the formative years of capitalism and thus trade unionism, those forms of expressions of working class resistance such as revolts, machine-breaking, industrial rioting, what Lenin called the 'spontaneous element',

"represents nothing more nor less than consciousness in an EMBRYONIC FORM".(26)

This primitive consciousness stems from

"workers losing their age-long faith in the permanence of the system which oppresse(s) them ..."(27)

These early actions are more in the nature of outbursts of desperation and vengeance than of conscious struggle, but subsequent and better organised strike action represents only revolutionary "class struggle in embryo", is not yet revolutionary consciousness, and is in effect trade union consciousness.(28)

"The history of all countries shows that the working class exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness, i.e. the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc."(29)

Such trade union consciousness

"gravitates towards socialism ... in the sense that socialist theory reveals the causes of the misery of the working class more profoundly and more correctly than any other theory, and for this

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(25) 'What is to be done?', Lenin (1902), Progress Publishers, 9th printing, 1973, p.31-32.

(26) ibid., p.31, emphasis in the original.

(27) ibid.

(28) ibid.

(29) ibid., p.31-32

reason the workers are able to assimilate it so easily ..."(30)

Thus for Lenin, there is an organic rather than parasitic relationship between industrial militancy and socialist ideology. Primitive activity such as machine-breaking is seen as indicative of working class appreciation of the impermanence of capitalism and thus as entailing its replacement. Better organised trade union action is seen as revolutionary class struggle in embryo and when combined with the explanatory power of socialist theory, leads to revolutionary consciousness. It is this latter connection which Lenin sees as providing the foundation for 'left' advance in trade unions rather than a straightforward parasitic connection.

The two views outlined, one which sees the 'left' as parasitically and the other as organically connected to militancy, concentrate on an observable industrial relations process: as such they are of relevance to later sections of this thesis.

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This brief survey of British industrial relations literature on 'leftwing' practice in British trade unions serves as an introduction to the central area of enquiry of this thesis - the investigation of the relationships between a national union leadership, revolutionary politics and membership wage militancy. It also highlights a major problem facing such an investigation; the existence of diametrically opposed assumptions and vocabularies with respect to revolutionary politics. This raises the question of how to approach the material to be studied, in essence what methodology to adopt. The method chosen is that of a historical study, based on certain of the union's records. The principal sources

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(30) ibid., f.n. p.42.

consist of the published shorthand transcripts of the annual policy-making conferences and the monthly union journal. The former contain not only records of votes, policy decisions and extensive statistical reviews, but also the dialogue of all debates,(31) while the latter record monthly reports of the work of the union's executive committee as well as editorial and other policy material. Attention is focused on particular issues to see how the 'left' reacted to them and how it developed its policy responses. The key issues are seen as the development of the union's wages and industrial policy and its responses to incomes policies and industrial relations legislation. This particular selection of issues involves making a judgement as to their relative importance as against others, but the choice may be defended on the ground that they provide strong tests of the union's response to political and economic events. As will be seen in later chapters, these issues provoked important policy discussions within the union. They are set in the context of a short, overall history of the union for the period under consideration. This should permit reasonable evaluation of the questions posed earlier in relation to TASS, specifically:-

a. what conditions or circumstances allowed TASS to promote and sustain a 'leftwing' leadership?

b. what aims did the 'left' pursue and what place had wage militancy within them? and

c. what was the 'left' leadership's estimate of its success in pursuing its aims and how far does the estimate accord with the factual record; in particular, how far did the 'left' generate the wage militancy displayed by the membership and how far did it determine its form?

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(31) Such dialogue is available up to 1967; thereafter the format of annual reports change and dialogue is excluded.

This evaluation having been completed, the results obtained are used to investigate the more general relationships, i.e. those between leadership, revolutionary politics and wage militancy, by way of setting the results against certain industrial relations controversies connected with wage militancy, specifically:-

a. The 'blue collar/white collar' debate.

b. The 'pluralist/Marxist' debate, and

c. The 'Ross/Dunlop' trade union wage policy debate.

The first three questions, the TASS-specific questions, provide the focus for Chapters 2 to 5. Each of the second group of questions provides the focus for Chapters 6 to 8 respectively.

CHAPTER II

TASS - MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE, ORGANISATION AND LEADERSHIP IDEOLOGY

The primary purpose of Chapters II, III, IV and V is to trace out the major strands of the union's development. These chapters are mainly descriptive and are intended to provide a necessary basis of fact which will form a foundation for the development of the questions posed in the thesis. Of necessity the approach to the material has been selective and a number of facets of the union's development central to the focus of the thesis are singled out and treated in some detail.

This chapter covers membership, organisation and leadership ideology. Chapter III deals with developments in wages and industrial policy and related financial questions. Chapter IV looks at developments in the union's platform on incomes policy for the period 1945 to 1963. Finally, Chapter V looks at the same area of policy for the period 1964 to 1970. Major emphasis is placed on the development of wages and industrial policy which is treated for the full period of the union's existence and is seen as providing some continuity of historical perspective in an area which is central to the thesis, whereas the other facets are tackled in the main for the post-1945 period.

A number of other writers have discussed the history or workings of TASS, e.g. Mortimer,(1) Wootton(2) and Clegg.(3) The following chapters reappraise the work of these authors and qualify their conclusions in a number of respects. In particular, it would seem necessary to re-assess the implication in Mortimer's official history that the growing wage militancy of the late 1940s and early 1950s was simply a continuation of

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(1) Mortimer, 'History of the AESD', 1960 - the official union history.

(2) Wootton, 'Parties in Union Government: the AESD', Political Studies, June, 1961.

(3) Clegg, 'The System of Industrial Relations in Great Britain', 1970.

a pre-1939 militancy. There is no evidence to support a continuation of militancy thesis; all the evidence points to a fundamental break between the pre-1939 period and the post-1950 period, with the decade of the 1940s providing a transitional period from non-militancy to militancy. This qualification applies even more forcibly to Wootton's statements categorising the pre-1939 period as 'guerilla warfare' militancy. These points are detailed where appropriate in the ensuing text.(4)

There also emerges from the work of this chapter a reconciliation of Clegg's claim that TASS has been controlled from 1950 by 'left-wingers' with that of Wootton which dates 'left' control from 1958. The reconciliation has to do with aspects or levels of leadership; the 'left' provided leadership on official union policy from roughly 1950 onwards, but only gained a majority on the executive committee and among the full-time officials and hence control of policy implementation in 1958.

It may facilitate understanding of the work of this chapter and of the next, if the overall structure of the conclusions with respect to 'left-wing' advance and the progression to 'militancy' is given here. Dealing only with the post-1945 period, the 'left' dominated official union policy formation on all major issues through their majority control of the union's annual conference for the full period of the late 1940s up until 1973 and, after becoming the majority on the Executive Committee and among the full-time Divisional Organisers in 1958, coupled policy implementation to policy formation.

This progression from policy formation to policy formation and implementation - the translation of militant policies into militant activities - is made more dynamic and complex on the one hand and somewhat tempered on the other, by the existence in practice of a quite distinct separation between what may be called 'internal' and 'external' policy implementation.

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(4) See below, p. 45-47.

On the one hand, the 'left', because of their majority at annual conference and thus control of delegations to the TUC, Labour Party, etc., were able to implement policy at 'external' bodies prior to 1958 even with a 'rightwing' majority on the Executive Committee. Prior to 1958 the 'left' were able to implement all those policies which were in the first instance external to the union, i.e. essentially those not requiring an immediate membership response. After 1958 external implementation was reinforced by internal implementation, i.e. essentially those requiring an immediate membership response.

The internal/external distinction, when superimposed on the policy formation/policy implementation progression, provides a useful classification of the dynamics of 'left' advance and the progression to 'militancy'. Policy formation coupled to external implementation provided a major foundation for 'left' majority control in 1958. For example, some of those who promoted 'left' policies at the union's conferences were chosen to pursue them at external bodies and were eventually promoted to become the majority on the Executive. The legitimacy accorded to the 'left' by the union's conference for its work both in policy formation and in external implementation enabled them in the 1960s to maintain and develop militant policies and to pursue internal implementation even to the extent of calling for activity from the membership which was technically illegal, e.g. in breaking the 1965 and 1967 incomes policy. At no time after 1958 was the 'left's' legitimacy seriously questioned and they were able to utilise the full machinery of the union to obtain positive membership responses to their policies.

On the other hand, the 'rightwing' Executive were forced into a partial internal implementation of certain policies prior to their replacement in 1958, e.g. they were forced to introduce the payment of 100% net wages as strike pay but were able to resist pressure to give official encouragement to strike.

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Structure

TASS is the main and longest running 'continuous association' representing draughtsmen, tracers and engineering technicians in the British trade union movement.(5) It was founded in 1913 on Clydeside(6) out of the general disturbance created in the draughtsmen's 'craft' due to the rapid technological change in the engineering and shipbuilding industries. Induced by military expansion and further stimulated by the Clydeside employers' 'no-poaching' agreement and the wartime Government's arbitrary use of 'leaving certificates', the AESD had built up a rudimentary national organisation by 1918. It had 11,500 members in 1922 and signed its first procedure agreement with the Engineering and Allied Employers' National Federation in 1924.(7) A similar occurrence took place during the Second World War so that whereas in 1939 membership stood at around 19,000, extended 'procedural cover'(8) coupled to wartime expansion and further technological change had boosted membership to around 39,000 by 1946.(9)

As Table I shows, membership(10) fluctuated during the inter-war

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(5) See Mortimer, op.cit., pp. 8-10, for prior 'associations' of draughtsmen and technicians.

(6) Up until a few years ago 'custom and practice' in the union ensured that the Clydebank Branch was always located in the No. 1 division.

(7) Mortimer, op.cit., p.1, 431 and 106.

(9) Mortimer makes no mention of Governmental intervention to achieve this extended 'procedural cover', a point Bain, 'The Growth of White-Collar Unionism', 1970, p.161-2, sees as important.

(10) The union uses three methods of calculating 'membership'. Firstly, 'book membership', i.e. those "on Branch Registers at the Beginning of Each Year"; secondly, 'paying membership' i.e. "based on the annual branch financial statements"; thirdly, 'virtual membership' i.e. total annual subscription income for membership class divided by the full year's subscription per member for the class, the various class 'virtual memberships' then added to give a total. (Source: Reports of Union Conferences). As might be expected, where figures are available for all three calculations, 'book membership' is higher than 'paying membership' which in turn is higher than 'virtual membership'. As is probably the case with most union membership figures, major discrepancies are apparent in the time series available for this study and these are noted where applicable. In general, however, 'paying membership' is used throughout this study supplemented where necessary by the figures for 'book membershi

TABLE I TABLE OF 'BOOK' AND 'PAYING' MEMBERSHIP

YEAR	'BOOK' (1)	'PAYING' (2)	YEAR	'BOOK'	'PAYING'	YEAR	'BOOK'	PAYING
1913			1935		11,208	1957	62,074	54,180
4			6		12,094	8	63,157	56,080
5			7	18,337	13,903	9	63,888	57,360
6			8	20,637	16,502	1960	67,360	58,098
7	6,500		9	23,600	19,310	1	70,396	60,824
8	10,911		1940	27,875	21,625	2	68,903	63,297
9	12,802		1	31,466	24,634	3	66,217	64,450
1920	14,570		2	35,020	27,830	4	65,893	61,446
1	12,800	11,920	3	39,161	30,510	5	71,707	62,048
2	10,500	11,500	4	41,560	33,616	6	73,420	63,965
3	10,000	8,240	5	44,158	36,661	7	73,024	69,655
4	10,500	8,035	6	47,726	38,800	8	75,754	68,459
5	11,000	8,707	7	48,529	41,722	9	86,789	70,443
6	11,000	9,087	8	47,790	44,710	1970	106,120	77,239
7)		9,045	9	47,860	45,049	1	101,346	93,120
8)		8,830	1950	47,794	45,103	2	105,776	96,858
9)	N.A.	9,164	1	50,181	45,039	3	114,094	101,508
1930)		9,663	2	53,028	46,927			
1)		11,124	3	55,029	48,007			
2)		12,074	4	55,124	50,004			
3)		11,049	5	58,803	50,239			
4)		10,613	6	61,203	51,806			

SOURCES: Mortimer, op.cit., p.431 and Relevant Union Conference Reports

(1) Annual figures relate to Dec. 31st of each year, thus, e.g. at December 31st 1970, 'Book membership' was 106,120; this is slightly different formulation from that outlined in the footnote on page 18 above.

(2) As far as can be established, 'paying' membership relates to 'Easter' each year.

years, yet Mortimer is probably correct in pointing out that while

> "the increase in membership which took place in the latter months of 1930 and throughout 1931 was a reflection of the favourable rates of the Association's unemployment benefit ... (as) ... workers ... joined the AESD as an insurance against unemployment ... the stability of the AESD during the depression was a sure indication that it had assumed a permanent place in the engineering industry and in the structure of British trade unionism."(11)

While this permanence was thus established early in its life, and while membership expanded rapidly both during and after the Second World War, the union's rate of growth had fallen significantly by 1954 and this stagnation re-opened a debate around the questions of recruitment policy and the job categories eligible for recruitment. The eventual outcome was a fundamental change in the union's rules in 1961. This 'opened' the union up to a range of technicians who had previously been considered outside the 'closed' cluster of skills surrounding the draughtsman. This expansion of membership categories was reflected in the change in title from the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen to the Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians' Association, a change suggested as early as 1943 during a previous debate on recruitment and degrees of 'openness'.(12) In the ten years during which this change was operational, i.e. 1961-70, membership rose from 60,000 to 77,000 though nearly 7,000 of this difference is accounted for in the twelve months April 1969 to April 1970, a growth phenomenon which continued into 1971 with an increase of 16,000 as shown in Table I, and which affected most unions.

In 1970, in a very high postal vote, the overwhelming majority of the union's membership decided on an initially federal merger with the AEU, the Constructional Engineering Union and the Foundry Workers to form the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers of which DATA was to become the

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(11) Mortimer, op.cit., p.164-5.

(12) R.C. Conference Reports, 1955, 1961 and 1943.

Technical and Supervisory Section, i.e. TASS. In 1973 this title was changed to Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Section, so that since then TASS has operated as an 'open' white-collar union recruiting, e.g. typists, foremen, technologists, etc. mainly in the field of engineering. Membership expanded from 93,120 to 101,508 in the first three years of the TASS period.(13)

Other merger negotiations also took place. A proposed merger with the Scientific Workers in the 1960s was rejected by TASS partly on the grounds that the A.Sc.W. membership was not primarily based in engineering and partly on the grounds that this membership was unlikely to be able to pursue a militant industrial policy. Recent events have shown this view to be false.(14) Negotiations were held with APEX with a view to amalgamation, but again did not come to fruition; in the words of the Executive Committee Report to the TASS 1973 Conference:

> "The basic reason has been the unwillingness of APEX to regard engineering as its main sphere. This union (APEX) prefers to attempt to compete with ASTMS in the general white-collar field of commerce, banking, insurance etc." (15)

The amalgamation with the three blue-collar engineering unions is unlikely to produce a classical industrial union due to the existence of other particularly general unions in the field,yet the objective of an industrial union in engineering is official TASS policy although it still recruits outside engineering.(16)

Procedure agreements with respect to all membership categories from the relevant employers' organisation have not been forthcoming for the TASS period of the union's history. They were never fully achieved for

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(13) R.C. Conference Reports, 1971 and 1973.

(14) R.C. Conference Report, 1967 and ASTMS strikes of 1971-74.

(15) Report of E.C. to 1973 Conference, p.24.

(16) R.C. Conference Report, 1971, p.171.

either the DATA or AESD periods as there was a continued lag between the union's claim to procedural coverage and the employers acceptance of it nationally. However, this lack of national success did not prevent TASS from pursuing recognition at local or plant level and the leadership increasingly encouraged drawing office committees and groups of members to recruit outside their own occupational groups.(17) A long list of occupations from which recruits are being drawn is published regularly in the union's monthly journal.(18)

No precise information is available on the numerical strengths of the various occupational groups within the membership for any point in the union's history. All that can be said with any safety is that prior to 1961 the bulk of the membership were draughtsmen (recruited to the 'craft' mainly from blue-collar sources)(19) plus related occupations, e.g. tracers, planning engineers, estimators, etc., that this occupational grouping was probably declining as a proportion of the membership in the late 1950s and that it continued to decline during the 1960s, such that by January 1972 only some 70% of the membership were in the 'traditional occupations', i.e. pre-1961 occupations clustered around the 'draughtsmen'.(20)

1.2 Concentration and Density

Membership concentration in the sense of the proportion of membership employed by any one or a few employers, is not often used in discussions on trade unionism apart perhaps from those on the public sector or in regional or local situations. While it is not possible to present such concentration figures for TASS for different time periods, some indication

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(17) See for example, Roberts, Loveridge & Gennard, 'The Reluctant Militants', p.87, 1972.

(18) Such a list of occupations is attached as Appendix I.

(19) Mortimer, op.cit., p.415.

(20) Figure supplied by TASS Research Dept.

can be given for recent years which may represent an important trend and which may bear on the main theme of this study.

Thus, in 1972/3 approximately 50% of the membership was accounted for by 30 separate firms and 70,000 members, roughly 70%, were employed in 120 separate firms. (These figures do not allow for some 6,000 'single members' whose exclusion would increase the percentages to 53% and 75%.) Three separate firms accounted for some 19-24%; GEC Ltd., 7-10%; Rolls-Royce Ltd., 7-8%; and Hawker-Siddeley, 5-6%.(21) Since no statistics are available for earlier years, it cannot be concluded that the mergers 'boom' of the late 1960s and early 1970s alone produced this concentration, though the union's reaction to it is perhaps salutory in this respect. Thus:

> "Conference has recognised for a number of years the impact that monopolisation of industry will have upon the whole field of industrial relations. The 1969 R.C. Conference approved arrangements for organisation within the large combines".

The 1971 Conference subsequently approved detailed arrangements for the establishment of some 40 'combine' or 'group' industrial representation committees to be co-ordinated and serviced by a Divisional Organiser and E.C. member (in addition to their territorial duties) under the overall co-ordination of the Deputy General Secretary, thus tightening up the loose 'combines' organisation of earlier years.(22)

Looked at from the point of view of density of white-collar unionism, TASS achieved a marked degree of success among draughtsmen. Bain's work on the growth of white-collar unionism shows that density among draughtsmen in 1964 for all manufacturing industries (all of whom were organised by TASS) was 48.7%, the highest of any white-collar union and ranged from 5.8%

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(21) R.C. Conference Reports, 1973, p.23 and 164 for GEC; 1971, p.15 for R-R; TASS Research Dept. supplied figures for Hawker-Siddeley.

(22) R.C. Conference Report, 1971, p.166 and 169.

in Chemicals, through 50% in Metal Manufacturing and Electrical Engineering and 67% in Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering, to 80% in Vehicles.[23]

2. ORGANISATION AND CONSTITUTION[24]

Few changes have taken place in either the organisational or constitutional structure of TASS over its history which might bear on the subject matter of this study. The treatment here, therefore, is in the main static with relevant changes inserted where applicable.

2.1 Offices, Branches and Divisions

In its evidence to the Donovan Commission, the union stated that:

> "The basic unit of organisation in DATA is the office in which members are employed." (25)

Each 'office' is required by rule (dating from 1919) to elect a 'corresponding member' (CM), the TASS equivalent of a shop steward, and an 'office committee'. The CM's functions are varied and include the distribution (annually) of the individual salary census forms and the completion of the master census form[26] on general conditions of employment, etc., the monthly distribution of the union journal, the weekly

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(23) Bain, op.cit., Table 3.8, p.35.

(24) This section is included in order to aid the later analysis of the power-struggle within the union and of leadership implementation of militancy. The position given is at December 1973.

(25) Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, Minutes of Evidence no. 36, HMSO, 1966. See also Mortimer, op.cit., p.75.

(26) Individual census forms are filled in privately by each member and forwarded to the Divisional Organiser by the CM. The general statistics are compiled by the DO in such a way that no one individual's wages can be ascertained, and the stats. are then sent back to the CM for the perusal of his members; an 'open' copy is sent by the DO to headquarters. Also see below, p. 39 and 47.

distribution of the 'Vacancy List',[27] the distribution of all letters and literature received from the branch, Divisional Council (DC) and 'headquarters', as well as the normal negotiating functions of shop steward. He may also act as secretary to the 'office committee'.

Branches are groups of 'offices' in one or a few 'plants' in a specific geographical area, i.e. are based on place of employment rather than place of residence, (though the number of 'factory' branches is small), and are made up solely of lay members meeting monthly with sub-committees, e.g. the 'minimum wage committee'. Each branch is responsible for the election of its Divisional Council Delegate, (annual) Representative Council (RC) Conference Delegate and has one vote in each of the periodic elections for the Divisional Council Chairman, Secretary and Executive Committee Member (all lay members). With the exception of motions and amendments submitted by the Executive Committee, branches alone are responsible for motions and amendments to the supreme policy-making body, the RC Conference. Branches can mandate both their DC delegate and RC Conference Delegate. There were 171 branches in 1950, 199 in 1958 and 247 in 1973.

The Divisional Councils, i.e. groups of branches which are territorially based, have a full-time Divisional Organiser (DO) assigned to them by the Executive Committee. The DCs, made up of one delegate from each branch plus Chairman, Secretary, EC member and DO, are responsible for the month-to-month running of the Divisions,[28] lay members only having

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(27) Journals, one per member, and TASS News (Vacancy List) two per office, are posted by headquarters to the CM's private address, not to the branch, as is much of the general correspondence from both Divisional Council and EC. Various leadership pronouncements indicate that mailing to the CM's private address rather than the branch is seen as ensuring a greater likelihood that the material actually reaches the members in the CM's offices. See below, p. 40, for role of Vacancy List.

(28) Divisional Councils are not in fact responsible for a 'district rate' with respect to wages as Roberts et.al., op.cit., p.76 claim. The really operative rate is the nationally set 'minimum rate' of which more below, p. 39/ 48, though of course a 'Divisional average wage' will be used in negotiations on occasions.

voting powers. They are also responsible for certain Divisional commitments, e.g. holding youth and adult weekend schools, agreeing to the DO's monthly report on claims, disputes etc. to the EC and where applicable, the election of delegations to the regional TUCs and regional Labour Party conferences etc.

DCs can, and often do, make suggestions to the EC or send motions to the EC, as can branches, office committees and individual members, but perhaps the real strength of the DCs lies in their ability to mandate their EC member with respect to forthcoming issues at the EC. There were 14 DCs in 1950, 15 in 1958 and 26 in 1973.

2.2 Representative Council Conference

While branches and Divisional Councils are obviously policy-making bodies with respect to their particular level of operation, the supreme policy-making body is the Representative Council Conference held annually by rule (or more often if required).[29] RC Conference is made up of one delegate from each branch and with the exceptions noted below, only branch delegates have voting powers. On policy motions and amendments each delegate carries a vote equal to the (paying) branch membership, but on changes to rules (Rules Revision Conferences take place every three years)[30] and in electing officials, delegations and Conference committees, each delegate exercises one vote only. Given 171 branches in 1950 expanding to 247 in 1973, RC Conference remains a fairly intimate gathering.

Conference elects the union's President and Vice-President and both have full voting powers, the President serving for one year then becoming the 'immediate' Past President.

The Divisional EC members, the General Treasurer,[31] the General

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(29) Rule no. 57, sections a, b and c.

(30) Rule no. 57, section d, parts 2 and 3.

(31) General Treasurer - lay member elected by the EC.

Secretary, Deputy General Secretary, and the two Assistant Secretaries plus all the DOs attend Conference with full rights of participation in debate but with no voting powers.

Conference, however, does not directly elect the full-time officials (i.e. General Secretary, Deputy and Assistants and DOs who all serve for 'life') but does elect the committees which select them, these committees usually being composed of EC members, though Conference retains the right to accept or reject the choice of the committees.(32)

Thus while the EC is only formally responsible for the general management of the union between Conferences under policies laid down by Conference, the power of the Divisional mandate plus the almost constitutional right to select the full-time officers, places the EC in a powerful position. Decisions of the EC can, of course, be challenged by Conference, though policy decisions rather than personnel decisions would seem more likely to be overturned.(33)

The President chairs the EC and is charged by Conference to guard its rights and policies on the EC.

2.3 The Executive Committee

Membership of the EC has both a territorial and functional basis. The territorial element comprises the lay EC member elected by the branches in each Division, i.e. 26 territorially-based EC members in 1973. The functional members are of two kinds, lay and full-time. The former are the President, Vice President, 'immediate' Past President, General Treasurer, and a Women's Representative.(34) The full-time

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(32) This right of acceptance or rejection has always resulted in acceptance perhaps because the person selected has taken up the appointment prior to the exercise of the right, thus rejection would be tantamount to 'sacking'.

(33) See below, p.49/55, with reference to policy debates in the early 1950s.

(34) Women's Rep. - a product of the 1922 absorption of the Tracers' union and commitment to EC representation; elected by the National Women's Sub Committee which is made up of one delegate per Division.

officials are the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretary and two Assistant Secretaries. Only lay-members vote, so that as of 1973, there were 31 voting members and 4 non-voting members. While as in most unions the full-time officials and in particular the General Secretary, carry great influence in discussions and hence decisions at any level in the union (including the EC), the territorial vote is always able to command a majority over the functional vote should division occur.

It has been said of this organisational and constitutional framework that it has much in common with the fine balance of the Nineteenth Century craft association particularly in terms of the formal division of power within TASS,(35) and this has changed little if at all over the history of the union.

There have, of course, been changes in the scope of organisation, e.g. new branches and Divisional Councils, new sub-committees at all levels, and in the bureaucratic functions and posts relating to the number of full-time officials. There have also been changes in the balance of power between the various levels in the union, particularly during the "struggles for national power which have punctuated the union's history".(36) Some of these changes in organisation and in the 'balance of power' are dealt with in the next section on 'Leadership Ideology'.

Changes have also taken place in a whole range of advisory bodies set up over the union's history, and the previous section examined changes in 'combine advisory committees', for example.

3. LEADERSHIP IDEOLOGY

3.1 The Generally Accepted View

That TASS has a reputation not only for industrial militancy but also for a 'left-wing' bias across a whole range of policy issues and a 'left'

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(35) Roberts, et al., op.cit., p.76.

(36) Ibid., p.77.

dominated leadership, is well documented in academic sources.

Clegg, writing in 1970, has noted (as part of a wider survey):

> "There is a much smaller number of instances of continuous control by a left-wing alliance, including the Draughtsmen, among whom such an alliance has held power for nearly twenty years" (37)

and as already noted he describes such an alliance as:

> "Communists along with anyone who is prepared to vote with them. In many unions, this includes left-wing Labour Party supporters." (38)

Roberts, Loveridge and Gennard, writing on the period up to 1968, also accept the 'left-wing' dominance in the TASS leadership,(39) and accept Wootton's date of 1958 for the shift, formally, from 'right' to 'left' at EC level.(40) It will be shown below that the 'left' still dominates the leadership (as of 1973) so that accepting Wootton's date of 1958, the 'left' has been in control for fifteen years as against Clegg's twenty up to 1970 or twenty three up to 1973. This difference depends in fact upon the definition of 'leadership' used with respect to this particular union and is resolved if Clegg's period is taken to refer to RC Conference only (for the period prior to 1958) and Wootton's period to the EC, full-time officials and RC Conference (for the period post-1958).

3.2 The Two 'Parties'

It will perhaps expedite the work of this section (and of Chapter III on 'wages and industrial policy') if before a history of their relative strengths is given, something is said on the major differences between the two 'parties'.

Wootton indicates that the birth of the 'two-party' system(41)

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(37) Clegg, op.cit., p.97.

(38) ibid.

(39) Roberts et. al., op.cit., p.83.

(40) Wootton, op.cit., p.150.

(41) Wootton defines "'party' as a 'group of persons holding the same opinions, forming an opposing side' in controversial issues of Union policy". op.cit., f.n. p.141.

in TASS takes place in the 1940s over a bitter dispute on wages policy in which the Communist Party members in the union emerge as a small but cohesive group.[42] The dispute went as follows:

> "In 1940, the Executive Committee survived the first attack on its position ... but in the following year, it had to admit defeat. In 1942 ... again it was defeated .. (And) in 1943 ... after a hard battle ... and again in defiance of the Executive Committee ... (the opposition's) policy ... was at last securely established as an Association objective". (43)

Out of these policy battles emerged the 'two-party' system (the 'right' according to Wootton being the initiators) with policy programmes, group meetings, voting lists and chief whips on both sides at RC Conferences[44] which structured the policy debates and voting for official union positions from the late 1940s through until the mid-1960s and which resulted in the 'left' party replacing the 'right' as a majority on the EC in 1958.

The central difference between the two parties is to be found - in line with Clegg's description of 'left-wing alliance' - in different perceptions of the role of Communists[45] in the union. At one level this relates purely and simply to whether or not the non-Communist majority will tolerate them in the official structure of the union. Generally the 'right' in TASS was only prepared to work with them under the duress imposed by the democracy of the union, i.e. not to work with them would be undemocratic [46], while the non-Communist 'left' accepted them as part of the normal trade union scene.[47] At another level, however, the central difference relates to different perceptions of what (international)

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(42) Ibid., p.147.

(43) Ibid., p.146.

(44) Ibid., p.151.

(45) 'Communists' in both Clegg's and in Wootton's usage, refers to members of the Communist Party of Great Britain, the largest 'marxist' or 'communist' party in Britain. The other smaller groups are usually referred to in the labour movement as 'ultra-left', i.e. to the left of the C.P.G.B.

(46) Discrimination on certain political grounds in general and on Communists in particular was rejected by RC Conference in 1949.

(47) Wootton, op.cit., p.143, 144, 145 and 150.

capitalism is, how it operates and how it can be changed, and thus is about trade unionism's place under capitalism and about what policies the union should pursue both industrially and politically. Essentially this resolves itself into a question of ideologies and finds its expression in the union around the role of the mass party of the working class, the Labour Party, and in particular, Labour Governments. The 'right' usually accept the managed-capitalism approach of social democracy as an ideology, thus rejecting the class analysis of marxism, the inevitability of class struggle and the overthrow of capitalism as a social system. To a greater or lesser extent the non-Communist 'left' see marxism as an acceptable ideology and thus will work with Communists and accept Communist leadership.(48)

At the risk of over-simplifying the actual position in the union, 'left' and 'right' when used in this thesis with respect to the union imply marxist and anti-marxist social democratic respectively. When used to refer to the wider trade union and labour movement, the terms imply the broader, heterogeneous groupings of normal usage.

3.3 Relative Strengths of the 'Parties'

A survey of motions carried at annual RC Conferences from the mid-1940s to 1958 shows that on almost every policy issue the 'left' could command a majority. TASS policy on German rearmament, Suez, NATO, relationships with East European trade unions etc. was almost continuously on the 'left' within the British trade union movement.(49) The position on wages and industrial policy is detailed in the next chapter and some indication is also given there on how the 'left' conference isolated the 'right' EC and forced it into a partial implementation of policy. Thus Clegg's claim that TASS has been controlled since around 1950 by the 'left'

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(48) Ibid., p.144-145.

(49) RC Conference Reports, 1953, 54, 55, and 56.

is correct in so far as it relates to leadership on policy rather than leadership on implementation.

It would seem that it was much more difficult for the 'left' to gain majorities for full-time union officials posts or to unseat the sitting 'right-wing' EC members in the Divisions and a more gradual changeover at these levels is detailed by Wootton. Thus for the years up to and including 1958, the following changes took place. In terms of full-time officials appointed to 'headquarters', Wootton notes that

> "a virtual signal victory for the left was secured in 1948, when a dedicated leftist, J. E. Mortimer was appointed to the editorship of the Draughtsman. Four years later another ardent left-wing member of the Labour Party, G. H. Doughty ... was elected to the vacant General Secretaryship, in the most bitterly contested election in the whole history of the Union".

Both, however, and Doughty in particular, were selected with support outwith the 'left'; in effect the 'right' were not able to maintain a completely monolithic vote.(50) In retaliation to these 'left' victories, the 'right' majority on the EC was able in 1955, through altering the selection procedure, to select an anti-Communist(51) as Assistant General Secretary though while the appointment was allowed to stand, the RC Conference gave the EC a "severe drubbing".(52) (It can be noted at this juncture that this 1955 appointment is the last occasion for which it has been possible to find evidence that a 'right-winger' obtained a full-time post).

By 1955 therefore, all three 'headquarters' officials were Labour Party members split 2:1 in favour of the 'left'.

At the level of full-time Divisional Organiser, Wootton notes

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(50) Wootton, op.cit., p.148.

(51) Ibid.

(52) Ibid., p.149.

> "in 1948, when there were eight Divisional Organisers in the field, who split Right-Left in the proportion of 5:3 ... the balance of power gradually changed, until, with a new appointment in 1957, the ratio became perhaps 6:3 in favour of the Left".

Only one of the six was a Communist however.(53)

On the EC the balance gradually changed either by new 'left' members replacing 'right-wingers' or by some of the uncommitted moving 'left', such that by 1958 the balance depended on the election of the Vice-President. The result was a decisive shift to the 'left' in terms of the vote on the EC which the 'left' then consolidated by not re-electing the 'right-wing' Treasurer (an EC-elected appointment), replacing him by a "man of moderate Labour views" who voted with the 'left' thus effectively further reducing the 'right' vote on the EC.(54)

The 'right-wing's' reaction to this perfectly democratic move was bitter and highly undemocratic in terms of the union's constitution and perhaps went a long way towards removing their grass-roots support among the active membership.(55) Contrary to the union rules, a document was circulated amongst the membership which "claimed that the Executive Committee had fallen under Communist domination", and there was open talk of "secession" and "thirty or forty thousand marching out".(56) Whether Wootton, writing closer to the events than the present author is correct or not in his view that

> "... a breakaway of a substantial number of branches was a possibility, given vigorous leadership and the help - which would surely have been forthcoming - of press and television" (57),

the fact is that the 'left' which included Communists, took majority control

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(53) Ibid., p.149-150.

(54) Ibid., p.149. See also correspondence in DATA Journal for Jun., Jul., and Aug., 1958.

(55) See below, p. 127 and 128.

(56) Wootton, op.cit., p.150.

(57) Ibid., p.151.

in the union in 1958 and consolidated it in 1959 and 1960, in this latter year electing a "powerful Communist member of the Executive Committee" as Vice-President,(58) and have maintained that control ever since. This shift to 'left' majority control took place during a period of bitter anti-Communism in the British trade union and labour movement. Further detail is given in Chapter IV on membership responses to leadership policies.(59)

By way of concluding the pre-1958 period it is perhaps important to note that on Wootton's evidence it would seem that the telling points were that the 'right' activists reacted within the union in a hostile way to valid democratic decisions, themselves behaving undemocratically in 1955 and again in 1958, and that they were unable, perhaps because of this, to regain the policy initiative at RC Conference and thus present a credible alternative to the 'left'.(60)

A post-1958 estimate of the strength of the parties is difficult to give in the same degree of detail as for the pre-1958 period. TASS policy on all major issues has continued to be on the 'left' of the trade union movement reaching a high period in its campaigning against the 1966 Labour Government's Prices and Incomes policy and then against both 'In Place of Strife' and the 1971 Industrial Relations Act. To give two examples, longstanding TASS policy on complete opposition to US involvement in Vietnam and calling on the British government to dissociate itself from such involvement was eventually carried at both Labour Party and TUC Conferences(61) and the union is on record for the removal of all bans

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(58) Ibid., p.149.

(59) Anti-Communism perhaps reached its post-1945 high between 1956 - the Hungarian 'uprising' and the 20th Congress of the C.P. Soviet Union, and 1961 - the high Court trial of Communists for 'ballot rigging'. See p. 86 below.

(60) See below, p. 84-85.

(61) Reports of Labour Party Conference and TUC for 1967.

and proscriptions within the Labour Party.[62]

The position with respect to 'headquarters' staff is that with Mortimer's resignation from the editorship in 1968, Ken Gill, a Communist[63] was appointed replacement. Consequent upon a reorganisation in 1971, Gill was appointed Deputy General Secretary while another Communist, Harry Smith,[64] was appointed editor, a post which was reclassified as an Assistant Secretaryship with Bob Dickinson, the 'right's' 1955 appointment to Assistant General Secretary, also being regraded to Assistant Secretary in charge of administration. Thus by 1971, of the four 'headquarters' officials, two were in the Labour Party and two were members of the CPGB and since there is no evidence that either Doughty or Dickinson had changed their political positions, they split 3:1 in favour of the 'left'. In May 1974, Gill was appointed General Secretary on Doughty's retiral and John Forrester (previously a DO as Doughty, Dickinson, Gill and Smith had been prior to their appointments to 'headquarters') was appointed Deputy General Secretary; he sits on the Labour Party's NEC as a TASS-sponsored TU member and is a well-known Labour 'leftist', i.e. a 'marxist'.[65]

Little detailed information is available on the strength of the parties either among EC members or among DOs, though it seems likely not only that the 'left's' strength has increased among both groups (Wootton noted that soon after the 1958 change in 'government' the sub-committees appointed by Conference also reflected the change and this is of particular importance in selecting DOs, the 'selectors' usually being EC members)[66], but also that by the mid- to late-1960s the 'right' had ceased to exist as an

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(62) RC Conference Reports, 1972, p.151 and 1973 p.162-163.

(63) 'The Sunday Times', 8th September, 1974.

(64) Ibid.

(65) Public Statement at TASS Summer School, 1974, at which the present author was in attendance. John Forrester died in October 1978.

(66) Wootton, op.cit., p.149. See also p. 27 above.

organised force within the union at all. It is also likely that the Communists have maintained, perhaps even increased, their proportion of members among the EC and DOs as well as taking the General Secretaryship and Editorship.

Some corroborative material relative to these conclusions is found in an article written by a TASS member immediately prior to the 1973 Conference and published in the weekly paper of the International Socialists, the 'Socialist Worker'.(67) The author of the article is a "TASS office convener"(68) and was a branch delegate to the 1973 Conference. The article probably overstates the degree of Communist domination - no mention is made of Labour Party members - not least because it is written in opposition to the Communists in TASS and to Communists in general. The article is quoted here at some length in order to allow its tenor to be appreciated:

> "The leadership of TASS (is) provided predominantly by Communist Party members ... Faced with the open and vicious Tory attack on wages, TASS retreated. The once prized tradition of the union had been set aside. The leadership is no longer responsive to rank and file activity. Instead, the rank and file is encouraged to be submissive to the executive. There was always a possibility that this note of the leadership's song could become dominant. The tendency to believe it was more important to win a full-time organiser's job for a 'left' than to develop rank and file activity was always apparent. This preoccupation with manning the bureaucracy with 'lefts' had its most serious implications for the 'broad left'.
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> At every annual conference the regular broad left meeting (69) will attract 95-98 per cent of the delegates. The support given to it by activists is general and overwhelming.
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> Yet/

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(67) 'Socialist Worker', 5th May 1973, article entitled 'In Memory of a Great Union'. See also the articles of 27th April and 18th May, 1974.

(68) Ibid., Socialist Worker, May 1973.

(69) See Wootton on such 'meetings', op.cit., p.153.

> Yet in recent years, the broad left has been involved in no more than making a yearly list (70) of supported candidates for positions within the union. The situation has become ridiculous. The right wing has been vanquished long ago, but every time the broad left merely discusses the mechanics of electioneering ... some activists within the broad left are being increasingly excluded as the Communist Party asserts its domination. The Party now holds all the positions of strength inside TASS and has done so increasingly since amalgamation with the AEU two years ago."(71)

While this quotation throws no direct light on the numerical strength of the 'left' and of Communists within it at any level in TASS, and while it probably over-estimates the extent of Communist influence (as noted above, the role of Labour 'lefts' is not dealt with at all), and also of the numbers present at the RC Conference "broad left" meeting (95-98% of the delegates leaves only 2-5% as uncommitted or 'rights' which while possible seems highly improbable), it does nevertheless substantiate Clegg's 1970 view, Roberts et al's 1968 view and the general 'left' position which is apparent in the wide range of Conference policy from 1958 through to 1973.

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The picture that emerges is on the one hand of a tight-knit and intimate 'craft-type' organisational structure with the concomitant reliance on lay-member control at all levels leading to open hierarchical democracy. Membership growth was not markedly fast over the union's history as a whole and the bulk of the membership were still as of 1972, from the 'craft cluster' around the draughtsman. There was a marked degree of membership concentration by company of employment by the early 1970s, though it is impossible to be precise about this for earlier years. Organisationally,

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(70) See above, p. 30 on 'voting lists' and Wootton, op.cit., p.152 and 153.

(71) 'Socialist worker', op.cit., 1973. See the TASS leadership's reply to the charge that it retreated under the Tory Government in 1972-74 - TASS Journal, May, 1974.

the union remained small; the number of branches rose from 171 in 1950, to 199 in 1958 and 247 in 1973; these branches were grouped in divisions the number of which rose from 14 in 1950, to 15 in 1958 and to 26 in 1973; the numbers sitting on the executive committee rose from around 17 in 1950 to 35 in 1973 and the numbers attending the annual policy-making conference, from around 200 to just over 300.

On the other hand is the picture of bitter policy and personnel battles based on two party 'machines', out of which the 'left' emerge as dominant on policy as early as 1950 and as the democratically elected majority both on the EC and among the full-time divisional organisers in 1958. The 'rightwing' reacted undemocratically over both the appointment of the Assistant General Secretary in 1955 and the emergence of the 'left' majority on the EC in 1958. The 'left' thereafter as will be shown in the chapters which follow, coupled policy implementation to the earlier policy formation, making the union one of the most wage militant in Britain and leading it into amalgamation with the AEU and others.

CHAPTER III

TASS - WAGES AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY

For reasons which will become clear as this chapter develops, the history of the union with respect to wages and industrial policy can be split fairly easily in the first instance into two periods, pre-1951 and post-1951.

1. EARLY MILITANCY

Within a few years of its foundation, TASS had evolved a general policy on wages and industrial strategy. By 1914, within 15 months of its formation, a primitive 'statistical schedule' on wages and conditions had been devised and circulated to all unionised offices, the results collated nationally (i.e. centrally) and made available to the membership generally. This statistical collection has been carried out annually[1] since around 1921-23 with increasing sophistication.

1.1 Early Wages Strategy

In 1919 this statistical information which enabled the union to assess with reasonable accuracy the 'going rate' for draughtsmen of different age groups, was worked into a wages strategy. Firstly, the union intended to establish unilaterally a 'minimum rate' based on an evaluation of the 'going rate', below which no member was to accept new employment; generally, the minimum rate was seen as a 'target' for bargaining purposes for those below the 'rate' and maintenance of differentials with respect to the 'rate' was to be the objective of those getting above the

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(1) It is not supplemented by a monthly return from all CM's as claimed by Roberts et al., op.cit., p.82, though CMs are requested to submit a census return after each change in wages and working conditions. A modern 'census form' is attached as Appendix II.

'rate'. Secondly, all members were to be required to actually apply for jobs through the medium of the union though individuals could accept private offers of employment providing these were cleared with the relevant union authority. This was called the 'employment control' component.

When voting took place on this proposition - 'minimum rate/employment control' - known as the 'control scheme', over 80% of the membership of 10,911 voted and over 90% of those voting, voted in favour though given the rules attached to this particular vote, the majority in favour was not sufficient to enable the leadership to put the scheme into operation.(2)

Linked to this control scheme was the use of a 'vacancy list' which was circulated to all unionised offices on a monthly basis. This listed all those firms which had notified the union of job vacancies and who thereby received free national advertising of their vacancies, wages and conditions, providing these latter were acceptable to the union which usually meant those on or above the unilaterally set rates. The Vacancy List was also used to inform the membership of firms where conditions were particularly bad, a technique known as 'posting'.

In essence this early wages strategy envisaged very tight and detailed control of the supply of union labour to individual plants, transferring labour to those plants paying the 'minimum rate' or better, and reducing the supply to those plants paying less than the 'minimum rate'. It never became operational. In the depression of 1921 attention was concentrated on the 'minimum rate' component though the membership were still encouraged to avail themselves of the statistical information held at head office when thinking of moving to another job.

This use of minimum rates (either defensively as a 'line to be held' or offensively as a 'height to be gained') coupled to the Vacancy List (used to inform the membership of both acceptable and unacceptable

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(2) Mortimer, op.cit., p.70. The very high poll obtained in this and other early elections and ballots has remained a feature of national ballots in the union, the most significant one in recent years being the 70% vote on the question of amalgamation with the AEU and others in 1970.

firms) became from 1921 one part of a two-part strategy which remained union policy up until the late 1940s as shown on p. 44 below.

1.2 Early Strike Policy

The other part of the strategy was known as the 'strike-in-detail'. This concept was first proposed nationally in the union in an article in its journal, The Draughtsman, in November, 1918,(3) in contradistinction to the 'go-slow' - called the 'ca canny' - and the all-out strike - called the 'open' strike. The 'strike-in-detail' entailed the gradual rundown of the drawing office staff of the firm with which the union was in dispute by encouraging men to leave individually to take up jobs with other firms, the union helping to find such jobs or providing unemployment pay in the event of no suitable vacancies being found. The union had also of course to be able to control the supply of labour to the firm and thus 'posting' such firms in the Vacancy List linked the minimum rate concept to that of the strike-in-detail.

The strike-in-detail was seen as less expensive than the open strike which might take a considerable time to "hurt" an employer due to the tendency for draughtsmen to work well in front of production schedules and thus their bargaining power was initially weaker.(4) It was also seen as less "harmful to the dignity of labour"(5) than the go-slow. However, both the open strike and the go-slow were not entirely ruled out; indeed the former was used nearly as often in the first ten years as was the strike-in-detail. Nevertheless, this latter was still formal policy as late as 1945 when it was once more incorporated in a successful resolution

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(3) Mortimer, p.53/54.

(4) Great stress was laid by the 'left' during the 1969-70 amalgamation debate on the need for support from the 'shop-floor' to help overcome this initial lack of bargaining strength, that this would be more forthcoming under amalgamation.

(5) Mortimer, op.cit., p.53.

before RC Conference.(6)

Some measure of the scope and success of the combined strategy - 'minimum rates', the Vacancy List and the 'strike-in-detail' - in the early years is given by Mortimer who notes that:

> "In the first half of 1920 this kind of pressure (i.e. strike in detail and posting in the Vacancy List) proved to be effective in gaining improved conditions at no less than twenty firms".

And with respect to minimum rates and the Vacancy List:

> "In the first half of 1920 over 900 (acceptable) vacancies were circulated ..." (7)

2. LIMITED MILITANCY

2.1 The Early Strike Record

However, as the accompanying Table II shows, strikes were few and far between. The ten years 1925 to 1934 were completely strike-free(8) and there were few strikes from 1935 through to 1950. Throughout most of the period 1925 to 1945 only the 'minimum rate'/Vacancy List component of the wages strategy was operational and given the general economic climate of the late 1920s and the 1930s and the tendency to reduce money wages(9) in the early 1930s, the main use of this component was simply defensive.(10) The level of unemployment was relatively high among draughtsmen throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and in each year from 1920 to 1950 the union paid out substantial unemployment benefit from its own funds and, from 1928-1948, from Government sources.(11) This certainly

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(6) Ibid., p.261.

(7) Ibid., p.78.

(8) Ibid., p.144 and 179.

(9) The average wages for draughtsmen over 30 as determined by the 'census' fell in each year from 1930 to 1933 inclusive, Mortimer, op.cit., p.472.

(10) Mortimer, op.cit., p.179, says: "/AESD members had for a number of years prior to 1935/ little alternative but to defend what they had already established, to resist wage cuts and to hope that there would be sufficient work available to keep them in employment."

(11) Ibid., p.459.

TABLE II - MAIN DISPUTES - 1919-1950

YEAR	FIRM	AREA	TOTAL NO. OF DISPUTES IN YEAR	REASON FOR DISPUTE AND MEMBERS INVOLVED	ACTION: STRIKE PAY	ACTION: STRIKE-IN-DETAIL	ACTION: POST.VAC. LIST	COMMENTS FROM THE OFFICIAL HISTORY
1919	Holroyd	Rochdale		Wages & Hours	X			First recorded official dispute.
	Kerr Stuart & Co.	Stone on Trent		Wages 17				
	T.C. Thompsons	Manchester		Wages & 6 Hours		X	X	
	Sandycroft Foundry Co.	Chester		N.A.				
1920	Grayson's Ltd	Liverpool		Wages O/T pay 15 Hours	X			Use of 'strike-in-detail' in a number of disputes
	Drydock Co.	Ayrshire		O/T pay 31	X			
1921	Royce Ltd	Manchester		Wage Cuts + "a number of serious and protracted disputes" - see Mortimer, p.90	X	X	X	Strike lasted for 18 months
1922/23	English Elect. Co.	Rugby		Wages 40	X		X	
	Mechans Ltd			N.A.				
	Rankin & Blackmore			N.A.				
1924	Glenfield & Kennedy	Kilmarnock		Wages	X			
	And. Barclay	"		O/T Pay and 60 Holidays	X			
	Kilmarnock Eng. Co.	"			X			
	Thompson & Sons	Sunderland		Wages	X			
1935	Coal & Allied Ind's Ltd	Seaham		O/T payment	X			
1943	Av.Roe & Co.	Manchester		Wages				"Biggest single wartime dispute" - Mortimer, p.231. The suggestion being that there were others.
1946	Cossors	N.London		Sympathy strike				+ "a number of disputes involving .. withdrawals of labour" Mortimer p.267.
	Fords	Dagenham		Negotiations rights				
1949	Vandervell Products Ltd	London		Victimisation				First post-war official dispute
1950	Air Industrial Developments	Walsall		Member unfairly dismissed				

SOURCES: This table is built up from material contained in Mortimer's official history and checked against other union sources.

affected both the ability of the union to finance strike activity and the membership's desire to strike.

Nevertheless, while the economic climate certainly militated against militant activity to improve wages and conditions, there is no evidence to suggest that militant activity was used to maintain wages and conditions. There is no material support from RC Conference Reports for example, for the proposition that the leadership in particular adopted a militant posture, e.g. asking for, and not receiving, a militant response from the membership.

Yet there is a policy continuity between the early 1920s position and the 1945-50 position in terms of the projected use of the strike-in-detail. This concept, a major component of the wages strategy of the early 1920s, reappears in a successful resolution of the 1945 RC Conference and again in 1950 in what might be called 'militant policy foundation resolutions' of the late 1940s and early 1950s and there is thus some semblance of continuity. This continuity is in essence superficial as shown both by the lack of militancy displayed by the leadership and by the low propensity to strike of the membership as indicated in Table II. The apparent continuity hides a basic shift in wages strategy from a spontaneous individualistic and piece-meal approach to a co-ordinated collective national level approach. The 'left' were able in the decade of the 1940s to organise opposition to the "piece-meal" bargaining policy of the 'rightwing' EC. In opposition to unco-ordinated plant bargaining, the 'left' posed "national advance through national negotiations" and this was seen as both an alternative wages strategy and the basis of a belief in "trade unionism as class action" as against the prevailing individualism.(12)

'National advance through national negotiations' was accepted as policy in 1945 after the 'left' had won a series of skirmishes around

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(12) See Roberts, et al., op.cit., p.83.

the question of wages policy.[13] At the core of the policy was national negotiations with the Engineering Employers' Federation on the question of implementation of the union's unilaterally set minimum rates, this being backed up by militant activity at office level. With respect to national negotiations, the successful resolution called for a national ballot to be held when "appropriate ... (on) ... the question of strike action to establish the minimum rate". The militant activity at office level was to be the strike-in-detail.[14]

This shift from a piece-meal non-militant bargaining policy to national negotiations for the establishment of national minimum rates is important in terms of a fundamental change in strategy. Equally important however, is the explicit attachment of the need for organised militant activity to make the strategy effective. As will be shown below, when the 'left' were able to implement the strategy beginning in 1951 and 1952, the strike-in-detail was not used. Normal all-out strike action became the norm. The strike-in-detail was as far as can be ascertained, never actually used between 1945 and 1950. The proper interpretation of its inclusion in policy between 1945 and 1950 would seem to be that the emerging 'left' used it symbolically or expediently to establish the foundations of militancy by linking a very early policy which had been used infrequently in the twenty years prior to 1945 but which had never been rescinded, to its own wages strategy of national advance through national negotiations backed up by militant action.

2.2 The "Continuation of Militancy" Thesis

It is this policy continuity with respect to the strike-in-detail which more than anything else gives rise to the implication in Mortimer's history of the union of a continuation of militancy thesis.[15] As shown

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(13) See the quote from Wootton, p. 30.

(14) Mortimer, op.cit., p.261.

(15) The other major foundation for this implication in Mortimer's history is continued quotes from editorials in the 'Draughtsman', the editor of which was a "syndicalist" and in a distinct minority in the leadership. See Mortimer, op.cit., p.87, 134, 191 and 211, for example.

above there is no basis in fact from the actual record of strike activity or from leadership pronouncements to support such a thesis. Further, basically the same leadership who in the 1930s did not call for militant activity on wages, argued against such activity, as will be shown below, in the 1950s.

It needs to be recorded however that Mortimer indicates that the union did display a willingness to take part in wider trade union questions, from giving donations to assist a strike of agricultural workers and to the Daily Herald in the 1920s for example, to circulating the membership for money to assist trade unionists in Germany and Austria who "were ... suffering persecution from the fascists", in the 1930s. He also indicates that early in its history the union affiliated to the TUC (1918), the Scottish TUC (1923), the CSEU (1943) and Labour Party (1944-45).(16) But all these taken together, while Mortimer builds wage militancy on to them, do not alter the factual record that the leadership did not encourage wage militancy for some twenty years and the membership displayed little if any wage militancy. It is not clear in fact, whether Mortimer is implying that the membership were militant but leaderless or that the leadership were militant and could obtain no membership response.

Wootton argues a different proposition with respect to the 'new militancy' of the 1940s. His interpretation of the policy difference is as follows: the philosophy of the ruling leadership was challenged in the late 1930s and early 1940s by a nascent 'left-wing' advancing a militant collective wages policy as against the leadership's "policy of guerilla warfare, that is, of piecemeal advance achieved by pressure on vulnerable firms". There is no evidence to support Wootton's claim of "guerilla warfare ... on vulnerable firms", indeed the term guerilla warfare first appears in the 1951 RC Conference report in support of the

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(16) Mortimer, op.cit., p.107 and 177; see also list of donations, p.460-462 and list of affiliations, p.446.

'left's policy on minimum rates.[17] To the extent that 'guerilla warfare' implies a central aim or strategy, it seems more applicable to the post-1960 period rather than the late 1930s and early 1940s.[18]

In concluding this section of the union's history, i.e. 1913 to 1950, then with the exception of the first few years, the period can be viewed from the point of view of wages and industrial policy, as one of relatively little militancy at both leadership and membership levels though the decade of the 1940s was, in effect, a transitional period of increasing militancy at official (conference) level leading to the militant years of the post-1950 period. This having been said, however, Mortimer is almost certainly correct in stressing the role of the Vacancy List linked to the centralised statistical material, in the development of the union's wages policy.[19] Roberts et al. also emphasise that the build-up in the pre-war period of expertise in statistical collection and the tendency to the institutionalisation of the use of this data-bank by the membership, was carried over into the militant period. Thus

> "the system that was evolved for individual bargaining became the basis upon which the Association was able to build a most effective strategy and organisation for collective bargaining in a full-employment economy. In the changed market conditions following the second world war, the Association's statistical service became the focus of a network of communications which enabled DATA to become unique in its use of 'pattern bargaining' and in the strategic use of the strike".(20)

Some of the implications contained in this quote will be challenged later in this study, in particular that the strategy was directed towards 'collective bargaining' and that this was bound up with 'pattern bargaining'

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(17) Wootton, op.cit., p.146 and RC Conference, 1951, p.110.

(18) See below, p. 57.

(19) Mortimer, op.cit., p.78.

(20) Roberts et al., p.82.

and the 'strategic' use of the strike.

From another point of view, this use of statistical information and circulation of the Vacancy List can be looked at as the provision of 'market information' which would otherwise not have been readily available.

3. CONSTRAINED MILITANCY

Writing in the 1973 Report to RC Conference, the union's General Treasurer stated

> "Since January 1st, 1951 (to December 31st 1972) over £2,920,000 has been paid to 36,783 members at 659 firms, representing an average of approximately £132,000 per annum.
>
> During this period, the percentage of union funds used to support our members in pursuance of their claims is the highest of any trade union in Britain and reflects the continuing high level of industrial activity by our Section (of the Amalgamated Union) and its members".

Adding in expenditure on strikes of £199,870 for 1973 gives a total expenditure on disputes over the period 1951 to 1973 inclusive of £3,119,870.(21)

By comparison with the expenditure on disputes by the two other white-collar unions with bases in engineering, APEX and ASTMS, TASS's total is enormous. APEX spent little on strike pay before 1968 while its expenditure totalled £112,100 for the years 1969-70 and ASTMS's total dispute expenditure for the years 1960-70 was only £230,500 and it also spent little prior to 1960.(22) In the high strike years of the late 1960s this expenditure reached a peak, and in 1970 all three unions spent over 50% of their total benefit expenditure on dispute pay. Of all the unions for which a disputes expenditure comparison is possible for the years 1960-70, the highest spender in this category is

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(20) Report of the 1973 RC Conference, p.67; also see Table III, p.50.

(22) Indeed in a joint strike action in the mid-50s TASS 'gifted' ASSET (ASTMS) some £35,000 to pay dispute benefit during the dispute - ASSET could not afford the necessary dispute pay; see RC Conf. Report, 1958, p.201. See also Mortimer, op.cit., p.378. TASS was the largest of the three unions in 1960 with 67,000 members; APEX had 60,000 and ASCW/ASSET had 37,000. By 1979, TASS had 87,000 members and the others 101,000 and 124,000 respectively. It is doubtful if membership size contributed to the differences in dispute expenditure.

TASS with 41% of total expenditure going on disputes.(23) Some further comparison is gained from Figure I which gives total trade union dispute expenditure per member per annum and similar figures for TASS.

Annual expenditure on dispute benefit for the period 1951 to 1973 plus the number of strikes per annum and numbers of workers involved, is given in Table III. Annual expenditure on dispute benefit is also shown separately in Figure II. Thus expenditure in the ten years 1951-1960 totalled £350,208; in the ten years 1961-1970 the total was £2,026,817; while the total for the three years 1971 to 1973 was £730,897 approximately.

There were on average 9.2 strikes per annum in the years 1951-60, 24 strikes per annum for the years 1961-70 and 82 strikes per annum for the three years 1971-73.(24)

While no exact figures can be given for the average number of members involved in disputes per annum (see Table III), the average figure has almost certainly risen.

3.1 The Policy Foundation for Financially-Supported Militancy

The 'policy basis' for this dispute expenditure is found in a series of resolutions accepted by Conferences in the period 1950 to 1953 though no clear interpretation by the leadership at EC level emerges until 1958-60.

A number of resolutions from the period 1940 to 1950 have been mentioned on pages 44 and 45 above and these formed the basis for a series of 'minimum wage' campaigns which were run almost every year after 1948. At the 1950 RC Conference the following 'policy foundation' motion was put and accepted:

> "MINIMUM RATES
>
> (This RC) believes that the time has come for a serious and practical attempt to better (members) conditions ... This RC accordingly instructs the EC in conjunction with the divisional offices to conduct,

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(23) Figures taken from Latta, 'Trade Union Finance', B.J.I.R., Nov. 72.

(24) No figures are available for strikes in 1960. Figures relate to 'main disputes', see Table III.

TABLE III. TABLE OF ANNUAL EXPENDITURE ON DISPUTE BENEFIT, NUMBER OF DISPUTES AND NUMBER OF WORKERS INVOLVED

YEAR	DISPUTE BENEFIT	BENEVOLENT GRANTS TO MEMBERS ON DISPUTE	NUMBER OF 'MAIN DISPUTES' (1)	TOTAL NO. OF DISPUTES	NO. OF MEMBERS INVOLVED IN 'MAIN DISPUTES'	TOTAL NO. OF MEMBERS INVOLVED
1951	322		3)		N.A.	
1952	1,815		4)		N.A.	
1953	3,593	20,874	5) -	27	N.A.	
1954	2,450	12,663	7)		229	
1955	536	4,402	10)		394	
1956	6,375	45,555	18) -	75	692	
1957	10,793	74,587	18)		1760	
1958	2,214	13,309	7)		270	
1959	7,105	51,916	11)		670	
			) -	59		
1960	91,699		N.A.)		N.A.	
1961	139,015		13)		1308	
1962	136,629		17	27	2021	
1963	158,464		19	19	2473	
1964	113,705		18	31	1361	
1965	128,956		16	39	1558	
1966	260,666		23	27	2187	
1967	321,933		34	76	1957	
1968	126,240		26	35	1295	
1969	192,990		18	32	1925	
1970	448,219		56	57	3371	
1971	262,241		67	67	3031	
1972	268,786		91	91	N.A.	
1973	199,870		87	87	N.A.	

SOURCES: RELEVANT REPORTS OF RC CONFERENCES

(1) 'Main Disputes' are those mentioned in Conference Reports by name and location of firm and plant. As can be seen from the Table the total number of strikes for each year is not available. The difference between the number of 'main disputes' and the total number of disputes refers, it would seem, to very small, short and unsupported disputes.

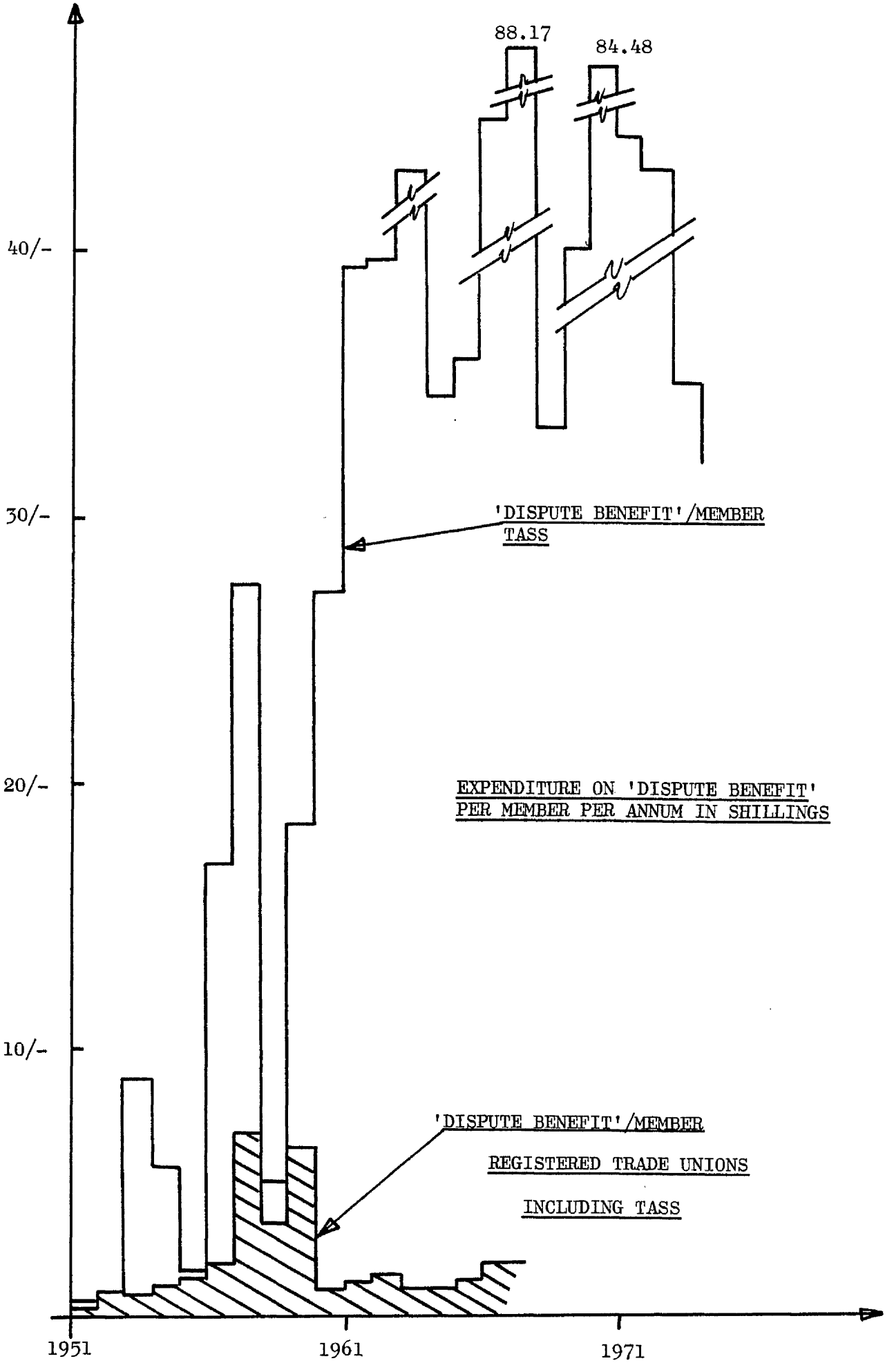
88.17
84.48
40/-
30/-
20/-
10/-
'DISPUTE BENEFIT'/MEMBER
TASS
EXPENDITURE ON 'DISPUTE BENEFIT'
PER MEMBER PER ANNUM IN SHILLINGS
'DISPUTE BENEFIT'/MEMBER
REGISTERED TRADE UNIONS
INCLUDING TASS
1951
1961
1971

FIG. I

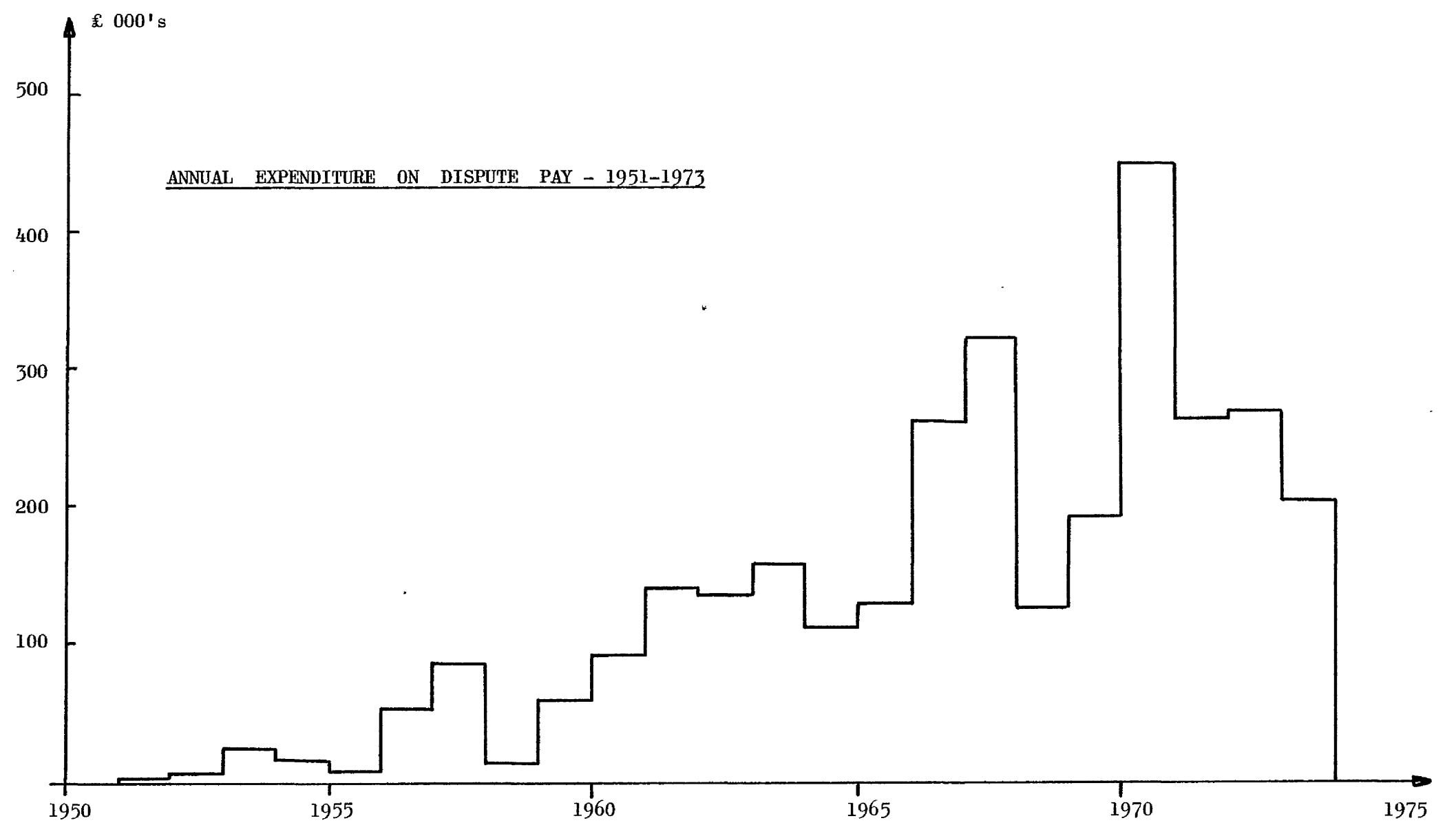
£ 000's
500
400
300
200
100
ANNUAL EXPENDITURE ON DISPUTE PAY - 1951-1973
1950
1955
1960
1965
1970
1975

FIG. II

> if necessary, a survey of the offices most widely affected by non-payment of the AESD rates and to promote within these, an intensive campaign for the operation of the strike in detail viewing with the utmost sympathy those cases where it may be necessary to pay enhanced compensation to members.
>
> This RC instructs the EC to prosecute this campaign during the ensuing year with the utmost vigour and to report back fully to the 1951 RC".(25)

This rather broad formulation was reinforced in 1952 as follows:

> "WAGES AND MINIMUM WAGE RATES
>
> This RC endorses the action of the EC in increasing the minimum rates and instructs the EC to approach the Employers' Federation for the establishment by agreement of the Association's minimum rates. In the event of no agreement being reached, this Conference instructs the EC to give maximum support to any appropriate action taken by our members.
>
> Conference further instructs the EC to keep within constant review the wage position, and authorises the EC to make any increase in the minimum wage rates necessary to protect the economic position of our members, including an approach to the Employers' Federation for a suitable advance in wages in line with the change in the minimum rates. In the event of no agreement being reached the maximum support shall be given by the EC to any appropriate action taken by the members for the purpose of establishing the claim, and for this purpose Conference gives all active support to the CSEU in the common effort to defend the economic conditions of the workers."(26)
>
> (emphasis added)

In the period 1950-1958 the EC's general interpretation of these instructions was that where a group of members requested strike pay this was forthcoming, usually at 100% nett wages, though as Wootton notes "when a strike has been mounted ... the Right (wing) within the privacy of the Executive Committee, may have expressed doubts and reservations" before agreeing to strike pay.(27) The EC did not go out of its way either to generate such requests or to pressurise the divisional organisers into generating them. Nevertheless, the pattern of paying 100% nett wages -

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(25) Report of 1950, RC Conference, p.161-165.

(26) Report of 1952, RC Conference, p.241-248.

(27) Wootton, op.cit., p.145.

the interpretation of "maximum support"-was laid down in the 1951-1958 period. As shown in Table III the bulk of the money spent on strikes for the period 1951 to 1959 is recorded under 'Benevolent Grants' and the rest under 'Dispute Benefit'. This suggests that such expenditure was viewed by the 'rightwing' majority on the EC including the Treasurer, as representing a passing phase rather than a rigid long-term policy.

There is no evidence arising from the 1951-1958 period to suggest that the level of applications for strike pay was such that selection of strikes was forced on the EC. Every application for strike pay was capable of being met by the union in financial terms. As will be shown below, the post-1958 period differs markedly in this respect and 'strike selection' from a 'strike waiting list' (built up with EC exhortation) does take place so that policy implementation meets Wootton's concept of guerilla warfare on vulnerable firms.(28)

3.2 A Technique of 'Left' Advance

Conference reports for the period 1951-1958 invariably contain either motions openly criticising the EC's lack of activity on wages or, what amounts to the same thing, details of attempts to move 'reference back' of the relevant section of the EC's report to Conference detailing its activity arising from previous Conference motions.(29)

This quite legitimate demand for an explanation of the EC's conduct with respect to prior policy decisions or the charge that such policy had not been carried out positively enough which was the substance of critical motions and 'references back', seems to have been used by the 'left' to progressively isolate the 'right' majority on the EC by winning over the 'middle ground' Conference delegates and/or swaying branches to the 'left'

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(28) See above, p. 46 and below, p. 57.

(29) E.g. 1950 RC Report, p. 153 on 'reference back' and 1953 RC Report, p. 230 on 'lack of activity'.

between Conferences on the basis of such criticisms. An example of how this was perceived at RC Conference perhaps highlights this mechanism. During the debate on the (eventually successful) motion on 'Minimum Rates' quoted at length on p. 49 the following statements were made by delegates opposing the motion or attempting to amend it to remove its implied criticisms. Thus from the shorthand transcript:

> "Mr. L. R. Sleaman (Southampton) ... remarked that his branch were slightly amazed to see the (first) paragraph. They thought it was a direct attack upon the EC and the integrity of the divisional organisers. It was their firm belief that the divisional organisers had intensively carried out the minimum wage campaign."

Further:

> "Mr. E. L. Hughes (Peterborough) ... (argued) that if the motion was carried in its original form there would be a repetition of what they had already seen that morning, a constant stream of delegates going up to the rostrum and attacking the EC for not carrying out a previous RC resolution".(30)

3.3 Links with the Broader TU Movement

By the early 1960s the range of maximum support strike issues had expanded and RC Conference "had authorised the EC to give full support on minimum rates, three weeks holidays, the 35-hour week and 100% membership",(31) though most strikes over the whole period 1951-73 were over wages issues and were linked to the annual wage campaign.

However, this seemingly independent and to some extent unique "maximum support" policy was not in fact completely isolated from the broader trade union movement. From its affiliation to the CSEU in 1943 TASS's wages policy was linked to that of the CSEU in general and the

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(30) RC Conference Report, 1950, p.164-165.

(31) RC Conference Report, 1962, p.371.

AEU in particular. Thus at the 1953 Conference, for example, the following motions were carried:

> "WAGES, POLICY AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH CSEU
>
> ... Conference pledges its full support to the CSE Unions and confirms the need for vigorous campaigning in conjunction with the other unions in common efforts to defend the economic conditions of the workers and to raise their living standards.
>
> WAGE CLAIM
>
> That this RC authorises the EC in conjunction with the CSE Unions, to take appropriate action to initiate a wage claim on a 15% basis ..." (32)

This relationship with the manual unions led Roberts et al. to note that since the Engineering Employers' Federation insisted on settling the claims of the manual unions first, TASS generally initiated its national campaign by local bargaining designed to restore the differentials disturbed by the manual workers' settlement.(33) As late as January 1962 when the CSEU called a one-day token stoppage in support of a wage claim, the TASS EC called "upon all members at firms where shop workers take action ... to take similar action in support of our national wage claims."(34)

On the other hand, from mid-1962 onwards more requests for dispute benefit were received than could be met financially, i.e. there was an almost continuous 'strike waiting list', so that while TASS continued to be active in the CSEU in a broad way, the EC attempted to shift the emphasis away from 'following in the wake' of the CSEU and AEU towards a more independent wages policy as detailed below. Thus from 1962 onwards, while references are made at Conferences to the helpful role of the AEU and CSEU in wage claims (this is particularly noticeable in arguments in favour of amalgamation with the AEU with respect to claims at plant level),(35) no motions

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(32) RC Conference Report, 1953, p.385 on 'Motions Carried". See also the 1952 motion quoted on p. 53.

(33) Roberts et al., op.cit., p.84.

(34) RC Conference Report, 1962, EC Report p.12.

(35) RC Conference Reports, 1968 and 1969.

on wages policy specifically mention co-operation and/or dependence on these organisations nationally as was the case in the 1940s and 1950s. From this it can be argued that the use of 'pattern bargaining' in an independent way and to achieve an independent wages policy only became operational in the period from 1962-63. TASS therefore became "unique in its use of 'pattern bargaining' and in the strategic use of the strike" with the concomitant highly centralised control, linked to a "network of communications"(36) no earlier than 1962/63 though of course there were indications of this 'uniqueness' prior to 1962.

4. INDEPENDENT MILITANCY

This independent use of 'pattern bargaining' by TASS can be simplified and stylised as follows. The presentation is based on material from various motions and debates at Conferences.

4.1 'Pattern Bargaining'

In the few months prior to national negotiations with the employers on a (wage) claim, the EC would choose those firms from the 'strike waiting list' which it considered would be capable of achieving settlements that would show the claim had been met by federated firms (usually those which it was assumed the Employer's Federation would consider significant). It could also be used to exhort other groups of members not only to lodge claims but also to push them through 'procedure'. All groups or offices were requested to submit such claims at the beginning of a 'wage campaign'. This would not only increase the numbers on the waiting list but might result in the necessary increases in some firms without

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(36) See quote from Roberts et al. on p.47 above. For detailed discussion of 'pattern bargaining' see: Seltzer, 'Pattern Bargaining and the United Steelworkers', Journal of Pol. Econ., Aug., 1951 and in the Monthly Labor Review, Feb., 1961; and Levinson, 'Pattern Bargaining: A Case Study of the Automobile Workers', Qtly. Journal of Economics, May 1960.

resort to strike action.

After the conclusion of national negotiations (or in the event of no agreement being reached) strike selection would take place to 'pattern' the negotiated or established 'key' increases across the membership usually in the form of 'maintenance of differentials'. Thus both 'pattern setting' and 'pattern following' were attempted after 1962 rather than simply 'pattern following' the manual workers as was largely the case prior to 1962 as noted on p. 56 above. The 'Vacancy List', circulated on a weekly basis throughout the period, would be used as the main means of mass communication as outlined on p. 25 above, coupled to DC and branch level activity.

This wage campaign 'strategy' is apparent in Conference-supported motions as far apart as 1962 and 1971. In a 1962 debate on "Wage Differentials" the following motion was carried:

> "This RC urges intensified organised activity at all levels of DATA structure, particularly in the offices, before and during national wage claims, to make possible increased differentials existing between ourselves and the manual workers in settlement of claims with the Employers' Federation".
> (emphasis added)

In another motion carried at the same Conference, the RC

> "agrees that the EC shall continue to have authority to provide full support in future disputes affecting members pressing for Conference Policies".

Indeed in a debate on 'Industrial Disputes and DATA Funds' at the 1962 Conference, it is quite apparent from the General Secretary's statements that a strike waiting list had built up.(37)

At the 1968 Conference the following resolution was accepted:

> "This RC instructs the EC to press for an acceptable national agreement ... in accordance with DATA's

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(37) RC Conference Report, 1962, p.368-380, 440 and 441.

policies with the Employers' Federation. Conference calls on members to assist the EC by domestic action on local claims." (38)
(emphasis added)

And in 1971, after the EC had failed to reach agreement with the Engineering Employers' Federation and had terminated the National Minimum Wages Agreement with the Federation, the RC urged

> "all members at office level to submit claims in accordance with existing DATA national wages policy, this to be improved in all cases where conditions make this possible; the EC to have overall authority in selecting those cases requiring DATA funds to pursue."(39)

/By 1974, as a result of the amalgamation into the AUEW, RC Conference accepted that "TASS shall endeavour to participate in national claims with the Engineering Section and whenever possible, take part in joint claims with other union members at their factories, for improvement in wages and conditions,"(40) though at the present time of writing this has not become operational./

4.2 Overview of Wages Policy, 1951-1973

It is possible, therefore, to outline TASS's general wages and industrial policy over the main period of concern to this study. From 1951 through to 1958-60 there was a fairly continuous build-up of expenditure on disputes - mainly on wages disputes - based on an outlook expressed in Conference industrial policy which saw such activity as essential to the aims as agreed by Conference. The major change which is apparent after 1958 is that the EC actively encouraged such activity as against its passive posture of the pre-58 period and that efforts directed towards an independent wages strategy are apparent by 1962-63.

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(38) RC Conference Report, 1968, p.154.
(39) RC Conference Report, 1971, p.174.
(40) RC Conference Report, 1974, p.140.

Annual expenditure on disputes continued to rise with few exceptions over the decade of the 1960s, reaching a peak in 1970. The number of disputes per annum showed a similar trend and the increases in both annual average expenditure on disputes and the numbers of disputes for the decade of the 1960s over those of the 1950s have continued into the 1970s, and wages policy has accounted for the bulk of this activity over the period as a whole associated increasingly with annual wage campaigns.

Two more recent trends are perhaps worth noting at this point. Firstly in 1967, the union instituted a scheme known as 'Divisional Development Funds' which allowed the separate Divisional Councils to hold a certain amount of money to finance local disputes although the dispute still required EC authorisation.(41) Thus the highly centralised control was maintained while drawing the divisions financially into the activity. Figures for such Divisional-level activity are not available. (Some indication is given below in terms of expenditure - see p. 69). Coupled to this there is evidence that the EC and RC Conference have encouraged members to strike without "full support". Thus for the years 1972 and 1973 a number of strikers received "donations"(42) which are in effect nominal payments made by the EC to members in lieu of wages lost during (short) disputes, i.e. members striking without EC permission or support receive some reimbursement, [and this "flexibility" with respect to dispute pay was accepted by Conference in 1974.] (43) The years 1967 to 1969 also saw the introduction of such non-strike activity as 'working without enthusiasm', 'days of rest, cleaning, meditation etc.' which seem to one writer to have been successful(44) though they are not now used.

Secondly, 'maximum support' has itself undergone change. The 100% nett wages figure was reduced in 1967 to 80% nett wages and further

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(41) Report of RC Conference, 1967, p.42.

(42) RC Conference Reports, 1972, 73, 74, Sections on Finance.

(43) RC Conference Report, 1974, Successful motion on Dispute Pay, p.140.

(44) Clegg, op.cit., p.300.

reduced to 60% or £15 in 1971, or if members are on strike with members of another section of the AUEW, then strike pay of £6 per week is paid, i.e. the Engineering Section rate.(45) This reduction in dispute benefit to the individual striker has also been coupled since 1965 to an institutionalised appeal for extra cash payments from members over and above subscriptions, ('the first weeks increase donation scheme' - see p.68 below), to help maintain the high level of dispute activity.

While these changes may reflect a financial problem, this has not yet, as of 1973, been translated into decreasing absolute financial commitment on average on behalf of the leadership or in reduced dispute activity on behalf of the membership.

5. MILITANCY AND POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

In concluding this section on 'wages and industrial policy' attention must be given to a previously unmentioned expectation of the 'left' leadership with respect to the effects of strike militancy in particular and industrial militancy in general. That is, given that the 'left' argued that militancy was necessary to maintain and improve wages and conditions, they also expected that industrial militancy would lead the membership firstly to be more 'trade union conscious'and secondly that this consciousness would eventually be translated into 'political or class consciousness'.

Reference will be made in later chapters to analyses of the concepts of trade union and class consciousness. The immediate intention is to outline the leadership's expectations in these areas. This presents a difficulty. Nowhere in the available material is there an explicit statement of these expectations, possibly because claims to be setting out to change members' outlooks or ideology would either be interpreted

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(45) RC Conference Reports, 1968, p.380-389 and 1971, p.114-116.

as pretentious, or would be seen by the membership as subversive or both. Such claims would be counter-productive.

Nevertheless the whole tenor of the 'left's' leadership suggests that such expectations existed. In particular the role of the union's monthly journal firstly under Mortimer's editorship and then under both Gill and Smith, was almost certainly seen as politically educational. The quite explicit class analysis in almost all major editorials and leadership articles over the whole period from 1949 onwards must make the union's journal one of the longest-running 'leftwing' periodicals in the trade union movement. The general method of presentation of the expectations was to argue that industrial militancy for economic ends - 'economism' in Marxist terminology - would eventually prove ineffective in providing solutions to the economic problems facing the WORKING CLASS so that the class would eventually turn, given political leadership, to political action to solve economic problems, i.e. they would become CLASS CONSCIOUS. Industrial militancy provided the basis for TRADE UNION CONSCIOUSNESS which was seen as a necessary precondition for class consciousness.(46) By stating the proposition in this way the references to the membership were to some extent hidden in the term 'class'.

There are some specific indications of such 'consciousness' expectations. For example, Wootton, who had access to Executive Committee meetings for a period, and who personally interviewed most of the national leadership of the period of the late 1950s, noted:

> "A few (of the leadership), primarily the Communists, credit strikes with an almost therapeutic value, toning up the membership in a particular establishment, healing old weaknesses, although perhaps the most appropriate metaphor is still the hackneyed military one in which the strike is the equivalent of the armed patrol."(47)

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(46) E.g. see the article in TASS journal of Nov., 1968. See also the view from Roberts et al. on p. 44 above, on the 'left's' view of 'Trade Unionism as Class Action'.

(47) Wootton, op.cit., p.144.

A 'left' delegate to the 1967 RC Conference drew the conclusion that the strike militancy policy had in fact made the membership more trade union conscious,[48] suggesting perhaps that this had been expected to occur.

The most explicit statement of the 'consciousness expectation' is seen in reflection as it were, in the reasons adduced by the leadership for the large majority vote in favour of amalgamation with the AEU in 1970. In an unsigned - therefore leadership - article in the July journal of that year, the proposition is put thus:

> "To decide to amalgamate with another union while successful required a level of understanding and an ability to anticipate the future needs of our membership not usually found in the rank and file of any union.
>
> This is not to say that the ordinary members of any union lack intelligence, but is an expression of the pragmatism inherent in British trade unionism.
>
> ... The three-to-one majority repeated itself many times throughout the union, HIGHLIGHTING A NUMBER OF FEATURES WHICH COULD ONLY BE THE SUBJECT OF SPECULATION PREVIOUSLY.
>
> One was the wide support of the industrial and social logic expressed by the union's leadership.
>
> Another was the LONG ACCEPTED but never proved unity of outlook of a social stratum throughout a whole nation and beyond. (It is doubtful whether any other country could produce the evenly developed consciousness portrayed in the vote. Divergence in regions is much more a dominant feature in countries without the long history of industrial capitalism which is ours.)
>
> An all-important factor is the heightened consciousness of a membership which has now a lengthy tradition of militancy and a cohesiveness born of a unity between policy and action".
>
> (emphasis added)

This excerpt contains the classical Marxist formulation and expectation - role of the leadership, homogeneity of stratum or class interest and industrial activity leading to heightened consciousness.

Thus, in conclusion, the policy of industrial militancy was seen

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(48) RC Conference Report, 1967, p.381.

by the 'left' as performing two inter-related functions - maintaining and improving wages and conditions and raising the consciousness of the membership.

6. FINANCE AND MILITANCY

Finance is treated here at some length with two interests in view and since neither relate to the pre-1958 period, only the post-1958 period is considered. Firstly, while membership response to the high level of strike pay provided by the TASS leadership might be one way of measuring the success of the 'militant policy' phase of the union's history, another perhaps complementary one might be the response of the membership to the appeals for extra financial aid mentioned above, to support the high level of dispute pay. Secondly, it may be instructive to look at a possible financial constraint from the point of view of amalgamation, i.e. the view which links union assets, or rather lack of them, with the desire to amalgamate.

6.1 Subscriptions/Average Contributions

Membership subscriptions are the major source of income for the union as with all unions and traditionally TASS's annual membership subscriptions have been high relative to those of other unions.(49)

It is difficult to compare subscription levels between unions due to different subscriptions rates based on age or 'skill' class, or sometimes on wage level, but some information can be obtained from the article by Latta referred to previously. In order to remove some of the difficulties Latta uses average contributions per member per annum which, while not necessarily coming close to subscription per annum, is sufficient for present purposes.(50) Thus in 1960, out of 39 unions for which reasonable

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(49) Latta, op.cit., p.398.

(50) Ibid., p.396-399.

comparisons could be made, TASS came tenth highest in terms of the average annual contribution per member, excluding the political fund, and had moved to fourth highest out of the same 39 unions in 1970, the figures being £3.62 and £8.11 respectively against averages of £2.85 and £4.61 for all registered unions.(51) Out of the eight white-collar unions included in the thirty-nine,(52) TASS was placed highest in terms of average contributions in both 1960 and 1970.

In terms of the highest increase in per capita contributions over the period, TASS ranked third out of 39 with an increase of 124% against an average for all registered unions of 61.8%. Once again TASS was top white-collar union and its increase of 124% compares with that of APEX with 85% and ASTMS with 27.2%. Neither of these unions were in the top ten in terms of average contributions in either 1960 or 1970, thus in 1970 both had figures of less than £6.02 (the tenth highest figure in 1970) against TASS's £8.11.(53)

That the subscriptions in TASS were well above those of ASTMS in particular, did cause some concern to the TASS leadership and on a number of occasions the leadership pointed to a (short-run) negative relationship between increased subscriptions and membership.(54)

6.2 Investment Income and Per Capita Assets

Over the period of Latta's study TASS was not as dependent on membership subscriptions as were some other unions. In neither 1960 nor 1970 does TASS appear in the top ten unions out of the 39 with the highest percentage of income derived from contributions while - to continue the comparison with APEX and ASTMS - both these unions do so appear. In fact, in 1960 TASS was in the top ten unions which had the highest

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(51) Ibid.

(52) I.e. TASS, ASTMS, APEX, CSU, TSSA, IRSF, NUBE and the CPSA.

(53) Latta, op.cit., p.399.

(54) For example, see TASS Journal, Apr., 1964, p.19.

percentage of income from investments, being ranked ninth with 13.6% - again the top white-collar union. By 1970, however, the union had dropped out of the top ten in terms of investment income.(55)

In terms of per capita assets, TASS ranked sixth highest in 1960 with £18.90 as against an average of £10.58 for all registered unions and again was top white-collar union, but by 1970 the union had dropped out of this 'top ten' and ceased to be top white-collar union in this category.(56) Over the period TASS had the second lowest percentage rise in per capita assets of all 39 unions, a negative 32% - the worst figure of all white-collar unions.(57)

Nevertheless, this still placed TASS above both APEX and ASTMS in terms of per capita assets in 1970. The TASS figure was £12.85 against £2.30 for ASTMS and while an accurate figure cannot be given for APEX, Latta's statistics show that it could not have been above £9.1.(58)

6.3 Financial Militancy?

The use of special levies has a long history in TASS. As early as 1920/21 a levy of 3d. rising within months to 1s.6d. per week was imposed to ease the payment of unemployment benefit(59) and with few exceptions unemployment benefit and levies are directly related.(60)

The two post-1945 exceptions occurred in 'lock-out' situations. The first, in 1967, was a dispute with the shipbuilding employers in which the national membership of 1,443 was involved - the bulk of them

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(55) Latta, op. cit., p.400.

(56) Ibid., p.405.

(57) Ibid., p.403 - Latta argues that this decline was due to the high expenditure on strikes.

(58) Ibid., p.405.

(59) Mortimer, op. cit., p.458.

(60) Levies are imposed under the rules of the Union . Members must therefore pay them.

'locked-out' - at a cost to the union of £195,038 in strike pay. A levy of approximately 50p. per member per month was imposed for a short period raising a total of around £55,000.(61) In addition to this some £55,500 was raised in special appeals both to the membership and to other unionists etc., although some of this figure would have been raised even if the lock-out had not taken place.(62) The levy alone covered over 25% of the expenditure on the 'lock-out'. Of the £55,500 raised by appeal, roughly £35,000 was raised inside TASS and £20,000 outside, so that TASS membership covered approximately 45% of the expenditure on the 'lock-out' or 28% of the total dispute expenditure in 1967 of £321,932.(63)

The second levy not associated with unemployment benefit was imposed in 1970 during a major dispute at the Coventry establishments of Rolls Royce Ltd. Around 1,000 members were involved, the majority of them 'locked-out', at a cost to the union of £239,428 in dispute pay. A levy of approximately 25p. per member per month was imposed raising a total amount of £46,000. In addition to this, £54,500 was raised from the membership in a special appeal, although again some of this money would have been raised in the absence of the dispute.(64) Thus the levy covered 19% of the expenditure on the dispute in terms of strike pay. Adding in the money from the special appeal, the TASS membership covered approximately 43% of the expenditure on the dispute or 22% of the total dispute expenditure in 1970 of £448,219.(65)

The only post-World War II levy imposed in relation to unemployment benefit took place in 1971 and was operational from July of that year up until July 1973. The levy averaged 15p. per month per member and over

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(61) RC Conference Report, 1968, p.112; RC Conference Report, 1967, p.366.

(62) See below, p. 68.

(63) See Table III and RC Conference Report, 1968, p.112-113.

(64) See p. 68 below.

(65) See Table III and RC Conference Report, 1971, p.85.

the twenty four months produced £430,704 against a total expenditure on unemployment benefit over the thirty six months of 1971 to the end of 1973 of £552,037, i.e. the levy covered 78% of expenditure. The rules applying to this levy guaranteed its use for unemployment benefit only.

'Special Appeals' and calls for 'donations' are of course a part of trade union procedure usually linked to some special event, e.g. costly disputes, Red Cross aid, special legal defence funds, etc. and on these general and usually infrequent matters, TASS is no exception. The area wherein TASS may stand alone is in its attempt to institutionalise such 'appeals/donations' on roughly an annual basis, linked to its militant industrial policy. This relates to the appeal that 'the first week's wage increase should be donated to the union'.(66) This proposition was proposed and accepted at the 1965 RC Conference and every year since then the leadership has campaigned to get the membership to donate their first week's wage increase (in each year) to union funds whether or not this increase has been achieved with official union aid.(67) In the nine years for which figures are available, i.e. 1965-73, a total of £180,595 has been raised in this way representing 8% of the total dispute expenditure over the same period. (Annual figures are given in Table IV).

As was noted above, some of this money was raised as a direct result of the two 'lock-out' situations and as can be seen from Table IV, the two 'lock out' years were also the highest income years in terms of the appeal. If allowance is made for the 'lock-out' appeals, the total raised by appeal of £180,595 would be reduced by up to £90,000. On the other hand, the introduction in 1967 of the 'Divisional Development Funds' meant that donations which might have otherwise been sent to national level were syphoned off at Divisional level, i.e. Divisional Development Funds were supported by local donations and although the EC could help DDFs

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(66) RC Conference 1965, p.579. See also p. 61 above.

(67) See successful motion reiterating the need for the scheme, p.150, 1972 RC Conference Report.

TABLE IV

INCOME FROM THE 'FIRST WEEKS WAGE INCREASE SCHEME' AND LOCK-OUT APPEALS		
YEAR	AMOUNT £'s	AS A % OF DISPUTE BENEFIT
1965	17,367	13.4
1966	9,786	3.8
1967	55,489	17.2
1968	5,239	4.1
1969	9,963	5.1
1970	54,501	12.2
1971	22,094	8.4
1972	23,264	8.6
1973	2,892	1.4
TOTAL	200,595	

SOURCE: Relevant Reports of RC Conference

TABLE V

ANNUAL EXPENDITURE FROM 'DIVISIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND' For No. 1 Division	
YEAR	AMOUNT - £'s
1967	N.A.
1968	N.A.
1969	612
1970	2,000
1971	374
1972	643
1973	N.A.
TOTAL	3,629

SOURCE: DIVISIONAL ORGANISER.

financially, there is no evidence of support from central funds. Unfortunately these Funds, which were used in the main to finance strike and related activity,[68] were not incorporated in the National Accounts of the union in such a way that the flow of funds through the Divisions can be assessed. Thus there is no way of quantifying the total amount of money raised under the 'first week's increase scheme'.[69]

In concluding this section one point should be noted regarding union funds which sheds some light on how the leadership assessed the finance available to it for expenditure on disputes and which almost certainly influenced the timing of subscription increases, levies and appeals. Faced with the need to allocate the flow of funds between current expenditure and reserves, the leadership opted for a fixed reserve in money rather than real terms so that anything over and above reserves and ordinary running expenses could be used for such things as dispute expenditure. Should this latter look like depressing reserves too much, subscriptions could be increased, levies imposed and special appeals launched. This position is accepted explicitly as early as 1964 when Conference after "congratulating all those concerned on the very high level of industrial activity", goes on to accept

> "that our ability to maintain a high level of industrial activity, and to continue our present practice of paying full pay to members engaged in dispute, is restricted by the financial resources available, and therefore instructs the EC to carry out a continuous educational campaign to convince our members of the necessity of paying a higher level of subscription. ... Conference also agrees that if, as a result of (industrial activity), the EC believes that the funds of the Association are likely to drop below £800,000, then the EC shall use the power which it possesses within the rules to impose a levy upon the membership to secure additional income and thus avoid too heavy a drain on the Association's funds." (70)

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(68) RC Conference Report, p.43, 1967.

(69) Some indication of such expenditure is given (in Table V) by the annual expenditure in one Division, the total being £3,629. There is no way of assessing how typical this expenditure was in relation to the other Divisions.

(70) RC Conference 1964, p.457-458.

This remained the position up until 1974 when a motion before Conference suggested that the operative figure with respect to the instituting of a levy to protect the funds, should be £900,000 and an amendment to the motion suggested £1,000,000. In the event the Conference agreed to give the EC "power to institute a levy when the funds fall below a viable level"[71] and while this represents a move to some flexibility with respect to the 'floor' to the national funds, at the present time of writing, actual practice would seem to set the 'floor' at £1,000,000. This figure has remained substantially unchanged since 1951.[72]

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While a broader and more detached view of the development of the union's wages policy is undertaken in Section 4 of Chapter V, a few pertinent conclusions can be drawn here. Firstly, the "many strikes/ high strike pay" policy shows a fairly consistent expansion from its inception in 1951 through to 1973. By the early 1960s this controlled militancy was by and large independent of the behaviour of other trade union organisations and was used to pattern-bargain, or even more strongly, pattern-impose settlements across the membership. By the late 1960s the membership was being encouraged to finance local divisional strike activity by donations rather than relying entirely on central funds out of subscriptions, and two levies were imposed with fair success to support central funds during lock-outs. In the early 1970s the unemployment benefit levy was a marked success and there is some indication both that members were prepared to accept substantial reductions in strike pay and still go on strike and that some members were prepared to strike without strike pay.

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(71) RC Conference Report, 1974, p.100-102 and p.140.

(72) See RC Conference Reports and monthly journals, 1951 to 1973.

While the leadership's success in carrying through the foregoing policies entailed a weakening of the union's financial resources relative to other unions, there is no reason to suppose that this was a major factor in deciding to amalgamate with the AEU and others.

Finally, the 'left' leadership in RC Conference, and, from the evidence in the union's journal, in the EC and in the branches, spent a disproportionately large amount of time and effort on the wages aspect of union policy and held the view that militant activity on wages coupled to 'left-wing' ideology would make the membership trade union conscious and eventually class conscious.

CHAPTER IV

TASS - INCOMES POLICY INITIATIVES, 1945-1963

This chapter is concerned with the TASS leadership's interpretation of and responses to incomes policy and with the membership's responses in the light of the positions taken up by both the leadership and Government. Attention is centred on Government initiatives 1945 to 1963, and with the material presented in Section 3 of Chapter III, provides a fairly complete picture of the union's wages and industrial policy for that period.

1. THE 1948-51 WAGE FREEZE

The return of a Labour Government in 1945 committed to a programme which included inter alia the maintenance of full employment, extensive nationalisation and major legislation on social services, brought into being a state of affairs which had been central to the aims of the dominant forces in the British trade union movement. Not only was there the return of the first majority Labour Government committed to a programme which the TUC had been instrumental in forging, but it was also returned at a time when extensive co-operation between Government and TUC had become an accepted part of the management of the economy. Such co-operation was at the centre of the TUC's aims[1] and the new government seemed amenable to a continuation of this state of affairs.

When, under the impact of a worsening economic situation, particularly a severe deterioration in the Balance of Payments deficit, the Government demanded in effect a wage freeze in its White Paper 'Statement on Personal Incomes, Costs and Prices' in early February 1948, the General Council of the TUC, while maintaining some semblance of negotiations, capitulated

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(1) Throughout this chapter reliance is placed for TUC/government incomes policy positions, on Dorfman, 'Wage Politics in Britain', 1973.

to all major government demands. The 'bargain' struck between the Government, employers and the TUC in March, 1948, was aimed at stabilising the economy in the face of the deterioration in the balance of payments. Its central goal according to all three parties was to boost exports both by restraining export prices and by increasing the output or potential output from the export industries through direction of labour to those industries. From the point of view of restraining export prices, this was to be achieved by the TUC accepting a wage freeze, the employers' organisations limiting dividends and profits, and the government enforcing strong price controls.

1.1 Interpretations and Responses within TASS

The TASS leadership was no doubt kept fully conversant with the course of negotiations between TUC and Government which took place from October 1946 to March 1948 if only because the editor of its journal was the president of the TUC for most of the period.(2) He was not, however, a member of the 'inner cabinet' of the General Council who negotiated directly with Atlee and other Ministers. The EC's response to the 'bargain' of March 1948 was one of unqualified support. At both the special conference of Executive Committees of affiliated unions held in March 1948 and at the full TUC of that year, the TASS delegation voted in favour of the General Council's interpretation of the 'bargain' as embodied in the General Council-supported motions.(3)

At the RC Conference held a few days after the March special conference, the nascent 'left', who had already won a policy position for a fairly militant national wages policy,(4) challenged the leadership's position by initiating a debate on the issue through moving reference back

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(2) Mortimer, op.cit., p.442.

(3) Ibid., p.282-283.

(4) See p. 45 above.

of the relevant section of the EC Report.[5] The debate which took place is interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, it allows an assessment to be made of the different interpretations of the immediate issues relating to the 1948-51 wage freeze. Secondly, it represents the beginning of the brief yet bitter battle on incomes policy out of which the 'left' emerged as dominant on the issue. This leads on to an analysis of this policy shift both in terms of interpretations and of the mechanics of winning Conference for the shift. Thirdly, some of the questions raised in the debate - Are wage increases the cause of inflation? Are there 'special cases'? Should the TU movement react more sympathetically to a Labour Government than to a Tory Government? - are questions of central importance which recur in almost all subsequent debates on the issue in the union, (and for that matter in the broad Labour Movement), so that detailed treatment of the debate throws some light on these general issues as well as on trends within the union.

The leadership's arguments as put forward by the Assistant General Secretary, were that the Government's proposals, including the wage freeze, were the only options open to the TU movement if living standards were to be maintained and eventually improved. Firms must remain profitable, real incomes remain static and productivity must improve. In essence, continued full employment had created a set of circumstances in which wage control had become essential.[6] This having been said, the Assistant General Secretary went on to justify the leadership's position by appealing to the fact that a large majority of affiliated unions had also come to accept the wage freeze and the 'bargain'. As he put it:

> "From the contributions to the debate (at the special conference, it was evident) that many of the trade union representatives were coming to the position when they felt that the trade unions would seriously have to consider the implementations of some common

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(5) Reference back was a frequently used 'left' tactic - see p. 54-55.

(6) R.C. Conference Report, 1948, p. 130-131.

> wages policy. He would put it no higher than that, but it was evident that there was a change, or at least a changing attitude towards that particular matter (that is, wage control)" (7)

The EC report, to which this quotation was a partial defence from 'left' attack, spelled out the leadership's view of the link between wage increases and price inflation thus:

> "Any further increase in the general level of incomes without any corresponding increase in the general level of output would only lead to an increase in the inflationary pressure upon prices".(8)

In thus accepting the philosophy of the 'bargain' the EC understood that TASS could not consider itself a special case and

> "... in the light of certain (wages) motions ... on the (RC) Conference agenda, delegates should note that delegates at the (special) Conference ... were asked not to take the view that they could accept the report on the basis that its provisions affected every other union but their own. (The Assistant General Secretary) asked delegates, when considering the report, not to take the view that it affected every other union but the Draughtsmen's Association".(9)

Further, delegates should not be swayed by the argument that this was a capitulation to a Labour Government which a Tory Government would not have obtained:

> "(It) was a very different matter for the organised TU movement, which had helped to put a certain government in power and supplied it with some of its ablest people, to discipline itself".(10)

While the 'left' challenged almost all of these statements during the debate, a reading of the verbatim record indicates that no concerted attack was made and no coherent alternative was offered. Two things were noticeable by their omission - the 'loyalty' question did not become an issue and no EC member spoke in favour of the 'left' opposition.

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(7) Ibid.

(8) Ibid., p.137.

(9) Ibid., p.133.

(10) Ibid.

On the immediate causes of the crisis, 'left' spokesmen argued that while it was certainly true that there had been a deterioration in the trade balance, this itself was only a reflection of Government foreign policy, particularly overseas expenditure on military matters and other capital outflow both leading to a drain on capital investment in British industry and thus low productivity output.(11) Further, wage increases were not the cause of inflation. The

> "spiral of profits and any inflationary tendency in the economy could be laid at the door of the profit-making capitalists ... Since 1945 wage increases in general industry had risen by 16 per cent, whereas net profits, after taxation, had risen by 39 per cent. This inflationary pressure came from the profit motive."(12)

In rejecting wage increases as the cause of inflation and in arguing different reasons for the Balance of Payments crises, the 'left' rejected the wage freeze and thus also rejected any recourse to a 'special case' argument. The EC nevertheless carried the Conference and the reference back was defeated.

Although the EC continued to support wage restraint up until the Special TUC Conference in January 1950, disaffection deepened as time went on. In June, 1948, the EC asked the General Council to press the Government to carry out its side of the 'bargain'. At the 1949 Congress the TASS delegation voted to amend the General Council's motion, calling on the General Council to submit detailed plans to solve the crisis. After the September 1949 devaluation of the £ the EC moved into opposition and voted against the General Council in January 1950.(13)

It is perhaps important to note that as TASS progressed from 'collaboration' to 'opposition', the 'left' became the accredited spokesmen.

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(11) Ibid., p.135-137.

(12) Ibid., p.139.

(13) Mortimer, op.cit., p.282-283, p.301 and p.303. Dorfman, op.cit., p.68, argues that in devaluing, the Government admitted the failure of its policy as a solution to the crisis.

Mortimer spoke on TASS's behalf at both the 1949 TUC and the January 1950 Special Conference and led for the EC at the 1950 RC Conference at which an EC-supported motion effectively rejecting wage restraint was unanimously accepted.(14)

This EC-supported motion represents a transitional policy position in the shift from 'right' to 'left' on incomes policy and is quoted here in full in order to compare it with the 1948 position and the 'left's' successful policy position of 1952.

> "This RC Conference reaffirms its strong dissatisfaction at the very high level of industrial and commercial profits which tend unnecessarily to inflate prices; and is concerned that the major share of the rewards of increased production during the last two years should have gone to the owners of industry.
>
> Conference recognises that in conditions of full employment trade union wage policy must be formulated with close regard to wider economic objectives, but cannot accept that this implies that there is any justification at the present time, when productivity is rising and when profits are at exorbitant levels, for a reduction in the living standards of wage earners.
>
> Conference reaffirms its belief that wage increases are justifiable:
>
> (a) as a reward for increased production;
>
> (b) to adjust the incomes of workers below a reasonable standard of subsistence;
>
> (c) to attract workers to essential undermanned industries, and
>
> (d) to safeguard those wage-differentials within an industry which are essential as incentives for skill, craftsmanship and special training.
>
> Conference accepts the necessity for cuts in Government expenditure to curb inflationary pressure, but regrets that economies have been made (a) in the capital investment industry, and (b) in the housing programme; whilst at the same time defence expenditure continues to rise to a figure substantially higher than the 1949 Budget estimate.
>
> Conference realises that greater efficiency and productivity in British industry, with a consequent raising of the purchasing power of wages, will help towards the achievement of a higher standard of life, and therefore affirms its support for the policy of the CSEU for the more effective

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(14) Mortimer, op.cit., p.302, p.304 and RC Conference Report, 1950, p.198.

> planning of the Engineering industry, and endorses the efforts made by (TASS) during the past year to stimulate the interest of draughtsmen in industrial production.
>
> This RC Conference, therefore, instructs the EC to place a resolution on the agenda for the Trade Union Congress, and to remind Congress of that part of their own 1949 TUC resolution which stated 'that Congress unhesitatingly rejects proposals which suggest that a permanent solution of the nation's difficulties could only be achieved by the lowering of wages, the lengthening of hours or a contraction of the social services!" (15)

On the basis of this motion the TASS delegation voted against the General Council's position at the September 1950 TUC and thus helped to defeat the wage restraint policy. The delegation also voted in favour of the ETU's successful resolution calling on the General Council to oppose restraint and abandon any further policy of restraint.(16)

To all intents and purposes this rejection of wage restraint at the 1950 TUC sounded the demise of trade union majority support for incomes policy until the TUC of September 1965, although the General Council continued to support 'moderation' throughout the 1950s.(17)

However, to complete the union's policy response to the issues raised by the 1948-51 wage freeze, attention must be given to the 1952 RC Conference which was held immediately after the Tory Government's budget of that year. The necessary two-thirds majority of Conference votes was obtained to discuss a branch-sponsored emergency resolution on the budget. The motion read:

> "That this RC Conference condemns the Tory Budget's savage attack on working people's living standards in the interests of higher profits and war preparations. We, therefore, call upon the General Council of the TUC to take immediate action to defend the conditions of the working class, and to work towards the end of the Tory Government".(18)

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(15) RC Conf. Report, 1950, p.197-202.

(16) Mortimer, op.cit., p.304-305.

(17) See Dorfman, op.cit., p.81-85.

(18) RC Conf. Report, 1952, p.366.

This was unanimously accepted by Conference (the EC while it did not openly support the motion, did not openly oppose it) and was the basis upon which Doughty, the General Secretary, seconded an unsuccessful ETU motion at the 1952 TUC rejecting the Government's "policy of so-called restraint or moderation designed to secure the withholding of ... wage claims".(19) This 1952 emergency motion and the actions based on it, brought policy on wage control into line with the militant 'left wing' policies on minimum rates, strike pay, etc., as outlined in Chapter II.

In comparing the shift in policy from 1948 to 1952 in terms of interpretation of the problem and of the solutions to it, the early position falls within Dorfman's concept of "collaboration", i.e. allegiance was given by the 'right wing' leadership of the union to a 'right wing' General Council and a 'right wing' social democratic Government. The 1950 motion quoted in full above, represents a shift from such 'collaboration' only to the extent that since the Government had not complied with the terms of the 'bargain', the union could no longer support it. The motion accepts on the one hand Keynesian demand management, e.g. "cuts in government expenditure to curb inflationary pressures" and the need to "formulate (union wage policy) with close regard to wider economic objectives". On the other hand, it accepts orthodox micro-economic market allocation incentives to justify wage increases and thus comes close to justifying a 'special case' approach, and only on this latter point does the policy content of the motion differ greatly from that of the Government. If the Government had kept its side of the 'bargain' a reading of this motion would imply acceptance of the 'bargain'. It is possible, of course, taken in the context of the power struggle in the union at that time, that given the Government's failure, the formulation of the motion suited the 'left' since it meant in practice a vote against the wage freeze and that a more extreme motion, ruled as falling at the Conference,

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(19) RC Conf. Report, 1953, p.32.

was run to point up the actual moderation of the successful motion.

The 1952 position while not explicitly 'leftwing', rejects by implication the managed-capitalism approach of earlier resolutions. It talks specifically about the working class, defending its conditions etc. and in fact laid down a policy foundation which, while it was made more explicit in later years, never fundamentally changed, i.e. a class-based analysis.

1.2 Responses to Productivity Bargaining

This shift in interpretation can also be seen in a related area of policy which developed in parallel with the 1948-51 wage freeze. This was the question of productivity. After the December 1948 TUC affiliated EC's conference on productivity came out in favour of increasing productivity through joint management-worker committees, the union set up a national Productivity Sub-Committee and held delegate conferences on the issue in a number of divisions. The Sub-Committee was wound up in 1951 after a national delegate conference, under pressure from

> "a succession of branch delegates ... (who) expressed the view that it was impossible to discuss the question of productivity to the exclusion of many other aspects of economic policy. They referred particularly to the burden of rearmament, the operation of the monopolies and restrictive arrangements in industry ... (and) ... that since the series of productivity conferences had been started there had been a substantial increase in productivity in engineering but that the major share of the benefit had gone to the employers and not to the workers." (20)

The conclusion that questions of improving productivity and of sharing out the rewards cannot be separated from wider issues of economic and political policy is perhaps a more explicit indication of the 'left's' thinking on incomes policy and related matters than the "defence of the working class" concept in the successful 1952 motion quoted above. It

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(20) Mortimer, op.cit., p.290.

is still nevertheless only the embryonic form of the later policy position of the 1960s which see questions of incomes policy and productivity bargaining as being against the interests of the working class under capitalism and only in the class's interests under socialism. Essentially the 'left' viewed economic and political issues as interpenetrated and in all subsequent debates this interpenetration overshadows any analysis in terms of what is called 'positive economics'.

2. WAGE PAUSES, 1956 and 1961/2

Two things stand out sharply with respect to the economic crises and wage restraint initiatives of 1956 and 1961/2 as compared with the situation in 1948. Firstly for whatever reasons there was not the same sense of urgency in the negotiations which took place as there was in 1948 and secondly, the trade union movement or at least some very powerful unions with leaders on the General Council of the TUC had moved away from the 'collaborationist' position typical of the General Council in the post-war years up until 1956. Thus while the General Council's overall position through the 1950s and early 1960s can be viewed as favouring 'moderation' in wage claims, the Council was not prepared to enter into wage 'bargains' either in 1956 or in 1961.

The Tory Government failed completely to obtain any co-operation from the TUC for its wage restraint proposals of 1956 and in order to salvage something of the economic policy package it introduced in 1961, it had to trade off its public sector "pay pause" for TUC co-operation in the National Economic Development Council.(21)

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(21) Dorfman, op.cit., p.113-114.

2.1 TASS Responses

As reflected in TASS Conference policy and debates, the 1956 initiative in particular raised little anger and response. The 1956 Conference explicitly laid down the general policy line of the period:

> "This Representative Council reaffirms its support for a vigorous wages policy and its opposition to wage restraint ..." (22)

The main policy debates at Conferences from 1953 to 1958 were on the issue of a vigorous wages policy and its degree of implementation by the EC, leading to the 'left' majority EC of 1958. Debates of the post-1958 period concentrated on raising the level of membership militancy and on the mechanics of operating a many strikes/high strike pay policy.

The TASS delegation's stand against the 'pay pause' at the 1961 TUC was confirmed at the 1962 RC Conference thus:

> "This RC Conference emphatically endorses the rejection by the Executive Committee of the Government's wage freeze policy, condemns interference with negotiating procedures, and calls on the Labour movement to resist attempts to solve the economic crisis at the expense of the working population' (23)

The February 1962 White Paper 'Incomes Policy, The Next Step' which established the NEDC and the National Income Commission, received a hostile reception from the TASS leadership. In the debate which took place at the 1962 Conference, the policy position taken up was that the TUC General Council's decision to participate in the NEDC was "against the best interests of the trade union movement" and the TASS delegation was instructed to "demand the immediate withdrawal of the TUC from the body".(24) When voting took place at the 1962 TUC, TASS was in the minority and the TUC did participate in the work of the NEDC. It did not participate in the NIC, a position with which TASS concurred.

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(22) RC Conf. Report, 1956, p.281.

(23) RC Conf. Report, 1962, p.272-276.

(24) Ibid., p.276-282.

2.2 The 'Policy Formation/Policy Implementation' Progression

The general direction of TASS policy on governmental initiatives on incomes policy is quite clear. With the exception of the 'collaborationism/managed-capitalism' of the 1948-50 period, the general foundation was that wage restraint under capitalism represented an attempt "to solve the economic crisis at the expense of the working population ... in the interests of higher profits ... (and was thus) ... against the best interests of the trade union movement". The alternative for the union and others in immediate economic terms was a "vigorous wages policy" and the longer-term solution was the establishment of a socialist economy and society, although this was never quite made explicit.

Before moving on to membership responses to these policies, reference should be made to the qualification to the policy formation/policy implementation progression outlined in the introduction to Chapter II. The work of the present sub-section has elucidated the nature of the qualification. The 'left' was able to implement 'external' policy, on incomes policy for example, prior to 1959 even given its minority position on the EC, because it controlled to a greater or lesser extent the composition of the delegation to 'external' bodies such as the TUC. For example, Mortimer served on the delegation from 1949 onwards.(25) This ability to implement 'external' policies in the face of 'rightwing' control of the EC coupled with the 'left's' claims that the 'right' majority on the EC did not implement certain 'internal' policies seems to have had the effect of strengthening the 'left'. The use of 'reference back' by the 'left' in Conference and the reactions of some of the delegates have already been outlined on p. 54 of Chapter III. It is difficult to find further evidence to substantiate this strengthening other than that the 'left' did in fact reach majority control on both EC and among the Divisional

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(25) There is no evidence to suggest that the 'right' in such delegations attempted to operate the equivalent of "Carron's Law" as happened in the AEU in similar 'right/left' policy splits.

Organisers by 1958. What evidence there is indicates, firstly, that the 'left' could and did show that there were areas of policy which the 'right' did not implement enthusiastically or at all, so that the 'left's' part in implementing policy at the TUC etc. may have given it a fair degree of leverage through the promotion of the agreed policy to the promotion of individuals who eventually replaced the 'right' at various levels of the union. For example, H. Smith, the present Assistant General Secretary (Editor), was a reserve delegate to the TUC delegation in 1955 and 1956, a full delegate in 1957, 1958 and 1959 and was elected Vice-President at the 1960 RC Conference, an election seen by Wootton as a major consolidation of the 'left' in the leadership.(26) Secondly, the 'left's' opposition to wage restraint for example, preceded by some years the TUC's rejection of it and hence the 'left' could and did claim that TASS policy was progressive and yet in the mainstream of trade union thinking.

3. THE MEMBERSHIP'S RESPONSES, 1950-1963

There was no occasion during the 1950-63 period to actually test the membership's acceptance or rejection of the union's opposition to incomes policy, since at no time was the membership called upon to support the policy in practice. There were no strike calls on the issue for example. No active response was ever required from the mass of the membership. Since there was no question of legal constraints on wage bargaining or institutions built into the incomes policies, there was little need for the 'left' to ask members to register token protests of any kind, e.g. boycotting institutions, or to ask them to break the law. To the extent that the 'right' maintained a majority among the Divisional Organisers up to 1958 and did not actively implement the "vigorous wages policy", there would be little organised activity in most Divisions which would be

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(26) RC Conf. Reports, 1955 to 1960. See the quote from Wootton, on p. 34 above.

seen by the mass of the membership as 'breaking' or challenging the incomes policy whether they agreed as individuals with incomes policy or not.

In early 1962 two national one-day stoppages took place in support of a national wage claim, the first such stoppages in the union's history. The Tory Government's 'pay pause' was operational and the NEDC/NIC White Paper came out in between the stoppages. It seems reasonable to suppose that the 'left' leadership's views would be well known to the mass of the membership not only through the monthly journal, but also through the divisions and branches which, by that time, were mainly controlled by the 'left'. The response of the membership to these stoppages can perhaps be taken as partial tests of policy in action.

The EC urged all members whose wages benefitted directly from agreements between the union and both the Engineering Employers' Federation and the Shipbuilding Employers, to stop work on 5th February and 5th March 1962. It agreed to pay £1 strike pay on each of the two days to those who stopped work. Sixteen thousand members claimed strike pay for the first stoppage and 21,000 for the second, that is, 25% and 33% of 'paying membership' or 20% and 30% of 'book membership'.(27) Assuming that most of the membership were covered by the strike calls(28) the percentages responding to the calls are not particularly high. Looked at from its most negative aspect, the response to the two stoppages suggests that the bulk of the membership were either not prepared to undertake militant action in support of wage claims in general or that the Government's call for a voluntary 'pay pause' did meet with a sympathetic response among the TASS membership. Furthermore, while there is little evidence to support the idea that reaction to the "Communist take-over" of 1958-60(29)

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(27) RC Conf. Report, 1962, p.106-107.

(28) i.e. that most of the members were in firms represented by the EEF and SSREF.

(29) See quote from Wootton on p.33 above.

led to many, if not mass, resignations, there is some evidence particularly in the correspondence columns of the journal that some groups of members were dissatisfied with the leadership and the policy.(30)

From a more positive viewpoint, the response of between 20% and 33% of the membership to the strike calls could be taken as a victory for the 'left', particularly since these calls were the first in the union's history and that the 'left' had only been in active majority control since 1958. While there may not have been mass acceptance of the anti-incomes policy position or of the militant wages policy alternative, neither was there mass rejection of it in terms of a noticeable reaction against the leadership by the membership or by delegates to the RC Conference which followed the stoppages.(31)

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To summarise, the 'left' in parallel with victories in other areas of policy, won the battle against incomes policy and after 1958 proceeded to implement their anti-incomes policy position among the membership when the need arose. The foundation was thereby laid both in policy and practice for what amounted to an assault by TASS on the wages policies and industrial relations initiatives of the 1964-1970 Labour Government.

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(30) See correspondence columns of the Journals of Jun, Jul, Aug, 1958, May, 1959, Jun, 1960 and Feb. 1961 for examples.

(31) i.e. the 1962 Conference, see above p. 83, which endorsed the 'left's' position.

CHAPTER V

TASS - INCOMES POLICY AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS LEGISLATION, 1963-1970

In view of the changed context and content of Government policies in the 1960s as against the 1950s, it perhaps does not oversimplify history to separate the two decades in what might be called a one dimensional way. If Prime Minister MacMillan's 'winds of change' speech is symbolic of the separation at the international level indicating a withdrawal from classical imperialist positions across the world, leading to political commitment by all major political parties to entry to the European Economic Community, then commitment in the 1960s to economic planning (somehow defined) by the major parties represents the separation from the decade of the 1950s at the domestic economic level.

Andrew Shonfield, when comparing the UK and USA with their West European rivals, notes:

> "(By the early 1960s) both countries embarked on policies which were intended to mark a deliberate break with the past, while copying some features, real or imaginary, of European experience. In Britain the effort was concentrated on avoiding 'stop-go' measures which had interfered with an even rate of growth; the formula adopted was economic planning on the French model."(1)

The Conservatives' contribution in institutional terms is represented by the NEDC, NIC and the training schemes set up under the Industrial Training Act. The return of the Labour Government in 1964 and its re-election in 1966, gave the economic planning trend its major impetus and a whole range of planning commitments and re-structuring instruments were introduced after 1964.

Labour's initial and perhaps most grandiose commitment was the National Plan of 1965 which was the responsibility of one of the Government's

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(1) Shonfield, 'Modern Capitalism', 1965, p.65.

new super-ministries, the Department of Economic Affairs. Other initiatives were the National Board for Prices and Incomes, the Industrial Expansion Act, the Redundancy Payments Act, the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation, Selective Employment Tax, Regional Employment Premiums, and the National Research and Development Corporation,(2) and these were paralleled by continued use of the NEDC.

While some of the foregoing were directed at the labour market/ industrial relations aspect of the economy, the two major developments in this area were the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations appointed in 1965 which reported in 1968, leading to the White Paper 'In Place of Strife', and the NBPI operating under a series of Acts from 1965 through to 1970, supplemented by the Commission on Industrial Relations appointed in 1969.

Even if it were possible to separate those planning commitments and restructuring instruments which were a response to what was seen as a need for a long term strategic change in the direction of economic activity from those which were in essence a response to short term problems, it would nevertheless be difficult to argue that the former, given their scope, would have been more acceptable to the trade union movement than the latter. In the event, while there was an understanding between the General Council of the TUC and the Labour Shadow Cabinet prior to the 1964 election on long term aims which was finally embodied in the 'Statement of Intent',(3) and while some discussion did take place between the General Council and the DEA in the early months of the Government's term of office over long term versus short term possibilities,(4) the Balance of Payments crises in each year from 1964 to 1967 led the Government to place major emphasis on support for the £ and on achieving a substantial expansion

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(2) See, e.g.,'The U.K. Economy',Prest and Coppock,3rd ed. for further details.

(3) Dorfman, 'Wage Politics in Britain', 1973, p.148.

(4) Ibid., p.120-121 and 124.

of export earnings. This entailed a short-run import surcharge, deflationary measures and wage control, the latter becoming severe between July 1966 and July 1967, all of which killed the 'National Plan'.

As in the negotiations prior to and during the 1948-51 wage freeze the General Council or at least a majority of it, was prepared to collaborate with the Goverment on the basis of 'traditional loyalities'. The minority within the General Council became more vocal however, as on the one hand the Government demanded increasingly tighter controls culminating in the 'complete standstill' on wages of July to December 1966 and the 'severe restraint' with a 'zero norm' of January to July 1967, and on the other the majority surrendered to these demands with increasing haste from 1964 through to 1967.(5)

Such was the reaction from rank and file trade unionists and within union leaderships themselves, that the General Council could only hold the line for 24 months from September 1965 to September 1967. Voting figures on the relevant Congress motions show the trend. In 1965 the vote on the General Council's collaborationist position was 5.3 MIL. for and 3.3 MIL. against; in 1966, 4.56 MIL. for and 4.2 MIL. against; in 1967 the General Council's position was defeated by a majority of 1 MIL.(6) After 1967 the Government was unable to obtain TUC support for its incomes policy. The devaluation of the £ in November 1967 and the massive deflationary package which accompanied it, effectively alienated majority trade union support, though Woodcock and other TUC leaders continued to exhort unions to wage moderation.(7) By mid-1969 the Government abandoned any attempt to enforce its incomes policy and the last six months of 1969 and the first six of 1970 saw such a marked degree of successful trade union activity on wage increases that it is often referred to as a period of "wage explosion".(8)

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(5) Ibid., p.142 and p.136, 140 and 141.

(6) Ibid., p.137, 140 and 141.

(7) Ibid., p.141 and 142.

(8) Clegg, 'How to run an Incomes Policy', 1971, p.59, and f.n. 2, Chapter I.

If the Government could claim a measure of success for its incomes policy strategy in that the TUC supported it, at least formally, from 1965 through to 1967, the same claim could not be made for its proposals on trade union reform. After the Royal Commission had presented its report, the Government drew up a set of proposals in the form of the White Paper 'In Place of Strife' without allowing the TUC time to respond. Trade union reaction was almost uniformly hostile. The 1969 TU Congress explicitly rejected the proposed legislation, after which the Government effectively withdrew its proposals. After some extremely tough and complex bargaining the Government was able to establish the CIR in 1969 with Woodcock as chief executive and in 1970 the TUC established Dispute Committees which purported to tackle some of the problems raised by the Royal Commission and White Paper. These measures, in the face of massive hostility, were at most second best and indeed were effectively boycotted by a large section of the trade union movement.(9)

When the Government went to the country in June 1970, it did so with a small Balance of Payments surplus, a central aim set almost immediately after it had come to power in 1964. The cost of achieving this surplus - 500,000 registered unemployed, zero economic growth in 1969/70 and a major rupture with the trade union movement - may not have lost it the election, but it must have had a major impact on the result.(10)

1. THE UNION'S INTERPRETATIONS AND RESPONSES

In order to facilitate a detailed analysis of the union's responses during this period, this section is structured as follows: firstly, two broad areas of governmental initiative are looked at from the point of view of union interpretation and policy - economic planning and incomes policy, and the Donovan Commission and 'In Place of Strife'; secondly,

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(9) TASS "actively opposed" the Disputes Committees, R.C. Conf.1970, p.148.

(10) The TASS leadership adopted this stance - see editorial in the Journal of July, 1970.

the union's activity based on its policy is laid out in some detail; and thirdly, membership response, particularly minority response, is considered.

1.1 Economic Planning and Incomes Policies

The 1965 RC Conference, in accepting the EC report, rejected the 'Declaration of Intent' which was signed five months earlier in December 1964 by representatives of the Government, employers' organisations and the TUC. It went on to reject incomes policy in favour of free collective bargaining.(11) The 1966 Conference explicitly rejected the 3-3½% annual wage increase norm which the Government had been advocating since April 1965 and which continued to be the norm up until the 'complete standstill' was introduced in July 1966. It also implicitly rejected the 'National Plan'.(12)

These rejections of the Government's overall economic strategy rested upon an analysis by the leadership of the economic crisis which differed from that of the Government. The 'left' argued that the Balance of Payments crisis was not caused by low productivity output and lack of price competitiveness due to excessive wage increases, but was the result of military expenditure overseas, high capital outflow and interest on loans received from foreign countries. They argued that the slow growth of national income was caused by the "stop-go" economic policies of the 1950s and early 1960s, which were themselves a reflection of the weakening role of the £ in world money markets, and that these had hindered capital investment decisions due to the uncertainty they had caused.(13) The 'left's' alternative strategy was, as might be expected, political as well as economic. They were for a move towards "socialism", seen in the immediate post-1964 period as the Labour Government with its "tremendous

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(11) RC Conf. report 1965, p.8-64 and 585.

(12) RC Conf. report, 1966, p.621-622.

(13) RC Conf. report, 1965, p.263-264.

ally ... the trade union movement" challenging capitalism by the extensive nationalisation of the "monopolies", facing "up to the city and the foreign bankers", instituting in the nationalised industries "a planned programme of investment" and taking immediate steps "for a redistribution of income and wealth in favour of working people".(14) Essentially the Balance of Payments crises were seen as of secondary importance to the political challenge to capitalism.

The National Plan, seen by the Government as "a guide to action" in achieving a 25% growth in output between 1964 and 1970,(15) was discussed in the union's journal but no real debates took place on it in the union Conference. The 'Plan' was never discussed even in the journal in terms of its feasibility or lack of clarity(16) although these might be mentioned. Instead it was attacked as not being an answer to the needs of the working people of Britain because it did not make inroads into the power of private property. Thus no debate took place on the overall goals of the 'Plan'or on the targets laid down within it for those industries in which the union had greatest involvement. Such 'indicative planning' was seen at best as almost useless and at worst as favouring a continuation of capitalism by maintaining and increasing profits. The leadership would have preferred the planned restriction of capitalism leading to a diminution of the capitalist sector of the economy and its subservience to a greatly enlarged public sector. The President in his address to the 1965 Conference admitted that "if it were possible to plan wages, prices and profits in a reasonable manner, a programme of planned expansion could be assured" but warned Conference that a study of the wage freeze of 1948-51 would show that while "wages remained relatively stable, prices varied considerably ... profits, although held in check for a period, were

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(14) RC Conf. Report, 1965, p.119, 263, 264 and 1966, p.373.

(15) 'National Plan', published September 1965.

(16) Dorfman, op.cit., p.119, argues that this was true of most unions.

eventually paid out in full."(17)

These themes - that the Government's economic planning was not planning at all, that its economic strategy favoured profits at the expense of wages and that it did not open up a way to socialism - run through conference debates for 1965 and 1966 and through the journals for that period. Mortimer, speaking in a 1965 debate on a composite motion entitled 'wage freeze', puts the union's position on economic planning thus:

> "What do we mean by planning? We mean an economy in which those who are responsible for society can control the disposition of resources. That is what (we) mean by a planned economy, so that not only do we establish targets as the National Economic Council has done but that we command the basic resources to ensure that these targets are fulfilled. This is something which the NEDC cannot do in this country; we have not a planned economy." (18)

Another Mortimer speech on behalf of the EC (moving an EC sponsored motion against income policy at the 1966 Conference) is probably the most comprehensive statement of the leadership's position on planning. He argued that the union had to recognise that it lived in a society in which 80% of industry was privately owned and that the dominant motive was the pursuit of private profit. He indicated that neither the exhortations of Messrs Wilson and Brown nor those of the Government would mean anything if they were in conflict with the private profit of firms and that the National Plan, and by implication indicative planning, had failed and would continue to fail. The leadership was in favour of much more effective economic planning but believed this meant the extension of social ownership and that this was of immediate relevance to the solution of Britain's economic problems.(19) The union was for 'physical' as against 'indicative' planning within a transition to socialism.

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(17) RC Conf. Report, 1965, p.119.

(18) RC Conf. Report, 1965, p.271-272.

(19) RC Conf. Report, 1966, p.374.

In rejecting the Government's overall economic strategy as embodied in the 'National Plan', the union also rejected the incomes policy proposals that went with it. The leadership condemned the concept of the 'planned growth of incomes' as in effect a euphemism for a wage freeze; indeed, as noted above, this latter is the title given to the incomes policy resolution at the 1965 Conference, i.e. over a year before the 'complete standstill' of July 1966. Basically the leadership's position as represented in a successful motion at the 1965 Conference, was "that only in a socialist society where the workers control the wealth they produce can any fair system of distribution be organised", so that under capitalism with a Labour Government or not, the union must insist "upon the trade unions' right to free collective bargaining in order to secure for the members their rightful share of the prosperity within the fields of their various endeavours."(20) The leadership rejected the argument that restraint of wages benefitted other sections of workers. In answer to the question "How can workers in certain industries ensure that if they forego their wage claims the benefit will be passed to other workers?", Mortimer replied: "The fact is that within capitalism there can be no such assurance. If we voluntarily restrained our claims the main beneficiaries would be the employers."(21)

The union leadership thus made no distinction between the "planned growth of incomes and of income distribution" which characterised Government policy in the period June 1964 to July 1966 and the policy of straight repression of wages which characterised the post-July 1966 period. Any attempt to interfere with free collective bargaining was seen as against the best of interests of the membership under capitalism, and the union's policy on this issue remained the same for the full period 1964 to 1970.

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(20) RC Conf. Report, 1965, p.585.

(21) RC Conf. Report, 1966, p.373.

Before turning to the question of productivity bargaining which was central to the Government's wages policy from 1968 onwards, it is perhaps necessary to say something about the apparent lack of consideration given by the union to the Labour Government elected in 1964 with a very small Parliamentary majority. Essentially the leadership viewed the Wilson opposition and then Government as being in the Atlee rightwing 'managed-capitalism' tradition. Thus in both 1965 and 1966, RC Conference went on record as opposing the policies of the Government in order to save it. The mover of the successful anti-incomes policy motion at the 1965 Conference argued that the motion was not "gunning" for the Government, nor was it intended as obstructive or destructive, rather it was aimed at preventing disaster for the Labour Party because this was precisely what would happen if those people who were its supporters were asked to stand by and accept wage restraint while the demands of Britain's monopolists and world bankers were satisfied. Mortimer made much the same point in the ensuing debate.(22)

The emphasis placed by the Government on productivity bargaining stemmed from a number of factors. The chairman of the NBPI indicated that at one level it was introduced to overcome the difficulties experienced in earlier phases of incomes policy in enforcing policy. Specifically, and seen as separate from the problem of enforcement, the purpose of productivity incomes policy was to slow down the rate of increase in labour costs per unit of output.(23)

The union Conference came out against productivity bargaining for two reasons. Firstly, it questioned the objective basis of the assessment or measurement technique implicit in the concept of productivity. It argued that engineering design and drafting functions were not amenable

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(22) RC Conf. Report, 1965, p.264 and p.269.

(23) 'The New Inflation', Jones A, p.83, 1973.

to objective measurement, thus it opposed "quantitative analysis"[24] of drawing office practices. To quote the union's position as put in a document circulated to the membership entitled "Data's Attitude to Work Assessment Schemes":

> "(Design) work is creative and highly qualitative and these aspects extend to varying degrees right through the process of design work to the (detail drafting) stage at which the concern for the sequence of manufacturing operation, tolerancing and reduction of manufacturing times must be exercised in the execution of drawing work" (25)

This objection comes close to an argument for special case treatment under productivity bargaining since it concentrates entirely on the main area of employment of union membership. No generalisation is made about problems of productivity measurement for other types of labour or labour in general.

Secondly, and related to the foregoing, the leadership argued that "by offsetting wage claims against increased productivity, labour power no longer increased in value. Profits were continually increasing; prices were continually rising; but wages were not rising proportionately."[26] Irrespective of the logic of this statement, the union Conference adopted the position that productivity bargaining benefitted profits more than wages.

1.2 Donovan and 'In Place of Strife'

The 'Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations' set up in 1965 and reporting in 1968 was the basis on which the Government issued its January 1969 White Paper 'In Place of Strife; a policy for industrial relations'.[27] That the union appreciated that the Royal

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(24) RC Conf. Report, 1969, p.260.

(25) Ibid.

(26) Ibid.

(27) White Paper 'In Place of Strife',CMND. 3888.

Commission Report contained proposals that might be beneficial to trade unions may be judged from the title of a TASS pamphlet circulated widely in 1968, 'Donovan Exposed - The Sugar Coated Pill with the Bitter Centre'.(28) The pamphlet begins by arguing that the pressure to set up the Royal Commission came from those who wanted to make a scapegoat of the trade unions for Britain's economic ills, thus focussing attention on the activity of trade unions, particularly shop stewards, to their detriment. The arguments put against the Commission's proposals concentrated mainly on what the leadership saw as restrictions being placed on trade union bargaining strength. Thus registration of trade unions was seen as giving "the State a channel of direct control and intervention in the formation of trade union rules ... this could easily become a means of pressurising a trade union into 'disciplining' its more militant members by direct or indirect threats to have it removed from the register". The proposal to introduce a Commission on Industrial Relations was seen as a way of inducing "in a variety of ways the trade unions to change their policy and structure and to adopt a radically new form of collective bargaining based apparently on the promotion of productivity bargaining on a factory basis". The union argued that from the Government's point of view the most important thing was to give the NBPI control over wage drift and that the proposal for the registration of agreements was meant to do just that; to quote the Commission "the registration of company and factory agreement would expose the whole process of pay settlement to the influence of (incomes) policy". Finally, the union admitted that it could support a move towards factory bargaining within a two tier system but only in order to obtain agreements which would "recognise the circumstances in (each) particular plant", because only with the continued link between factory and national agreements would it "be possible to retain a sense of overall

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(28) TASS pamphlet, 1968. See also Mortimer's penultimate editorial in Journal of July 1968 and Journals of Dec. 1968 and Mar. and May 1969.

working class solidarity which tends to be lacking in other countries".(29)

The White Paper 'In Place of Strife' contained a number of proposals for the reform of industrial relations practices in Britain which the Government intended to put into legislation. From the point of view of the TASS leadership the main proposals to which they took exception were:

(a) the direct legal enforcement, where the parties wished, of agreements between trade unions and employers' associations;

(b) the establishment of an Industrial Board to hear certain types of cases against employers, trade unions and individual employees;

(c) the twenty-eight day cooling-off period;

(d) an Order in Council requiring strike ballots;

(e) the registration of trade unions and employers' associations; and

(f) that a union may be sued in tort except in circumstances of a trade dispute. (30)

On these proposals, the leadership argued an essentially similar case to that given above on the Royal Commission Report. They argued that "the right of trade unions to take action is an essential balance in the unequal relationship which exists between an employer and his workpeople", that interference by legislation had tremendous dangers for trade unions - "it took ten years for Rookes v. Barnard to reach final judgement in the House of Lords" - and that overall "the intention of the White Paper is very harmful".(31) On this basis the union opposed the introduction of 'In Place of Strife'.

2. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The leadership's activity in attempting to implement Conference policies during this period is so broad as to require some division and

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(29) TASS Pamphlet 1968, p.10.

(30) TASS Pamphlet, 'In Place of Strife', 1969.

(31) Ibid., p.4-5.

structuring and the following areas have been selected for detailed examination.

Policy implementation:

1. In the labour movement.
2. Under 'vetting' and 'early warning'.
3. Under 'complete standstill' and 'severe restraint'.
4. Under 'productivity bargaining' and 'delaying powers'.
5. On 'In Place of Strife'.

2.1 In the Labour Movement

From 1964 through to 1970 TASS utilised every opportunity to argue its policies in the broader labour movement. At every annual TUC and Special Conference held from 1965 to 1970 inclusive, the union was vocal in its opposition to incomes policy and industrial relations legislation. At the 1965 TUC and again in 1967, TASS seconded the main anti-incomes policy motion, in the latter year winning a majority against incomes policy, and at the 1969 Congress TASS moved the successful motion against trade union legislation. A similar position can be documented for Labour Party Conferences for the period.(32)

Outwith conferences, the union was instrumental in forming a collaborative venture with the A.Sc.W, ASSET, STCS, and ACTT to produce material opposing incomes policy. This resulted in the publication of a booklet entitled 'Declaration of Dissent' which was widely distributed in 1965, and a broadsheet entitled 'Five Unions Speak' circulated prior to the Labour Party Conference of that year.(33) A further publication entitled 'A Bad Package' was distributed immediately after the introduction of the wages 'standstill' of July, 1966.(34) The five unions also ran

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(32) Relevant RC Conf. Reports.

(33) RC Conf. Report, 1966, p.41.

(34) RC Conf. Report, 1967, p.85.

a series of teach-ins against Government policies for delegates to the TUC and Labour Party Conferences of 1965 and 1966, and TASS organised a series of public meetings in the major cities in 1966 and 1967 achieving attendances of between 200 and 600.(35)

The union published on its own behalf two pamphlets against proposals for legislation on trade union reform, one entitled 'Donovan Exposed' and the other on 'In Place of Strife', both of which were widely circulated in 1969 and which have been commented upon previously.

2.2 Under "Vetting" and "Early Warning"

With reference to Government legislation on incomes or TUC initiatives over the full period 1964 to mid-1970, the TASS Executive Committee attempted at all times to implement RC Conference policy, working to breach restraint whenever this was necessary regardless of whether the restraint took the form of standstills, statutory limits or delays, or TUC voluntary vetting etc. Thus under the TUC vetting scheme which operated only nominally from September 1965 to July 1966(36) but became more rigorous from July 1967, the leadership in effect refused to co-operate.

In the early period the EC took up the position that any domestic claims arising from its July 1965 national agreements with the Shipbuilding and Engineering Employers' Federations, which would almost certainly be above the 3-3½% norm, should not be notified individually but should be covered by submitting a single letter to the effect that the union considered them outwith the scope of the voluntary scheme. That is, the norm applied only to national settlements and since TASS's national settlements were always backed up by domestic claims on the question of differentials via 'pattern bargaining', the union claimed that they lay outside the scope of the vetting machinery.(37) The EC, in conjunction

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(35) Ibid.

(36) Dorfman, op.cit., p.138.

(37) RC Conf. Report, 1966 - EC Report, p.42.

with the other unions making up the TUC's Joint Consultative Committee of Staff Unions, followed the same procedure with respect to claims for four weeks holidays which would also have been above the 3-3½% norm.(38)

The General Council's reply to both letters vindicates Dorfman's judgement that the TUC's vetting committee was ineffective at least in the early period. The reply was received by TASS early in 1966, and rather lamely "note(s) the views expressed and ask(s) that wherever possible assistance be given to implement ... Congress's decisions".(39)

Under the more rigorous vetting instituted in July 1967 (after a year of 'standstill/severe restraint'), the union initially submitted details of all new domestic claims but made no attempt to hold claims within the guidelines. Eventually in the autumn of 1967 the EC was asked to send representatives to have discussions with the TUC vetting committee. During the discussions the vetting committee made it clear that almost all the claims submitted were not in line with the criteria of Congress. The TASS representatives stated that they were bound only by the decisions of their RC Conferences and would thus continue to press claims in line with Conference policy, i.e. outwith the TUC criteria.(40)

The vetting committee also raised the question of the union's unilateral termination of its 1965 National Minimum Wage Agreement with the Engineering Employers' Federation. This termination had taken place during discussions initiated by the Federation in July 1967 at which the Federation made an offer pending the outcome of the NBPI report on the engineering industry,(41) an offer the union rejected. The vetting committee asked why details of the national claim had not been submitted to it. The union said no national claim had been lodged, thus there were no details. The outcome was that the union, having discussed its rejection of the

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(38) Ibid.

(39) Ibid. Quoted in the EC's Report.

(40) RC Conf. Report, 1968, p.44-45.

(41) Such an agreement had been TASS policy for 25 years - the 1965 agreement was the first.

Federations' offer and having indicated the sort of offer it would need in order to press acceptance on the membership, did not send any further details of domestic claims arising out of the national negotiations to the vetting committee.(42) Given the relationship between TASS national wages policy and domestic claims and activity,(43) (the use of 'pattern setting' domestic claims and 'pattern following' claims based on national awards or claims), this boycotting of the vetting committee on national and domestic claims effectively excluded the majority of domestic claims.

Immediately following these autumn 1967 discussions with the TUC vetting committee, the EC was invited to meet the Minister of Labour for discussions on the 'early warning' of claims and specifically on the rejection of the EEF's wage offer. The Minister endeavoured unsuccessfully to persuade the EC to accept the Federation's offer and await the NBPI report. He then stated that he would not be prepared to approve subsequent settlements for general wage increases outwith his guidelines except where productivity gains were included as part of the agreements.(44) The Minister did threaten orders(45) under Part II of the 1967 Act as a back-up to his exhortations and in at least four separate settlements considerable correspondence and discussion took place. In two cases productivity clauses were eventually included and the settlements were then accepted by the Minister. In the other two cases implementation was carried out by the firms concerned before approval was granted but the Minister did not interfere.(46)

The union continued to press claims above the norm, engaging in illegal settlements where possible and encouraging the membership to break the

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(42) See below, p.106.

(43) RC Conf. Report, 1968, p.44-45.

(44) See p. 97 above.

(45) RC Conf. Report, 1968, p.45.

(46) Ibid.

legislated norm, as outlined below, p.108.

2.3 Under 'Complete Standstill' and 'Severe Restraint'

Of the twelve months of 'standstill' and 'severe restraint with a zero norm' (July 1966 to July 1967) the EC admitted that legislation created situations within which it was "almost impossibly difficult ... to honestly apply the decisions of (RC) Conference".(47) Indeed the EC report covering the period April 1966 to April 1967 and thus covering the period of 'standstill' and most of the period of 'severe restraint', is the only EC report for the period 1964 to 1970 in which such difficulties are reported and of which it might be said that a touch of frustration or perhaps mild hysteria appears. The difficulties were of the following character.

Firstly, in October 1966 the Government argued an interpretation of the 1966 legislation which meant that employers were not able to continue to pay merit differential awards to TASS members whose birthdays (21 to 30 years) fell during the period of the 'complete standstill'.(48) This would affect in excess of 20% of the membership.(49)

Secondly, the Minister of Economic Affairs made it clear in late 1966 that employers should not give general merit awards to salaried staff during the period of 'severe restraint' and that such awards would be treated as a violation of the legislation.(50) This would adversely affect those members of the union on salaried staff for whom such merit awards were a customary annual or semi-annual feature.

Thirdly, the more general problem of processing wage claims during the 'complete standstill' and 'severe restraint', cut across the whole

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(47) RC Conf. Report, 1967, p.16. The word "honestly" seems to apply to 'endeavour' rather than to 'illegal operations'. See below p.108.

(48) Ibid. The Government extended the 'standstill' on merit differentials up to July 1967.

(49) Calculated from 'virtual' membership figures for 1966 which underestimate the percentage. See RC Conf. Report, 1966, p.292.

(50) RC Conf. Report, 1967, p.17.

machinery the union had built up around the 'pattern bargaining' concept described in Chapter II.

While its formal protests on the questions of differentials and merit awards fell on deaf Ministerial ears, the EC did record a number of successes. During the period of 'standstill' it was able to reach agreement with a number of employers to pay back-dated awards as soon as this became possible. By means of regrading, promotion and "other means" a number of agreements were made acceptable within the requirements of the legislation, and in "two major cases involving large numbers of members in the West of England and in the Midlands" settlements were arrived at which "because of the unusual circumstances then applying could not be given general publicity"(51) - in plain English, the two settlements were known by the union and the employers concerned to be patently illegal. This is the first indication that the leadership was prepared to enter into illegal agreements with willing employers.

During the period of 'severe restraint' covered by the 1967 EC report, the EC noted that a number of strikes on wage issues were entered into (six disputes are mentioned by name of company) and one in particular led the Ministry of Labour to reverse its earlier position on merit differentials on change of age, thus "liberat(ing) a great many members salaries and prevent(ing) a position that could have meant that, by July 1967, merit differentials could have vanished from salaries of draughtsmen twenty-one to thirty years of age and tracers eighteen to twenty-five years of age"(52) - a not inconsequential success.

2.4 Under 'Productivity Bargaining' and 'Delaying Powers'

The previous two sub-sections cover the time period April 1965 to December 1967. The main factor which separates this period from the

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(51) Ibid., p.16.

(52) Ibid., p.18.

post-1967 period is the emphasis put by the Government in this latter period on productivity bargaining. The union took the view that the Government, through the NBPI, intended to use its powers under Part II of the 1967 Act to delay settlements thus pressuring unions into negotiating productivity deals.(53)

In early 1968, soon after Part II orders were made on local authority bus crew settlements, the Minister of Labour issued orders to delay the payment of agreed settlements between two companies and TASS.(54) The point at issue was that the companies had agreed to pay wage increases, indeed had implemented the increases, which were above those the NBPI argued were within the 3-3½% norm as detailed in its First Report on Pay and Conditions in the Engineering Industry.(55) The whole question of pay and conditions of manual workers in the engineering industry had been referred to the NBPI by the Minister of Labour in June 1967 in view of the fact that the three-year 'package deal' between the CSEU and the relevant employers' Federations was coming to an end, and when negotiations between the staff unions, including TASS, and the EEF over staff working conditions broke down, the Minister included this item and staff pay in the referral to the NBPI and the report was published on the 29th December 1967.(56)

At the February 1968, EC meeting the TASS leadership

> "decided to support the members at Beckman Instruments including strike action if necessary, to compel the employer concerned to agree to pay the whole award retrospectively when the order expired."(57)

A similar position was taken on the other settlement covered by a Part II Order and both firms who had cut the increase back to the NBPI

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(53) RC Conf. Report, 1968, p.62.

(54) Ibid. The companies were Beckman Instruments Ltd., Glenrothes and Steel Group of Cos. in N.E. England.

(55) Ibid.

(56) Ibid., p.44-45 and 62.

(57) RC Conf. Report, 1968, p.62.

figures, agreed to pay the negotiated increases when the Orders expired with retrospective adjustment covering the period of the Orders.(58) Only one wage settlement was delayed by the NBPI during 1969, the balance being paid by the Company (I.C.I.) when the delaying period expired.(59)

During 1969 it was found necessary to ask some groups of members to try to negotiate certain aspects of productivity agreements which ran counter to TASS policy - the union was opposed "to any effort to measure individual effort or to evaluate quantitative work effort in TASS members' employment areas."(60) The EC asked that all agreements containing productivity elements be sent to the Industrial Sub-Committee of the EC for vetting, and felt it necessary to specifically reiterate its opposition to productivity bargaining in a successful resolution before the 1969 RC Conference.(61)

Towards the end of 1969 the Department of Employment and Productivity brought pressure to bear on the union leadership to agree to productivity deals, meeting with as little success as did the Ministry of Labour over the NBPI's report in 1967.(62)

Leadership pressure continued throughout 1969 and into 1970 for wage increases above the legislated norms as witnessed by the number of strikes(63) though in terms of leadership pronouncements and energies, as with publications etc, 'In Place of Strife' and other proposals on trade union reform came to assume an equal place.

Two points are worth noting here with respect to the overall attitude of the leadership to incomes policy. Firstly, and in line with the NBPI's general conclusion that many productivity agreements were essentially

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(58) Ibid., p.62 and 69.

(59) RC Conf. Report, 1970, p.16.

(60) RC Conf. Report, 1968, p.133.

(61) RC Conf. Report, 1969, p.34, 286 and 260-262. See also RC Report, 1970, p.146 for a similar resolution.

(62) Ibid.

(63) See Table III, p.50.

bogus, the EC report to the 1968 RC Conference stated:

> "Later in the year (i.e. 1967) the Ministry (of Labour) hesitated in approving many ... domestic settlements, including those at the main car firms, but eventually these (on the basis of some assurances being worked out to produce some savings because of more effective working arrangements) were also allowed to be implemented.
>
> It then appeared likely that if the wages settlement contained a promise to co-operate in revised working arrangements to bring about some savings, that this would be acceptable to the Minister. The significant settlements at Plessey and Vauxhall Motors were cleared on these grounds."(64)

Implicitly if not explicitly this statement admits that the national leadership was prepared to connive at settlements on the promise of co-operation to achieve productivity gains which they (and probably the managements involved) did not intend to honour and which were therefore illegal. That the leadership intended that this route to illegality should be used as widely as possible by the membership is shown by the paragraph of the EC report which follows that quoted immediately above, thus:

> "So as to assist members in understanding what matters were possible and what were not in deciding upon such domestic productivity agreements the Executive Committee published a special statement about work assessment schemes". (65)

Secondly, and from the same EC report, the EC noted that after it rejected the Employers' Federation's wages offer in July 1967, which became NBPIs maximum in its report of December 1967,(66)

> "the number of domestic agreements on wages ... which were better than the 'national offer' and without its limitations, are too numerous to fully detail in this report. It covers a very large number of firms, including all in the automobile industry, many in the electronics, telecommunications, aero engines, electrical engineering and in most other sections of industry ... It was not possible for obvious reasons to give full details and names of firms at that time." (67)

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(64) RC Conf. Report, 1968, p.62.

(65) Ibid.

(66) See p.102 above.

(67) RC Conf. Report, 1968, p.62.

Not only was the leadership prepared to enter into illegal settlements and provide the membership with information on the relevant matters with respect to achieving such settlements, it did actually publicise them via the weekly TASS News and the monthly Journal, restricting the publicity to broad statements rather than details and names of firms and specific locations. For example, a typical 'advert' would read - "A large engineering firm in the North East has granted a claim for between £3-£4 per week on average"[68] when the Employers' Federation's offer in July 1967 was a maximum of £1.50p at age 21 falling to £1.00 at age 30 and over.[69] Thus illegal settlements were used to exhort the membership to further acts of illegality. For the five months from September 1967 to January 1968, over 150 of these broad 'adverts' appeared in the Journal, while for the six months to July 1968, 52 'adverts' appeared. The threat of Part II orders may have contributed to this falling off in adverts, if, that is, the figures just quoted accurately represent the totality of such settlements, though there is nothing to suggest that they are in fact anything but accurate.[70]

This type of activity raises questions of an ethical and political nature; in particular it raises questions of political obligation to obey the elected government and its laws and as noted below,[71] this generated a discussion in the correspondence columns of the monthly Journal. The leadership's attitude however was quite clear - laws which they considered to be anti-working class and thus against the best interests of the members, should not be obeyed, a position reiterated more forcefully against the IR Act, 1971.[72]

The issue was in fact, never the subject of an open debate at RC

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(68) See for example the Journal of Oct. 1967, p.5.

(69) Journal of Sept., 1967, p.5.

(70) See relevant Journals.

(71) See below p.113.

(72) See below, p.111.

Conferences. The majority of delegates seem to have accepted without question that the policies they decided necessitated illegal action on the part of the membership. The opposition to the leadership at Conferences did not make it an issue either, tending to concentrate on the issue of loyalty to the Labour Government.

2.5 On "In Place of Strife"

The union's policy response to legislation on trade union reform has already been outlined,(73) as has its implementation activity in the labour movement.(74) There are, however, three areas of activity which are worthy of note if only because they are carried over into the campaigns against the IR Act 1971.

Firstly, the leadership mounted a propaganda campaign which, coupled to the issue of incomes policy, was probably the largest in the union's history prior to 1970, and was definitely the largest led by the 'left'. To some extent the membership had previously been introduced to such propaganda during the union's campaign to overturn the judge-made law arising out of Rookes v. Barnard in 1964, a case involving a TASS member and costing the union considerable legal fees.(75)

The numerous week-end schools, special branch meetings and the use of the weekly TASS News as well as the monthly Journal as a propaganda medium, raised the issue to a new and higher level especially in 1968, 1969 and 1970. The 'left' leadership were, in effect for the first time, able to use the whole machinery of the union to mount a massive education campaign within the membership on a political rather than an economic issue. The effects of this campaign are evaluated in a later section.(76)

Secondly, the TASS EC was among those union executives which were officially represented at the various conferences called by the unofficial

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(73) See above, p. 97-99.

(74) See above, p. 100-101.

(75) RC Conf. Report, 1965, p.35 and 323.

(76) See below, p. 112-118.

and Communist-led[77] 'Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions' which was a fairly powerful instrument of trade union opposition from around 1967 until the repeal of the IR Act, 1971, in 1974. This affiliation at the level of the EC is the first recorded instance of the 'left' leadership committing itself formally and openly to unofficial rank and file action and indicates perhaps the 'left's' political strength not only within TASS but within the movement in general, in that EC affiliation to the Liaison Committee could have caused problems with other trade union leaderships.

Lastly, at the EC meeting of June 1969, the leadership took a decision to press the TUC to call a one day stoppage in an attempt to force the Government to abandon its proposed legislation. In the event such action was unnecessary, but the TASS leadership were to use this policy precedent successfully within the AUEW against the IR Act.[78]

3. THE MEMBERSHIP'S RESPONSES

As for the period 1945-63, it is difficult with respect to the period 1964 to mid-1970 to evaluate in a rigorous way the degree of acceptance by the mass of the membership of the leadership's interpretations of and responses to incomes policy and trade union reform. A principal difficulty lies in trying to separate membership reaction to the leadership's position on incomes policy from reaction to other influences, for example, to increases in subscriptions or to 'leftwing' material in the monthly Journal, since the available statistics are so compiled as to make the necessary distinctions impossible and the other main source of information - letters and articles in the union journal - tends to deal with broader or multi-topic issues.

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(77) The Chairman and Secretary are members of the Communist Party.

(78) Journal of July, 1969, p.4 and of January 1971, p.4.

While these and other difficulties exist with respect to reactions from those who were members of the union, an even greater difficulty exists with respect to the reactions of those who might possibly have joined the union during the period. There is no way of assessing how policy on incomes policy and on trade union reform affected recruitment. Admitting these difficulties does not however preclude saying something on the issues and some material is available on the following areas:

1. Comments in union journal.
2. Statistics on resignations, membership etc.
3. Response to financial appeals.
4. Strikes.
5. Other policy tendencies.

The general conclusion on membership response is that, allowing for the inadequacy of the evidence, there was overall support from the mass of the membership for the leadership's policies. Some of this support was certainly passive but given the publicity the 'left' gave to its policies, it cannot be assumed this passive support was based mainly on ignorance.

3.1 Comments in the Union's Journal

As noted in Chapter II, the union's monthly journal, posted directly to each CM (shop steward) in quantities representing one copy per every two members on the CM's membership list, is probably the longest running 'left-wing' union journal in modern British trade unionism and given the method of distribution perhaps also one of the most widely circulated. While RC Conferences periodically considered the relationship between the journal's editorial policy and union policy a fair measure of editorial freedom was allowed, but with reference to the correspondence pages of the journal, Conference did exercise some control particularly prior to 1958, for example, banning the use of pseudonyms.

Editorially the journal was committed over the post-1948 period to publish all items of correspondence received providing they were correctly

signed and with union membership number attached. Thus the correspondence pages of the journals, which were widely used, provide a useful reflection of debates taking place inside the union. During the period under consideration, 1964-1970, most of the correspondence which was directly related to union policy supported the policy line of RC Conferences. But for the two years 1967 to 1968 a noticeable increase took place in letters and short articles in which criticism was expressed of the union's industrial policy and political analysis. There were two such short articles in 1967 and one in 1968 while there were none in either 1965/66 or 1969. There were 14 letters of criticism in 1966, 18 in 1967, 17 in 1968 and 11 in 1969, all relating specifically to wages policy and/or 'leftwing' influence.

Further, these figures do not include a substantial amount of correspondence in 1967 and 1968 which was essentially discursive rather than critical around two other related themes. Firstly, for the first time in a number of years there was correspondence from members of the Liberal Party discussing questions of incomes policy, conditions under which laws should be obeyed and Liberal policies. Secondly and perhaps of more significance was correspondence from, among others, Christian writers on the issue of disobedience to the law.(79)

Some of the critical correspondence was associated with the rump of the old 'rightwing' leadership(80) and the following quotation indicates the general criticisms:

> "For all our militancy since the 1939 war the status of draughtsmen and their earnings relative to other workers has fallen. This failure to maintain and improve our status rests squarely on those members who have constantly used the union to further their political views ... This political motivation of many of our members has disastrously weakened our case ...
>
> By all means use the strike weapon when industrial considerations merit it. But no longer should we allow

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(79) TASS Journals, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968 and 1969.

(80) See for example correspondence in July 1967 journal, particularly letter from Mr. H. Smith "of London S.E." (to distinguish him from H. Smith, the Communist), an EC member and President in the pre-1958 period.

> groups of our members who just think that they are entitled to higher wages, shorter working hours or longer holidays to collectively threaten rather than bargain with their employer. And to do so without due regard to the national interest ..."(81)

3.2 Resignations, Membership etc.

The available data on resignations is not in fact very helpful since among other things it is limited to a very short time period as indicated in Table VI. Certainly the 244 resignations in 1967 known to be due to opposition to general policy are higher than equivalent figures for 1968, 1969 and 1970 but is not of the order achieved in 1971. The figures for 1967, 1971 and the other peak year of 1973 represent only around 1% of both 'book' and 'paying' membership, and are thus proportionately very small.

The figures for 'Lapsed' and 'Resigned Personal and Unknown' tend to be high when those for 'Resigned due to TASS policy' are high and if it is assumed that some of the former may relate to opposition to union policy, then the degree of rejection in terms of members leaving the union becomes more significant. Taking the figures in line 10 of Table VI, 1967 and 1971 are peak years in the series when taken as a proportion of the membership, 10.7% of 'book' membership in 1967 and 10.1% of 'book' membership in 1971 or 11.2% and 10.9% of 'paying' membership respectively. If it is assumed that resignations in 1967 and 1971 are related to the union's opposition to incomes policy in the first year and the IR Act in the second, then percentages half as large as the above would represent a significant degree of opposition to the union's policy. Essentially, however, this must remain a matter for conjecture.

In terms of total membership one point may be made. While it is obvious that many factors operate on the rate of growth of union membership, i.e. the net addition to membership in any period, it might be expected

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(81) TASS Journal, Aug. 1967.

TABLE VI - REASONS FOR LEAVING THE UNION - NUMBERS UNDER EACH HEADING, 1967-74

	REASON	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
1.	LEFT TRADE	2,357	2,243	2,253	2,898	3,413	2,135	3,064	2,677
2	OVERSEAS	892	549	516	761	547	472	555	749
3	DIED	105	98	110	211	221	296	292	279
4	JOINED FMBS	8	13	8	-	-	-	-	-
5	LAPSED	2,237	1,748	1,772	1,834	2,049	5,472	3,898	3,457
6	RESIGNED PERSONAL UNKNOWN	5,366	4,228	3,437	3,977	6,761	4,756	5,109	5,793
7	RESIGNED DUE TO TASS POLICY	244	84	16	184	1,336	195	318	143
8	RESIGNED DUE TO INCREASED SUBS	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	TOTAL	11,209	8,977	8,112	9,865	11,327	13,326	13,236	13,098
10	TOTAL OF 5+6+7	7,847	6,000	5,225	5,995	10,146	10,423	9,325	9,393

SOURCES: EC Reports to RC Conferences

that a cost would be imposed in terms of the number of applications to join through the pursuance of overtly 'leftwing' policy. As Table I, Chapter II shows, total membership by both measures rose fairly steadily over the period 1964 to 1970; 'book' membership fell in 1967 though 'paying' membership rose and the reverse occurred in 1968, while on the other hand total applications for membership rose steadily over the period with the exception of the high peak on 1965, as shown in Table VII. Thus while the figures do not prove that there was no detrimental effect on union growth due to the policies pursued, total membership did nonetheless rise over the period as did applications to join.

3.3 Response to Financial Appeals

The amount raised per annum under the 'first week's wage increase scheme' detailed in Table IV in Chapter II could for the relevant years be interpreted as suggesting some rejection of the union's wages/anti-incomes policy position since excluding the shipbuilding "lock out" year of 1967, the annual total fell from £17,367 in 1965 to £9,786 in 1966, to £5,239 in 1968 rising to £9,963 in 1969. On the other hand, since many members would only receive the legislated increases where these were allowed, they may not have seen these as deriving from the union's activity and hence not have paid them to the union.

3.4 Strike Data

Figures for strike expenditure per annum, the number of 'union supported' disputes per annum, the total number of strikes per annum and the number of members involved in 'main supported' disputes, detailed in Table III page 50 , all show a decline in 1968 and the number of 'main supported' disputes and total number of strikes continued to fall into 1969 before rising sharply with the other two series in 1970. While this may be wholly accounted for by the massive deflation which accompanied the November 1967 devaluation leading to a weaker bargaining position on behalf of the

TABLE VII TOTAL APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP PER ANNUM(1)

YEAR		YEAR		YEAR	
1913		1935		1957	10,535
1914		1936		1958	8,923
1915		1937		1959	8,846
1916		1938		1960	13,702
1917		1939		1961	13,150
1918		1940		1962	11,810
1919		1941		1963	9,601
1920		1942		1964	11,963
1921		1943		1965	18,036
1922		1944		1966	13,298
1923		1945		1967	14,210
1924		1946		1968	16,089
1925		1947		1969	23,487
1926		1948		1970	34,565
1927		1949		1971	14,794
1928		1950		1972	21,087
1929		1951	9,668	1973	28,227
1930		1952	9,092	1974	33,023
1931		1953	7,701		
1932		1954	7,435		
1933		1955	9,871		
1934		1956	11,005		

SOURCES: EC REPORTS TO RC CONFERENCES

(1) Different descriptions are used in the Reports; 'accepted applications', 'accepted into membership', 'new members joined' and in the more recent reports, 'applications approved'.

union, this explanation would run counter to the qualitative evidence set out in Chapter II with regard to the union's overall militancy which seems unrelated to the level of demand in the economy. Nevertheless a suspicion remains that the leadership were finding it increasingly difficult to convince the membership to carry through strikes for claims which were essentially illegal. Since only annual data is available it is not possible to locate the decline in relation to changes in legislation. However, the possibility is that the introduction of the August 1967 Act with its emphasis on productivity bargaining which TASS rejected, coupled to the leadership's insistence on claims which were above the NBPI ceiling may have placed many groups of members in the position of not being prepared to fight claims. Some corroboration of this may be found from the figures given earlier that for the six months ending 31st December 1967, 150 'adverts' of illegal settlements appeared in the union press while for the six months ending 30th June 1968 only 52 such 'adverts' appeared; fewer settlements were arrived at because members would not fight.

3.5 Other Policy Tendencies

Two areas of policy debate are of interest under this heading; firstly, those contributions which were in direct opposition to the dominant line, and secondly, those contributions which can be considered more extreme than the dominant policy line.

There was a motion before the 1965 Conference directly supporting an incomes policy. Only the mover spoke in favour of the motion and his argument was brief - if inflation could be controlled pension funds would not depreciate.(82) More generally, the arguments used against the 'left's' platforms on incomes policy and TU legislation ranged from the position that a Labour Government was better at any price than a Tory one and should therefore be supported,(83) through arguments as to whether the 'left'

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(82) RC Conf. Report, 1965, p.273-274.

(83) RC Conf. Report, 1966, p.376.

presented any alternative programme except a free-for-all market struggle, indeed that this free-for-all had produced legislation as a reaction(84) or whether TASS's militant policy had effected any marked improvement in the wage position of the membership,(85) to arguments supporting the efficacy of incomes policy as a means of decisively shifting the distribution of national income in favour of wages and salaries.(86)

In almost all of these contributions however, the main drift of the argument was in favour of loyalty to the Labour Government and Labour Party, the 'left's' position being seen as disloyal, if not openly disruptive, and playing into the hands of the Tories.

The other area of contributions to debate which is of interest, centres around the questions of disaffiliation from both Labour Party and TUC and as will be seen are more extreme than the dominant position.

There were in fact, a number of amendments to the main anti-incomes policy motions of the period which were not accepted by the RC Conference and which could be considered more extreme than the main motions, but it is the consistent raising of the question of disaffiliation, particularly with respect to the Labour Party, which perhaps represents the main extremist tendency.

While there was no motion on the agenda for disaffiliation from the Labour Party in either the 1965 or 1966 Conferences, there was one in 1967, two in 1968, one in 1969(87) though none in 1970.

However, there was an unsuccessful motion in 1966 requiring the union to "freeze the contributions to ... the Labour Party until such times as the freedom of the trade union movement and its members is restored" and another one in 1968 to the same effect.(88)

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(84) Ibid., p.379.

(85) Ibid., p.377.

(86) Ibid., p.379. See also the disaffiliation arguments in the 1968 report, p.146.

(87) RC Conf. Reports, 1967, p.437, 1968, p.133 and 1969, p.126.

(88) RC Conf. Reports, 1966, p.600 and 1968, p.133.

It is clear from the contributions to debates on these disaffiliation motions (that is, when they were debated and not withdrawn), that the main reason for moving them was what was seen as the anti-trade union policies of the Government. The 1967 unsuccessful motion made this explicit:

> "This Representative Council instructs the Executive Committee to take the necessary steps to disaffiliate from the Labour Party and to so remain whilst it pursues anti-union policies".(89)

There is no evidence to suggest that any of these motions were sponsored by TASS members who were politically to the 'right' of the Labour Party, the speaker to the 1967 motion openly disassociating himself from such a position, thus:

> "My branch wishes to dissociate itself from all Tories, neo-Tories and so-called non-politicals. This is not a resolution that is being moved from the right-wing or in fact from a so-called non-political stand."(90)

The leadership's response to these motions was either to obtain a withdrawal or to move an amendment (or support a branch amendment).

Thus the 1969 disaffiliation motion was totally amended to read:

> "This RC reaffirms its support for a socialist party, and encourages full co-operation of our members by affiliation to the Labour Party. It further exhorts our members to offer themselves for positions at all levels within the Labour Party in order that they may be in a position to advance (TASS) policies, believing that this can only be done from within."(91)

The 1967 Conference debated the only motion submitted on disaffiliation from the TUC(92) and this was rejected by Conference.

The mover of the motion argued two points; firstly, that representation on the General Council of the TUC was "obsolete", the manual trades taking

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(89) RC Conf. Reports, 1967, p.437.

(90) Ibid., p.437-438.

(91) RC Conf. Report, 1969, p.285-286.

(92) RC Conf. Report, 1967, p.176.

all the seats and being disproportionately represented even among themselves, while the white-collar unions had no representation, and secondly, that the union could not "in all sincerity belong to a body who are in direct opposition to (TASS) on such a fundamental matter as the prices and incomes policy", an argument expanded on by the seconder of the motion.(93)

The three speakers opposing disaffiliation, including one on behalf of the EC, all argued much the same case, namely that while the union deplored the policies being pursued by the General Council of the TUC it was too small a union to forego the "many links and many roots" that membership of the TUC had given and would give, and that TASS did and could play a useful part inside the TUC in changing the policies (which is exactly what happened at the 1967 TUC).(94) The union's General Secretary was in fact elected to the General Council in 1969.(95)

Thus the 'left' leadership maintained a consistent positive stance on the principle of affiliation to both Labour Party and TUC and were supported by the delegates, all the disaffiliation motions which were debated being overwhelmingly defeated.

To round off this sub-section on 'other policy tendencies', some points may be made on the degree of homogeneity with respect to policies within the EC since it was made up entirely of members most of them lay members. Firstly, Mortimer resigned the editorship in August 1968 to take up an important post with the NBPI, an action that caused great bitterness within the leadership. While there is no available evidence that there had been major policy disagreements in the EC between Mortimer and perhaps others and the hard-core 'left', it nevertheless seems likely that such disagreements did occur, and given Mortimer's new post these disagreements would almost certainly have been about industrial policy in general and

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(93) Ibid., p.176-177.

(94) RC Conf. Report, 1967, p.177-179.

(95) TUC Report, 1969, p.124.

incomes policy in particular. Secondly, in the period 1967-68 there is evidence that a number of EC members who had left the Communist Party in a move to the 'left', formed a group in opposition to the 'left' majority. One of them, M. Cooley, served as President in 1971 and has been described as a"Maoist".(96)

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In concluding this section on 'the membership's responses', it is argued that there is some evidence which is broadly consistent when taken across a number of points, which indicates a degree of rejection by sections of the membership of union Conference policies on incomes policy and the leadership's implementation of them. There is also some evidence that there may have been some fragmenting of the leadership in and around the EC level related to policy and implementation on incomes policy. On balance, however, the weight of evidence allows the conclusion that the 'left' were never under any serious challenge throughout its period of leadership including the years 1964 to 1970; indeed there is no evidence that the leadership's opposition to 'In Place of Strife' led to anything but overwhelming support by the mass of the membership and this coupled with the rise in recruitment in 1969 and 1970, seems to have led to a further consolidation of the 'left' in the union.

4. THE TASS-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

In drawing this fourth and final chapter on the union's history to a close, attention is turned to the three questions posed in Chapter I with respect to the 'left' in the union, specifically:

(a) What conditions or circumstances allowed TASS to promote and sustain a 'leftwing' leadership?

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(96) Indeed Cooley seemed to subscribe to this description in discussion with the present writer in 1970.

(b) What aims did the 'left' pursue and what place had wage militancy within them?

and

(c) What was the 'left' leadership's estimate of its success in pursuing its aims and how far does the estimate accord with the factual record; in particular, how far did the 'left' generate the wage militancy displayed by the membership and how far did it determine its form?

4.1 The 'left's' path to power

In sub-section 1.2 of Chapter I there was set out the argument that the 'left' have gained power in British unions where they were able to connect some version of socialist ideology with independently generated industrial militancy and that special features attach to the mode of operation of this connection. Four special features were identified; these were that the 'left' connected with:

(a) historical/local militancies,

(b) rank-and-file protest, in that the 'left' provide a vehicle for its expression through policy platforms which when linked to low membership participation provide a base for 'left' control,

(c) organisational vacuums, which allow the 'left' to set up unofficial organisations which they then control,

and

(d) dilutee labour, in the case of TASS, with the 'left' using the former's lack of professional identity to build a base for eventual control.

The material presented in this and in the three previous chapters leads to the conclusion that the connection between socialist ideology and industrial militancy is by no means as straightforward as any of the special features examples suggest. The main complicating factor, and that which presents the greatest difficulty in terms of analysis and evaluation with respect to the four examples, is that the 'left' took power in stages

spread over almost twenty years. As was indicated in the introduction to Chapter II these stages can be characterised as follows. For the full period of the late 1940s up to 1973 the 'left' dominated official union policy formation on all major issues through their majority control of the union's annual Conference and after becoming the majority on the Executive and among the full-time Divisional Organisers in 1958, coupled policy implementation to policy formation. This progression from policy formation to policy formation cum implementation - the translation of militant policies into militant activities - is made complex by a quite distinct separation between 'internal' and 'external' implementation. Because of their majority in Conference the 'left' were able to control delegations to the TUC, Labour Party, etc. and were thus able to implement all those policies which were in the first instance external to the union, i.e. essentially those not requiring an immediate membership response. After 1958 external implementation was reinforced by internal policy implementation, i.e. essentially those requiring an immediate membership response (though the 'left' did force the 'right' leadership prior to 1958 into a partial implementation of wage policy). This characterisation does not seem to sit easily on any of the four special features examples and in order to evaluate their explanatory powers with respect to TASS an analysis of this characterisation is undertaken first after which return is made to the four examples.

i. Taking the early period, i.e. up to 1952, there is no evidence of either leadership or membership industrial or wage militancy for the fifteen to twenty years prior to the emergence of the 'left' in the union. As the nascent 'left' engaged in battle in the early 1940s with the established 'rightwing' leadership over wages policy there was a rise in strike activity but it was slight to say the least. Only five named strikes are noted by Mortimer as taking place between 1943 and 1950 and only two in the previous nineteen years (see Table II, p.43). Continuous expenditure by the union on strike pay starts in 1951, i.e. after the 'left' had won this policy

position. Neither is there evidence that particular geographic areas displayed a noticeably greater militancy than other areas or adopted outspokenly militant postures in the later 1940s, on to which the 'left' connected socialist ideology. What seems to have happened, given no prior militancy and no noticeable upsurge as the 'left' emerged, is that in the later years of the Second World War a small but cohesive 'left' appeared at annual Conference. The 'rightwing' leadership denounced them in the monthly journal but perhaps because of, among other things, the political nature of the wartime alliance, were unable to prevent their continued appearance at Conference. The leadership next established in Conference a 'party', the existence of which became public to Conference delegates at least, through the use of voting lists etc. The 'left' responded in kind and by the late 1940s the existence of these two 'parties' albeit in embryonic form became an accepted feature of annual Conference and spilled over into the work of the Executive Committee. It is this early establishment of 'parties' and their acceptance in the formal structure of the union - their de facto legitimation by both 'right' and 'left' in the sense that both understood the emerging rules-of-the-game, so to speak - which provides the key to the particular form of development in the union in terms of the transformation from 'right' to 'left'.

Essentially the battles over wages and incomes policy, which were the major areas of contention in the period up to 1952 with the former remaining so in terms of implementation up until 1958, were fought out among the activists rather than the membership. At one level this is seen clearly in the 'left's' use in Conference of the historical connection between their new wages strategy and the 'strike-in-detail', i.e. their wages strategy entailed national negotiations backed up by militant activity at office level, to provide a foundation for their challenge. In this sense the 'left' did connect with an independent militancy - an early militant policy rather than with a contemporaneous militant movement. Wootton provides some corroboration of this struggle among the activists when he notes that a realignment of

forces took place in Conference and in the EC as the 'parties' solidified. The main evidence that the struggle was restricted to the activists is that it does not appear among the membership in general. There is no evidence that any movement developed among the mass of the membership in support of one side or the other.

That is not to say that 'left' and 'right' did not propagandise among the membership because presumably they did, rather it is to argue that the policy battles were fought out more or less openly by the 'parties' within the democratic structure of the union which did not require recourse to the mass of the membership. Neither was any immediate response required from the mass of the membership to all of the changes in policy consequent on 'left' Conference victories. The evidence on incomes policy for example, shows that only in 1962 was any active response required of the membership on a policy dating from 1952 against incomes control.

The promotion of Mortimer and then of Doughty further consolidated the 'left' in the official structure of the union and reinforced the legitimacy of the 'left' trend.

ii. Of the period 1952 to 1958, two points stand out. Firstly, there was a fairly slow build-up of strike activity; there is no evidence of general militancy among the membership. Secondly, the 'left' further consolidated their position through inter alia the 'reference back' technique in Conference and their domination of union delegations to external bodies.

The slow build-up of strikes can be seen from Table III, p.50. There is no evidence of a flood of strike-pay applications consequent upon the 'left' policy victory on 100% nett wages strike-pay. The 'right-wing' leadership did not actively campaign among the membership for the 'high strike-pay/many strikes' wages strategy and it would seem that a struggle between 'right' and 'left' took place "in the field" to use Wootton's phrase, over the implementation of the strategy at divisional, branch and office level. Nevertheless, to the extent that the evidence

does show a build-up of strike activity coupled presumably to a build-up of more militant postures among the membership, the weight of evidence would seem to allow the conclusion that both were, in the main, the result of 'left' activity. At worst the conclusion would be that the 'left' purchased militancy through the paying of 100% nett wages strike pay; at best they articulated grievances and provided an apparent method of solving them.

The 'left' further consolidated their position in the leadership of the union through their role as official spokesmen both internal and external to the union. As much as anything else it was the activity in the wider trade union and labour movement of spokesmen like Mortimer and Doughty which gave TASS by the late 1950s a reputation as a militant union. As Roberts et al. note, TASS was more readily accepted by the manual unions in the CSEU than were either the forerunners of APEX and ASTMS.

This combination of 'left'-led wage militancy from formal positions of leadership (though still a minority in the EC) coupled to the standing achieved in the wider movement, provided the foundation for the 1958 'left' majority on the EC. The struggle between the two 'parties' remained bitter throughout the 1950s, with the 'right', while winning the Assistant General Secretary's position in 1956, being unable to hold off the 'left' from majority control in 1958. Wootton points out that the 'right' threatened to leave the union after the 'left's' 1958 victory, taking 20 to 30 thousand members with them, but they did not do so. Many factors were undoubtedly at work, but one which may have weighed heavily was that they had been beaten democratically, themselves behaving undemocratically in 1956 and immediately after their 1958 defeat, and being seen to do so by the mass of the activists. That the people who replaced them were activists of long standing, indeed of some reputation, and who took their place alongside such noted 'leftwingers' as Doughty and Mortimer and others previously in a minority, must also have played a part. There is also the possibility that the 'right' 'party' was much weaker "in the field" than

the 'left'; they effectively disappear in the early 1960s so the scales may have in fact weighed heavily against a mass walk-out.

iii. Of the period of 'left' majority control little needs to be said. The build-up of wage militancy continues although the minority response to the one-day strike calls in support of the CSEU wage claim in early 1962 is perhaps indicative of the actual spread of militancy among the membership. By 1962-63 an independent wages strategy emerges based on a 'strike waiting list' and TASS enters its heyday as a wage militant union.

Before returning to the four examples, it must be stated that the small scale of the union may have been a factor firstly, in the early acceptance of the 'parties' in Conference, i.e. among as few as 170 delegates, and secondly, in their operation "in the field", i.e. in as few as 14 districts and 170 branches. If the concentration by firm of employment, which is apparent in the early 1970s, existed in the 1950s then this also may have aided such operation.

In terms of the four examples, it has already been noted that the 'left' did connect with a previous militancy - a policy rather than an immediately preceding and then contemporaneous militancy. Secondly, the 'left' did provide both publicity and platform although there is no indication of either rank-and-file protest or of a link to low membership participation, lack of democratic value being more a prerogative of 'right' than 'left' on the evidence to hand. In point of fact, the charge that the 'left' only appeared at Conference on the basis of low membership participation at branch meetings was never publicly made by the 'right'. The main phenomenon which causes problems of analysis is the parallel build-up of wage militancy and 'left' advance over a twenty year period. It is accepted that theorists who hold the 'connection' examples as explanatory of TASS, could argue that this thesis, in concentrating on the leadership's development rather than that of the membership, fails to take into consideration an independent rise in militancy among trade unionists in general

or among the membership in particular onto which the 'left' connected. That is, it is accepted that without a much more detailed analysis of the union's industrial environment over the period or a comparative study with other unions and their environment for the same period, it cannot be concluded with certainty that TASS's militancy was purely a result of internal factors. Further it is accepted that without a much more detailed analysis of the membership's structure, attitudes and development over the period, it cannot be concluded with certainty that TASS's wage militancy was simply a product of 'left' articulation and structuring of membership grievances which would otherwise have petered out. Nevertheless the material presented in this and the three previous chapters makes these conclusions highly probable; notwithstanding the long-term rise in wage militancy among blue-collar unionists outlined in the first few paragraphs of this thesis, the weight of evidence built up from the records of the case-study union allows the conclusion that wage militancy among the membership was in general a function of 'left' leadership and activity for the full period from the late 1940s up until 1968-70; thereafter a more obvious leadership/membership two-way interaction on strike activity is apparent and this in a period of sharply rising wage militancy among white-collar unionists in general. Another way of looking at the relationship between the TASS 'left', rising blue-collar wage militancy post-1945 and TASS membership wage militancy, is that the TASS 'left' attempted to duplicate the blue-collar pattern using their affiliation to the CSEU, the need to encourage blue-collar support for TASS wage claims at factory level etc. to engender membership wage militancy.

What can be said with certainty is that no other white-collar union displayed TASS's official policy on militancy, its official strike record, spent as great a proportion of income on strike-pay or achieved a reputation for wage militancy among both unions and employers alike,[97] as early as did TASS or for such a sustained period. This is not to argue that the TASS membership were industrially docile and induced to militancy by 'left' activity alone. It is to argue that there is no general body of evidence

(97) See 'The Power to Manage: a history of the Engineering Employers' Federation', Wigham, 1973, for an employers' view of TASS wage militancy

of rising white-collar wage militancy before the late 1960s; that while it is possible that the membership of TASS were subject to special industrial factors conducive to militant action which were not at work on the memberships of ASTMS and APEX for example, there is no a priori reason to expect this, or to expect that such change should take precedence over the evidence presented on 'left' activity. The TASS membership must of course have faced similar problems by and large, as were faced by other private-sector white-collar trade unionists, and membership did increase roughly in line with the unionisation of the private-sector white-collar labour force as a whole. The key difference is that the 'left', from positions of formal leadership, identified the wage question as capable of achieving a militant membership response and were able not simply to structure membership wage grievances into strike activity, but to raise wage militancy to a level not achieved by other white-collar unions and to integrate it into the central work of the union; indeed the wage question takes on a number of dimensions in TASS which are almost certainly not found as explicitly in other unions, particularly the explicit integration of wage militancy, class consciousness and socialism, all more or less openly stated in the union's Conference policies.

Of the example which proposes 'left' connection with unofficial organisations, then to the extent that this fits TASS, the equivalent would perhaps be the 'party' since combine committees etc. were set up officially by the union - TASS displayed an official willingness to change the organisational structure, under 'left' leadership no doubt, in a way which the example suggests other leaderships were not.

With regard to the dilutee labour connection, its proponents offer no material foundation for it. Even if it was the original base for 'left' advance or from which the 'left' emerged, it is difficult to conceive of it remaining so through to 'left' majority control and beyond. It is possible that as the membership expanded, drawn according to Mortimer from

the shop-floor in the main, as blue-collar workers were promoted to the technical staff, the 'left' continually utilised their "lack of professional identity" as a base for further advance. It has not proved possible to test this. What can be said is that it is difficult to reconcile 'professional identity' with the overall political and industrial stance taken by the union for some twenty years, and more particularly to the overwhelming 1970 vote on amalgamation.

The foregoing raises the question of whether or not the 'connection' concept is the best way of viewing the relationship between a 'left' in a union and industrial or wage militancy; does it aid the analysis of this relationship? A number of points emerge from the case-study. Firstly, the 'connection' concept postulates what would seem to be a false dichotomy between the membership and the 'left' which is not apparent in TASS. On no occasion from 1943 through to 1970 were either the activists or the membership prepared to accept this dichotomy by way of applying bans and proscriptions, mass walk-outs etc. other than the slight destabilisation in the period 1966 to 1968, consequent upon 'left' activity or victories.

Secondly, the actual relationship between 'left' ideology, activity and membership response is more complex in the TASS case than a straight 'connection'. It might stretch the available evidence too far to argue that it supports the Leninist position set out in Chapter I, that class consciousness is inherent in trade union consciousness, in a sense is the unconscious counterpart of trade union consciousness, and is made conscious when trade union consciousness and socialist ideology interpenetrate. The 'left' leadership's belief that such an interpenetration took place is evaluated at the end of this chapter. Nevertheless, it can be argued that rather than being a parasitic relationship, the complex TASS situation is more accurately regarded as symbiotic, hence creating the possibility of a synergistic effect between the 'left' and the membership.

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In concluding this sub-section it is held that the balance of evidence suggests that the 'left' came to power in TASS through their ability to constitutionally carry their policies and personnel at annual Conference and then carry the majority of the membership with them, through a combination of policy and activity in the field, in the implementation of these policies. The key features were the early de facto legitimacy accorded to the two 'parties' which effectively constrained the actions of both 'parties' but particularly the 'right' in terms of responses and extra-Constitutional activity, and the standing accorded to the 'left' individually and collectively in the wider labour and trade union movement.

4.2 The 'left's' aims

The material presented in previous sections of this Chapter and in Chapters III and IV leaves little room for doubt that the 'left' pursued courses of action over the period 1945 to 1970, more particularly from 1958 to 1970, predicated on the view:-

(a) That industrial action, (i.e. strike activity, the threat of strike activity and related action), linked together at national level, maintained and increased wages in a way which was significantly different from what they would have been otherwise,

(b) that industrial action built membership confidence in trade unionism via solidarity and discipline, leading to trade union consciousness, and

(c) that when combined with a marxist political perspective led to class consciousness.

This 'view' was not written down in one single document nor enshrined in union policy at any one Conference. By its nature it could not be called a strategy in the sense of a plan of campaign, rather it represented what amounts to a political philosophy applied to trade union activity internal and external to the union with one aim in view - to make the membership (and if possible, others,) class conscious. This was seen as the ultimate

protection of the membership's interests, a class consciousness aimed at establishing socialism.

While it is possible to consider the union's centralised wage cum strike policy coupled to the continued use of the centralised data bank as just a straight alternative to the previous policy of piecemeal industrial action - that is, to view it as simply a different wages strategy - this was certainly not how the 'left' viewed it. They argued that the piecemeal approach was not simply an inferior wage strategy but was in fact sectional and divisive; it did not build trade union consciousness but rather perpetuated the market system whereas the 'left' saw their policies as leading through rising class consciousness to an understanding of the need to supercede this system and replace it with socialism. Theories of union wage policy are considered in Chapter VII and the proposition that the 'left's' wage/strike policy and the use of the data bank were positive causal factors in the wages actually paid to the membership is tested in Appendix III. Theoretical and empirical aspects of trade union aims and within this, class consciousness, are considered in Chapters VI and VII.

In attempting to carry their policies into practice, the 'left' utilised the full machinery of the union and by and large openly stated their political philosophy, calling for and largely receiving, positive responses from the mass of the membership. With the exception of a brief period of what amounts to minor instability in the late 1960s, the 'left' maintained their position of leadership, indeed almost certainly consolidated it further, in the early 1970s.

4.3 The 'left's' successes

Taken together, policy at both TUC and Labour Party conferences, the strike record, the expenditure on strike pay, the illegal activity carried out in the late 1960s, all suggest that no matter the difficulties in defining militancy, TASS was not only a militant union, it was almost certainly the most militant of the white-collar unions during the period

under consideration; indeed in terms of all-round leadership attitude to strike militancy it may have been the most militant union in Britain. Further, its militancy was not hidden from the membership and neither was the leadership's majority political outlook. The union's journal was overtly 'leftwing' and overtly industrially militant as were its other publications.

STRIKE MILITANCY AND TRADE UNION CONSCIOUSNESS

Given that the 'left' leadership was the main factor over the period, it is probably the case that in the first decade of the high strike pay policy (1951 to 1961) militancy was 'purchased' by the leadership. Even in the period of 'strike waiting lists' (1962-1970) the balance of evidence suggests that groups of members on the list controlled themselves due to their desire for strike pay, i.e. they would not strike without strike pay. On the other hand, there is evidence that potential strikers low down on the waiting list would attempt to get 'victimised' by their employers and under union rule could immediately go on strike with full pay thereby effectively 'jumping the queue', thus perhaps indicating not only an impatience to strike but also a transitional stage between striking with full pay and the much later position of striking with only a token monetary donation from the leadership. Be that as it may, the union's strike record remained high throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s even with the reduction to 80% nett wages in 1968 and later to £15 per week or 60% nett wages whatever was the highest or £6 per week if on strike with engineering section members, such that by the early 1970s strikes were taking place without strike pay being paid although EC permission still had to be obtained.

By the early 1970s, other white-collar unions, e.g. those with bases in engineering, ASTMS and APEX, had adopted militant postures including strike activity. There is no evidence however that their activity came close to TASS's annual average for any period of years. Thus while it

cannot be held with complete certainty that the 'left' leadership built into the fabric of the union an attitude favourable to strike militancy - a strike-proneness - this conclusion does seem a reasonable one.

Whether this strike-proneness when taken in conjunction with the relatively successful 'first week's wage increase' scheme and the two major appeals on the 1967 shipbuilding lockout and 1970 Rolls Royce lockout, coupled to the membership's overwhelming acceptance of the two year long levy for union unemployment benefit, i.e. a consistent high level of collective activity, can be taken as evidence of a higher level of trade union consciousness than that achieved in other white-collar unions, as the leadership believed, must remain as far as this study is concerned a matter for conjecture. Perhaps the degree of homogeneity of the membership during the full period of the study, i.e. the cluster of occupations around the draughtsman, coupled to the very high degree of concentration of the membership by company of employment, led to different aspects of trade union consciousness being highlighted in this union as against others. Nevertheless a fair measure of collective activity was achieved and its relationship to wage militancy was clear to the membership.

There seems little point given the goal of 'class consciousness' and the 'left's' view of its relationship to militant activity, in considering any potential options which were open to the leadership as against the actual wages/strike policy it pursued for some 20 years. Nevertheless one point can be made which while not indicating an alternative to the pursued policy, may point to forces operating in the late 1960s such that the strike pay policy started to break down. That is, the shipbuilding lock-out of 1967 which the union eventually won, was the first major single stoppage that the union had to finance. Over 1400 members (2% of paying membership) were locked-out at a cost of £195,038. In 1970, over 1,000 Rolls Royce workers were locked-out in Birmingham at a total cost of £239,428 and the threat by the company of a total lockout of all its TASS employees throughout Britain (7% of paying membership) must have had a large

bearing on the final settlement which the union did not see as a victory. Finally, an essentially negative piece of evidence: for the years 1969 to 1973, the union did not have a strike in any of the GEC plants throughout Britain yet this company employed over 10% of the union's membership, the implication being that a lockout would have led to financial disaster for the union. Many factors are involved in a decision by a company to lockout sections of its employees; but the union's high strike pay strategy may have made it increasingly vulnerable to mass lockouts such that even the slightest threat by a management was sufficient to make it back down.

Over the period 1951 to 1970 however, the union had a strike/strike pay record not matched by any other union in Britain and there is no evidence that the mass of the membership saw such activity as anything other than legitimate trade union activity.

TRADE UNION CONSCIOUSNESS AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Without a detailed comparative analysis of TASS as against other unions, it is not possible to locate TASS's place in the ranks which formed up against incomes policy and industrial relations legislation in the post-1945 period. At one level the union's rejection of incomes policy is simply an extension of the logic of the 'many strikes/high strike pay' policy - if there is wage control then there cannot be a militant strike policy. Indeed for the brief period July 1966 to July 1967 when the Government was able to achieve some domination over trade union wage activity, to the extent that even the TASS membership were reluctant to pursue militant activity, there are signs of frustration among the TASS leadership (see p. 104). The furthest the union would go on the Donovan report was to admit that factory bargaining would permit the recognition of "circumstances in (each) particular plant" but that only with the continued link between factory and national agreements would it "be possible to retain a sense of overall working class solidarity" (see p. 98) - again making explicit the purported

link between militant wage activity and class consciousness and this leads on to the other level of union thinking, the political. The challenge or assault launched by the TASS leadership on incomes policy etc. in the 1964 to 1970 period was seen by the leadership as as much a political as an economic one. Class collaboration was counterposed with class struggle, planning under capitalism was counterposed with socialist planning, and capitalist law with the economic needs of workers. This latter, on which it must be reiterated the leadership won a major victory as witnessed by the degree of illegal activity, is best summed up by the leadership's phrase - "the right of trade unions to take action is an essential balance in the unequal relationship which exists between an employer and his workpeople", (see p. 99). Thus the leadership's position on incomes policy etc. was much more than simply rhetoric; they did use almost every means at their disposal to defeat legislation, in particular by encouraging the membership to break it, and in general the membership supported them.

TRADE UNION STRUCTURE AS CLASS ORGANISATION

The overwhelming vote of the membership on the amalgamation with the AEF was seen by the 'left' leadership as an expression of a class understanding born out of the union's militant record and socialist policies. The leadership's views on this have been set out on page 63 above. A review of the union's membership growth and the leadership's position on amalgamation coupled with a brief look at the circumstances surrounding the amalgamation, while in no way providing a test of class consciousness, may nevertheless clarify some of the issues involved.

As indicated in Chapter II, membership growth through the 1950s remained low and in 1960 the union altered its rules to 'open' the union to a wider range of technicians than were previously eligible. Yet up until the campaign around amalgamation with the AEF no major consistent long-run recruitment effort was made by the leadership; indeed it is only after 1970

that the concept that large size is of major importance in both wage bargaining and in influence in the wider labour movement, becomes of central concern to the leadership. Taking the 10 years 1960 to 1969 TASS membership rose from 67,040 to 86,789 or by 29%, while APEX membership rose from 59,545 to 101,230 or by 70% and ASSET/A.Sc.W. (i.e. ASTMS) rose from 36,551 to 123,800 or by 233%.(98) While allowance must be made for the different size of the catchment areas available to the three unions, e.g. that there are many more clerical workers than technicians in British industry, nevertheless to the extent that the catchment areas are dependent on union policy TASS effectively restricted itself. Moreover in the negotiations in the mid-1960s with both APEX and A.Sc.W, TASS adopted a 'holier-than-thou' attitude with respect to militancy, essentially arguing that neither union was capable of high strike pay militancy and that neither union saw engineering as its main base. This approach to growth by amalgamation certainly helped TASS to fall from the largest of the three unions in 1960 to the smallest in 1970 as did the leadership's lack of concern with growth in general, an outlook not shared by the leaderships of the other two unions.

Of course while it is possible that had TASS adopted a more positive approach to amalgamation with the aforementioned unions, amalgamation would still not have ensued, nevertheless when the leadership did set up an amalgamation procedure with the AEF it had little difficulty in convincing an overwhelming majority of the membership that it was in their interests. On the assumption that one of the difficulties involved in 'opening' the union up prior to 1960 was the craft sentiment of many of the members and that this sentiment was gradually eroded during the 1960s such that amalgamation of one sort or another became a possibility, then the choice of the AEF remains a strange one because perhaps it seems the most difficult one to carry through. It might have been expected that the easiest amalgamation would have been within the white-collar group of unions, particularly with the 'foreman's union', ASSET, rather than a blue-collar union which,

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(98) Figures supplied by TASS Research Dept.

while craft-based, nevertheless had a major 'semi-skilled' component. On the other hand perhaps the craft sentiment of the draughtsman pulled the union closer to the craft-based engineer. This argument cannot be settled within the scope of this study. If, however, it is assumed that the forces making for successful amalgamation with the AEF stemmed wholly from the leadership and its use of the union's propaganda machinery then an earlier amalgamation with either the A.Sc.W or APEX, say in 1967 or 1968, would certainly have been acceptable to the membership on the same basis. If, on the other hand, as the leadership argued, the successful vote on the AEF amalgamation represented a high level of trade union consciousness and possibly a high level of class consciousness with respect to industrial unionism among the membership, then the amalgamation was indeed a noteable event in trade union history. Two points may be noted however. Firstly, while it seems highly improbable it is nevertheless still possible that, for example, the ASTMS leadership under Clive Jenkins could also have carried through such an amalgamation. There is no way to test this possibility. Secondly, the period in which the amalgamation vote took place was a very complex one. The disputes in the labour movement around the policies of the Labour Government, the "wages explosion" of 1969/70, coupled with a tremendous rise in strike militancy across the TU movement and in trade union recruitment in these years, may have created a set of circumstances conducive to such an amalgmation which were not present before or since.

Be that as it may, the union was not growth conscious to any marked degree over the period 1945 to 1965; during the 1960s it grew more slowly than the other two white-collar unions with major engineering bases; and the leadership did not display a marked enthusiasm for white-collar amalgamation. Whether earlier amalgamations with either APEX or A.Sc.W or both, would have aided the achievement of the other policy goals set by the leadership, e.g. higher wages or greater impact on the policies of either the TUC or Labour Government remains open to doubt. Indeed with respect to the latter

two bodies, the three unions did collaborate throughout the life of the 1964-1970 Governments. Further, whether failure to grow in the 1960s will have any lasting effect in weakening TASS either industrially or politically is also open to doubt. The union's overall position does not seem weak when viewed from the mid-1970s,[99] and only history will tell whether lack of attention to size in the 1950s and 1960s was a positive or negative factor in the union's development.

(99) In 1976, TASS had 161,607 members, APEX had 141,767 and ASTMS had 396,000 (as affiliated to the TUC).

CHAPTER VI

THE 'BLUE COLLAR/WHITE COLLAR' DEBATE

In the preceding four chapters while a broad description of the case-study union's development was given, attention was directed at the three TASS-specific questions set out in the Introduction.

A major conclusion drawn is that while the leadership did, in fact, spend a major part of its time on the wage issue and in this was generally supported by the membership, its main aim was to use wage policy coupled with ideological policy to make the membership class conscious. It seems appropriate therefore to pursue in the first instance this question of union aims, leaving until Chapter VIII a more detailed analysis of trade union wage policy.

McCarthy has commented that trade unions are complex and diverse institutions, that the term "trade union" has been used to cover a wide variety of organisations with contrasting aims, methods, strategies, traditions and structures.(1) If this is the case it could well be asked whether or not there can be a general theory of union aims. One approach to this question, which has an added significance given that TASS is a 'white-collar' union, is found in the debate around whether or not white-collar or non-manual unions pursue different aims by different methods than those pursued and used by blue-collar or manual unions. The first section of this chapter reviews some of the relevant literature on this debate in the light of the experience of the case-study union. In doing this it is appreciated that a major critique has already been undertaken by Bain et al.,(2) but it is hoped that the detailed material provided by the case-study will nevertheless prove useful. The conclusion drawn is that as far as TASS

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(1) 'Trade Unions' - McCarthy, p.9, 1972.

(2) 'Social Stratification and Trade Unionism' - Bain, Coates and Ellis, 1973.

is concerned no aims or methods were employed which would set TASS apart from the so-called 'blue-collar' unions, even though the ideological role of the TASS leadership could be interpreted as an exception in current trade union conditions.

Another aspect of this debate relates to the question of class consciousness and this is taken up in the second section. It is concluded that 'class consciousness' as argued for by theorists who accept the white-collar/blue-collar separation is theoretically inadequate in terms of their specifications and differs from the conception of class consciousness held by the TASS leadership.

Chapter VII is devoted to a critique of the wider literature on union aims hinted at in the previous comment from McCarthy by way of the 'pluralist/marxist' debate on trade unions.

1. A SPECIFICALLY 'WHITE-COLLAR' UNIONISM?

Much of the comparative analysis of white and blue-collar unionism has been conducted around the sociological concept of 'union character'(3) and it is this part of the debate which is considered in detail here.

At the most general level the concept of character has been used to argue that depending on where a union's membership is drawn from in terms of a postulated social hierarchy or stratification in society, so will depend the aims it pursues and the methods it employs to achieve these aims. A union's character - its aims and methods - thus depends on its place in the hierarchy, but generally speaking a distinction is made between white and blue-collar unions. White-collar unions are held to have essentially similar characters which are significantly different from the essentially similar characters of blue-collar unions to allow a distinction to be made between them. Before developing the analysis two points need to be noted.

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(3) Some writers have used different terminology to refer to 'union character' - see Bain et al., p.4.

1.1 Terminological Classification

The blue-collar/white-collar terminology postulates a distinction which may not be easy to apply in practice in certain areas of employment. The environmental and other differences relating to a coalminer or blast-furnaceman on the one hand and a bank clerk or insurance agent on the other are fairly obvious, but the differences between a toolroom superintendent, foreman, chargehand and skilled toolmaker or an industrial clerk and a working garage proprietor are perhaps more difficult to discern. Where, for example, would petrol pump attendants fit into such a classification? They may or may not actually manually operate the pumps, but they do normally handle cash receipts and thus come close to performing clerical work. TASS now organises garage clerical staff.(4) Where would traffic-light control engineers fit into such a classification? They are skilled electricians yet work in an environment amenable to white-collar dress, and again many are TASS members and the union has found their strike-effectiveness very useful indeed.(5) The shop-workers union, USDAW, which might have been expected to recruit petrol pump attendants, is usually assigned to the blue-collar category presumably because many of its members work in productive industry (mainly in Co-operative movement factories) as well as in the manual side of distribution. Some of its members (and many of its potential members) both literally and figuratively wear white collars, e.g. Co-operative store managers, Marks and Spencers cashiers, a whole range of shop assistants, particularly those in high street quality shops, etc. Are all shop workers blue-collar or more accurately manual workers?

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(4) See 'TASS News and Journal', April 1977.

(5) They were successfully used in strike-action to break GEC's wages stranglehold on the union. See p.136, above, and TASS Journal of April 1973.

1.2 Organisational Classification

It may have been the case in some previous period in British trade union history that a distinct organisational classification into blue and white-collar unions could be made. Notwithstanding the 1970 amalgamation to form the AUEW, most of the large blue-collar unions have now built up fairly substantial non-manual or white-collar sections, as shown in Table VIII. This process may be given greater impetus in the future if other blue-collar/white-collar amalgamations take place, e.g. APEX, has discussed the possibility of an amalgamation with the GMWU.(6)

TABLE VIII

UNION	TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	WHITE-COLLAR MEMBERSHIP
TGWU	1,800,000	140,000
AUEW	1,200,000	Eng. Section Supervisory Section:- 10,810
		TASS:- 161,000
GMWU	960,000	62,000
NUPE	650,000	62,500*

*Includes some 50,000 nurses
(1976 figures, supplied by the unions)

While these white-collar sections may pursue different aims by methods other than those used by their blue-collar comrades, their organisational unity represents a recent shift in British trade union structure based on a change of attitude on the part of some white and blue-collar leaderships if not yet memberships.

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(6) Report of APEX Conference, 1976.

2. THE CHARACTER DICHOTOMY

Difficulties of terminological and organisational classification aside, the debate has centred around the existence or otherwise of a white/blue separation or dichotomy. It is complicated by a number of factors, principally that there is no agreement or consensus among sociologists on the conceptual framework to be used. There is little or no agreement on the theory underlying the independent variable, i.e. stratification. Similarly with the dependent variable, character, there is also some dispute. While some theorists have used a Weberian separation of the status/class type, others explicitly or otherwise have employed an egoist/fraternalist separation. The concept of separation itself is variously defined with some theorists posing not a dichotomy, but some kind of continuous spectrum between blue and white-collar character. The use of an intervening variable, social imagery, is also surrounded by theoretical dispute.(7) Given these differences among the experts it probably suffices for present purposes to set up a simple status/class dichotomy model as the subject of a critique based on the TASS experience. The problems of accurately placing TASS along with other unions on a spectrum for example if such exists, would require much more detailed analysis than can be undertaken here though intuitively it could be held that this white-collar union would be placed at the extremity of the blue-collar end.

White and blue-collar character can be counterposed in the following way:

TABLE IX/

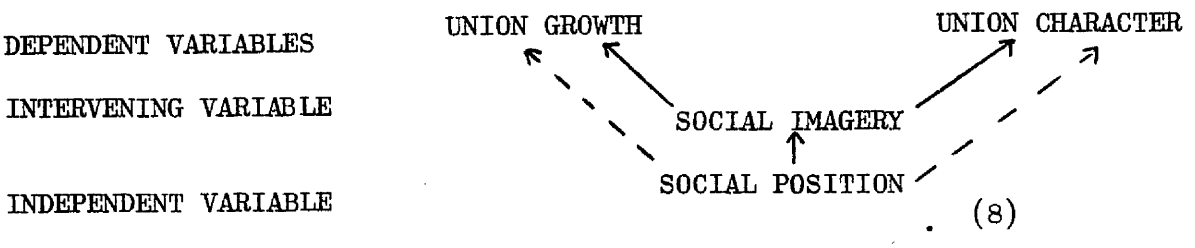
(7) For a comprehensive survey of the debate see Bain et al., op.cit.

TABLE IX

CHARACTER ATTRIBUTE	WHITE-COLLAR	BLUE-COLLAR
MAIN AIM	SOCIAL STATUS	ECONOMIC REWARD
Who the aim is meant to benefit	The sectional interest	All-union, inter-union or class interest
Methods	Non-militant and non-political	Militant and political
Political Outlook	'Conservative'	'Labour'

Assuming 'social status' and 'economic reward' to refer to the Weberian definitions of 'status' and 'class' i.e. concern with the individual's position in the hierarchy of prestige in the society at large in the former, and with size and source of income and degree of job security in the latter, then the above Table represents an attempt to encompass the central distinctions made by various theorists between blue and white-collar character.

White-collar workers are seen as seeking social status generally or professional standing specifically in the case of professional associations, and they do this on behalf of the organised sectional interest using methods which are non-militant and non-political thus being 'conservative' in outlook. Blue-collar workers are seen as wage-conscious rather than status-conscious, homogeneous rather than heterogeneous and pursuing interests wider than their own immediate organised sectional interest. Using methods which are militant and political they are 'labourite' in outlook. Leaving aside problems of defining such concepts as militant and political in the 'character' context, there are a number of ways of interpreting these two propositions. Bain et al. provide a schematic description of the postulated relationship between stratification and character thus:-



(8)

The full lines on the diagram indicate the sophisticated version of the relationship which explicitly or implicitly underlies the simple relationship of the dotted lines. The direct interpretation of this relationship is that given social position and through the mediation of social imagery, union character may be determined. The problem with this interpretation is that not only is there disagreement about the theoretical nature of each of the variables but also, accepting the variables, about the nature and direction of causality. Might not union character change the subjective assessment of social position or the social image of society that that an individual holds? If social imagery is meant to bear some relationship to objective reality might not union character impinge on the social imagery which groups in society hold? For example, could it not be argued that the wage militancy displayed by white-collar unions post-1968 was the result of a changed imagery of union character under the impact of, inter alia, the seemingly successful militancy previously displayed by blue-collar unions?(9) Was there, in fact, a demonstration effect? Or is the explanation that, under the pressure of declining income differentials as against blue-collar workers, white-collar workers pursued the only options left open to them, militancy and political action?(10) Given the confusion among the sociologists both of these causal sequences seem reasonable.

Another way of interpreting the two propositions is that they are circular - their authors, unable to be objective, have included their own class background in the causal sequence and have in effect set up the

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(8) Bain et al., op.cit., p.9. Since theories of union growth are not considered in this thesis, only the right-hand side of the diagram is analyse

(9) See 'How to run an incomes policy' - Clegg, p. 59-67, for some discussion of relevance to this.

(10) See 'TASS Journal', Feb., 1970, p.4.

dichotomy:

white-collar = middle class

blue-collar = working class

and then sought evidence which justifies the assumptions - middle class people have middle class values and have aims and methods "acceptable to society", i.e. to the middle class, whereas working class people have aims and methods not acceptable to the middle class.

Yet another way of approaching the dichotomy thesis is in effect not to let it get off the ground. That is, to postulate that there are no a priori grounds for maintaining:-

i that status is the prerogative of one group in society rather than another, or for that matter economic reward,

ii or that status need be separate from economic reward,

iii that white-collar workers are less homogeneous than blue-collar workers,

iv or that some 'methods' and 'outlooks' are the prerogatives of one group rather than another.

All these must be shown to hold in practice or the distinction breaks down.

2.1 The TASS experience

Recourse to the history of TASS should be sufficient to refute the contention that there is any simple formulation such as that underlying the direct interpretation of the dichotomy thesis upon which to base a meaningful distinction between blue and white-collar unions.(11) Even allowing for garage clerks and traffic-light control engineers in membership, TASS has been a white-collar, predominantly craft union since its formation. For the twenty five years up until 1970 the union placed

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(11) Bain and Clegg note that "the many attempts to explain the growth and character of unionism in terms of 'class' and 'status' are a monument to the folly of explaining trade unionism without first looking closely at trade unions". (Emphasis added) - 'A Strategy for Industrial Relations Research in Gt. Britain', BJIR, Mar., 1974.

major emphasis on economic reward although for the 'left' in the union this was seen as consequent upon the class consciousness aim. Status was not even a regular minority point of view expressed in annual conferences of the union, though since conferences were normally made up of activists perhaps the most important evidence is that status was not a regular issue in the correspondence columns of the journal where the less active (therefore less ideologically-motivated) members might have been expected to express their point of view. The only counter-evidence comes from the very few leadership pronouncements mentioning status, made in reference to highly skilled designers and engineers, usually of university degree or equivalent level, but these were to the effect that economic reward was the most accurate measure of status.(12)

On the question of 'methods', TASS militancy also runs counter to the prognostication of the dichotomy thesis, so much so that it raises questions as to why this particular evidence was not given greater weight in earlier pieces of empirical research on union character. It is precisely in the post-1950 industrial militancy of TASS members and in their acceptance generally of 'left-wing' political policies in conjunction with the leadership's expectations of consciousness-raising that is found the militant and political action par excellence that dichotomy theorists argue only relate to blue-collar unions. No more evidence need be offered than this against the dichotomy position on militancy and politics.

While it is the case that the union was wage-conscious and thus spent a great amount of time on discussing and implementing its policy, it was also involved in wider issues again contrary to the dichotomy thesis. For example, as recorded in Chapter III, p. 46, TASS affiliated to the TUC

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(12) See 'TASS Journal' of Mar., 1970, for example. For some interesting comments on the relationships between status and economic rewards, see Hyman, 'Inequality, Ideology and Industrial Relations', BJIR, July, 1974. By way of an aside, TASS officials have said to the present author that the key difference in industry is between staff-graded and non-staff-graded workers.

in 1918, the STUC in 1923, the CSEU in 1943 and the Labour Party in 1944, and as recorded in Chapter II, p. 31, the union adopted policies on German re-armament, NATO, Suez and relationships with East European trade unions. Thus, far from pursuing sectional interests or not being involved in broad organisations, the reverse is the case. The progression of affiliations may indicate a long-term struggle in the union about where its basic interests lay - affiliation to the TUC, NFPW and the STUC being more easily accepted as something necessary at a national level to the membership's interests, affiliation to the CSEU, a mainly blue-collar industrial confederation, being more difficult to get accepted, and more so political affiliation to the Labour Party - but the union was certainly involved in the broader movement throughout its history.

It might of course be argued that since the majority of TASS members at least up until recently, were 'promoted' to staff grades from craft areas on the shop-floor,(13) they thus carry their manual traditions with them. A counter point of view might be that in being promoted, their wage-consciousness would be demoted in favour of their new-found status. Without much more detailed research neither position can be proved or refuted here although the build-up of industrial militancy during the 1950s and of political policy during the 1960s suggests that even if either of them were operational the 'left's' leadership still had a major impact. Yet it is not at all the case that wage-consciousness, militancy and political involvement were simply the result of 'left' control replacing status-oriented goals of an earlier period. As previously noted, under previous 'right-wing' control, i.e. pre-1951 or pre-1958 whichever is preferred, the union was certainly less wage-conscious, much less militant but no less politically involved, although in a different direction, than under the 'left', but these attributes were not overshadowed by status goals as postulated by the upholders of the dichotomy thesis. The best that can

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(13) 'History of the AESD', Mortimer, p.415.

be said is that given the craft nature of the union's membership, it displayed a blue-collar character and when coupled to 'left' control it became the epitome of such character.

2.2 The Wider White-collar Experience

There is, however, a sufficient body of evidence from the behaviour of other white-collar unions, e.g. teachers, clerical workers, foremen, airline pilots, civil servants, etc. to conclude that TASS is not in fact an exception to the rule.(14) In all the union areas mentioned, militant action over wages has been a feature of the past few years. For some of them affiliation to TUC or Labour Party is of long standing, e.g. APEX and ASTMS, while for others it is fairly recent, e.g. NALGO's affiliation to the TUC and the teachers' unions in both England and Scotland affiliating to their respective trade union centres. While such affiliation need not indicate a lack of sectional interest or sectional protection, the act of affiliation to a predominantly blue-collar trade union centre would seem to go beyond the bounds of status as used by dichotomy theorists unless the TUC and STUC have now become status symbols. The affiliation of the Educational Institute of Scotland, the largest Scottish teachers' union, to the STUC, could be interpreted as an act of sectional protection rather than a positive commitment to the wider trade union movement. The degree of competition between teachers' unions in Scotland coupled with the method of representation on the committee which discusses teacher salaries with the relevant government department, compelled the EIS to protect its position by joining the STUC after two of the other unions had previously done so. In 1970-1 both the Scottish Further Education Association and the Scottish Schoolmasters' Association affiliated to the STUC, registering 1,050 and 3,000 members respectively; the EIS affiliated in 1971-2, registering 32,000

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(14) See, for example, the evidence amassed by Bain et al, op.cit.

members.[15] The EIS would now however seem to have accepted its place in the wider movement with its General Secretary sitting on the General Council of the STUC.[16]

Some white-collar unions have had a long association with, for example, the CSEU and in 1970 TASS, APEX, ASTMS and ACTSS (the white-collar section of the TGWU) were affiliated.[17]

While none of the white-collar unions mentioned in this sub-section would seem to come close to TASS in duplicating the postulated blue-collar character, they do show sufficient difference from the dichotomy's white-collar paradigm to indicate how far it fails to cover the wider white-collar experience.

2.3 The Blue-collar Experience

From the blue-collar union point of view there is some evidence to suggest that some of them do not conform to the blue-collar character postulated by dichotomy theory. While they are all by and large wage-conscious, some of them are not very militant, for example the Tobacco Workers' Union, Iron and Steel Trades Confederation and the Amalgamated Union of Sailmakers, among others are not noted for their militancy. Some of them are fairly sectarian, for example the 'black squad' in the shipyards, the Boilermakers.

On the questions of status and homogeneity some blue-collar unions would seem to have been as status-conscious (though not with respect to a "hierarchy of prestige in society at large" but rather with respect to a hierarchy of prestige within the job-cluster) and as internally segmented as any white-collar group. The Boilermakers maintain the craftsman/mate

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(15) Reports of the 74th and 75th Scottish Trade Union Congress.
(16) Report of the 78th STUC.
(17) Report of proceedings of 35th Annual Meeting of the CSEU.

distinction in their rule-book; the AEU, the EETU/PTU, UCATT and the Sheetmetal Workers' maintain the skilled worker/unskilled worker position in theirs, and there is little doubt that these differences are among other things an expression of status.(18) Furthermore, trade union officials do admit that dilutee or government-trained labour tend to be "looked down upon by properly time-served men".(19)

The existence of wage differentials or more accurately the importance placed on them by different groups of unionists and non-unionists alike, points to an appreciation of status - albeit again not of the kind defined by Weber - even where claims to it are wholly subjective. It is not clear therefore that the suggested homogeneity of blue-collar workers is of the kind actually met with in practice. Wage solidarity and secondary boycotts there may be, blue-collar workers are differentials-conscious as well as wage-conscious. Why this is so need not be of concern here.

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Leaving aside a more detailed consideration of 'aims' to the next Chapter it is here concluded that the blue/white-collar separation based on social stratification, while interesting, bears little relationship to the complex TASS experience specifically or to the wider trade union experience generally. The TASS experience allows a conclusion to be drawn similar to Lockwood's, i.e.

> 'generally speaking the overall tendency has been for blackcoated workers to form associations fashioned after those of working class unions'.(20)

6.2 UNION CHARACTER AND CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

Following on from Lockwood's characterisation of non-blackcoated unions as working class unions, he and Blackburn(21) have been the main exponents

(18) See the respective rule-books.

(19) In personal discussions with the present writer.

(20) 'The Black Coated Worker' - Lockwood, p.194-195, 1958.

(21) 'Union Character and Social Class' - Blackburn, 1967.

of the view that union character can be used to measure the working class consciousness of a union. Neither writer precisely defines class consciousness[22] and this will be referred to later. Since both writers hold essentially similar positions on the relationship of character to consciousness, attention is focused on Blackburn's exposition which is the most clearly set out and detailed.

Blackburn introduces the idea of 'unionisation' - made up of two parts, 'completeness' (more usually 'density') and 'unionateness' (an index of character) - and argues that unionisation 'may be taken as an index of class consciousness'.[23]

Completeness

It is difficult to see how completeness relates to working class consciousness (however defined unless circularly) in anything but a rough and ready way. Leaving aside the difficulties associated with the practical measurement of completeness for open unions such as TASS, people may join unions for many reasons, e.g. to gain access to insurance cover in the case of school teachers, or legal cover as provided by TASS and many other unions, to obtain employment where union shops are the rule or simply to obtain fringe benefits of one kind or another. There is no reason to suppose that such recruits to trade unions are what might be called 'trade union conscious', i.e. view themselves as having interests common to all trade unionists such that they are prepared to act collectively to protect these interests, far less to suppose that they are class conscious. Even the concept 'trade union consciousness' raises difficulties in the sense that union leaderships may compete with each other in the recruitment field and in others without taking into consideration a broad view of total trade union structure, e.g. vested interests in growth and structure may lead

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(22) See Bain et al., p.96.

(23) Blackburn, op.cit., p.9.

to sectionalism and is apparent in the periodic debates on structure at the TUC. A union which vigorously pursues an expansionist membership policy along with union shop agreements, may achieve a high degree of completeness without in any way being class conscious, indeed the reverse may be the case - it could be militantly sectionalist.

Unionateness

Blackburn does, however, concentrate on unionateness as the key to class consciousness and argues that an organisation can be described "as more or less unionate according to the extent to which it is a whole-hearted trade union, identifying with the labour movement and willing to use all the powers of the movement ... The level of unionateness depends on the commitment of an organisation to the general principles and ideology of trade unionism".(24)

It is not at all clear that this quotation is meaningful. For example, what is the 'labour movement'; is it a fairly static group of organisations or simply the collective at a point in time of organisations of workers for industrial and/or political ends? Does it include the Communist Party or for that matter the Tory Party's trade union organisation, and therefore does it mean identification with them? Some unions operate bans and proscriptions of one form or another against Communists holding union office but not against Tories holding union office - how does this paradox affect identification with the 'labour movement'? One union allows only Labour Party members to hold its top offices - is it more or less identified with the 'labour movement' than those with no bans or some bans?(25) What are "all the powers of the movement"? Are they the powers of strike action and secondary boycott or the powers to impose an incomes policy? Is there

(24) Blackburn, op cit., p.18.

(25) For example, APEX and the NUR.

general agreement on the meaning of "general principles and ideology of trade unionism"? Was the support of some London dockers and Smithfield meat porters, mainly trade unionists, for Enoch Powell's position on immigration, part of the ideology of trade unionism or the support now being given by some London trade unionists to the National Front?(26) Is there an acceptable definition of 'working class consciousness' with which to underpin the concept of unionateness? Marxists like those in Tass would define working class consciousness as the recognition by those who sell their labour power, workers, of the historically transient nature of capitalism, of the need to work actively to transform capitalism into socialism using violence if necessary and the need to do this as a class as against the sectional plurality of capitalism. Would Blackburn agree with this definition?

Blackburn admits the ambiguities in his formulation but argues that a useful measure of an organisation's unionateness and hence class consciousness can be obtained by considering with respect to the organisation the following seven elements:-

i. regards collective bargaining and the protection of the interests of members, as employees, as its main function, rather than, say, professional activities or welfare schemes,

ii. is independent of employers for purposes of negotiation,

iii. is prepared to be militant, using all forms of industrial action which may be effective,

iv. declares itself to be a trade union,

v. registers as a trade union (where this is applicable),

vi. is affiliated to the TUC,

vii. is affiliated to the Labour Party.(27)

It would take the present discussion too far afield to consider each point in detail. Taking (i) as Blackburn does, as somehow primus inter pares, why should collective bargaining be considered so important?

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(26) See, for example, 'The National Front', Walker, p.110-111, 1977, for a brief discussion of docker and meat porter support for Powell.

(27) Blackburn, op. cot., p.18-19.

TASS wages policy - financially supported strikes, unilaterally set minimum rates, pattern bargaining, etc. - can be interpreted as an attempt at unilateral regulation. (This interpretation is considered more fully on p.176 below). Would TASS thus 'score' zero under this element? Blackburn thinks so; he argues that collective bargaining is 'basic to the concept of unionateness'. Even worse as far as TASS is concerned, he further argues - 'If an organisation has no score under this item, it has no score under the other items, i.e. its level of unionateness is zero'.(28)

More generally, it is not at all clear that these seven elements if accepted by a union would not still allow it to be as sectional as it wanted to be, rather than, as Blackburn implies, much more broadly motivated. Further, even if it is accepted that the elements, interpreted sympathetically, go some way towards defining a broad trade union and political outlook if not class consciousness, it would seem that their spirit applies more easily to trade union leaders than to rank and file. TASS, for example, had at no time prior to 1970 more than 47% of its membership paying the political levy and a referendum on Labour Party affiliation may have resulted in disaffiliation had one taken place. This need not, indeed the former did not seem to impair TASS industrial militancy, so again how would TASS have then 'scored' on the unionateness scale? Such a reduction in outlook, i.e. disaffiliation from the Labour Party, would have been against the wishes of the leadership as indicated in the debate on disaffiliation in 1967 dealt with on p.120 above. Blackburn, other than the comments on collective bargaining, offers no system of weighting for the seven elements.

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The TASS experience since 1945, effectively demolishes the 'blue-collar/white-collar' character dichotomy. If TASS represented the only evidence against the dichotomy thesis then perhaps the existence of the

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(28) Blackburn, op cit., p.28.

'left' leadership could be used to explain this exception to the rule. The broader white-collar and blue-collar evidence indicates that far from being an exception, TASS's experience is the rule.

However, it would be incorrect to leave matters there. There would seem to be sufficient evidence from the TASS case to at least give credence to the hypothesis that both the form and the content of the political stance adopted by the union, including that over amalgamation, and supported by the mass of the membership, represented a higher level of consciousness than has yet been found among white-collar unions in Britain and that this was the result of 'left' leadership.

CHAPTER VII

THE 'PLURALIST/MARXIST' DEBATE

Returning to the comment from McCarthy mentioned at the beginning of Chapter VI to the effect that a wide variety of aims have been attributed to trade unions, there is a marked tendency in the literature on the subject for theorists to highlight one specific aspect of union behaviour and then to argue that this is the defining aim or characteristic of trade unions. In relation to this tendency two points can be made. Firstly, there seems to have been little discussion among theorists on a theory of the specification of aims, a subject which has generated some debate among economists in their field of study. Thus the concepts of maximising, satisficing, sequential consideration of alternatives and optimum mix, for example, have little place in the literature. Secondly, there is little acknowledgement that there may exist different aims for different groups within one union, e.g. for the leadership, for the full-time officials, for the clerical staff employed by the union (who may be union members), for the membership in whole or in part.(1) Some attempt has been made to come to grips with this question in the descriptive historical chapters of this thesis by outlining the various aims held by different groups within TASS where there was evidence for such variation. The development of a theory of the specification of union aims is beyond the scope of this thesis, and the approach relies on the more usual position of the majority of writers. The second point relating to differentiation of aims, is returned to on a number of occasions and in a number of ways in this and later chapters.

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(1) But see for example, Hyman, 'The Workers Union', p.206-221, 1971, for some discussion on this point.

This chapter concentrates on two of the main contending theories in modern academic industrial relations, the pluralist and the marxist, or more correctly, on how trade unions fit into both theories. However, given the dissimilarity of aims that have been attributed to trade unions a brief resumé of the broader literature on aims may prove helpful. The first two sections of this chapter review two broad areas under the headings of economic and political. Sections 3 and 4 consider the pluralist and marxist approaches to rules, law and trade unions, while the remaining section deals with these views on trade unions and the experience of the case-study union.

1. Economic analysis

Many early writers were concerned to underline what they saw as an essential similarity rather than diversity when dealing with trade unions and usually did so with respect to a broad economic aim in which what might be called the 'wage objective' features prominently. They would have agreed with what Flanders has called the conventional answer to the purposes question, that:

> "(unions) defend and, if possible, improve their members' terms and conditions of employment. They are out to raise wages, to shorten hours and to make working conditions safer, healthier and better in many other respects." (2)

Implicit in this approach is that trade unions impose a cost on an employer individually and on capitalism in general which is greater than the wage bill. Accepting that this is so, and without getting involved in a theory of the specification of aims, then a number of questions arise. How should economic reward be defined? How far do unions or

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(2) See for example 'Six Centuries of Work and Wages' - Rogers, p.439, 1912 edition; 'The History of Trade Unionism' - the Webbs, p.1, 1920 edition; a book by a former general secretary of the General Federation of TUs - 'Trade Unions, their past, present and future' - Appleton, p.121, 1925; and 'Management and Unions' - Flanders, p. 41, 1970.

individual workers take into consideration aspects of this imposed cost other than wages when they formulate claims for increases in the latter? Do unions trade-off one aspect for another, e.g. forego a wage increase or accept less than they otherwise would in order to obtain some gain in holiday entitlement? To put the question another way, how do unions and/or individual workers define economic reward? Allen[3] has argued that the monetary wage is an ever-present concern to workers hence unions, since it is through this, given exogenously set price and tax structures, that they buy the necessities of life; that since few if any of them could maintain consumption standards if they withdrew from the labour market, they are continually forced to present themselves for employment and are thus continually faced with the monetary wage whether weekly or monthly. He stresses the dynamic aspects of the employment relationship, i.e. wages are a cost to the employer to be minimised though income to the worker to be maximised, and this contradiction is subject to forces arising from changes in the cyclical pattern of employment as well as structural changes in employment.[4] There is surely a major element of truth in this position, though whether it is as rigid as is implied, in the face of the argument that given the provision of a social security system, workers will remain unemployed until work turns up at what they consider the "right" wage, is another matter. Nevertheless, it is true that many of the non-wage costs imposed on employers involve long-term benefits, e.g. clinic facilities, locker and washing-up facilities, safety equipment including clothing etc. and thus will not require to be of concern to specific groups of workers on a week-to-week basis though it is probable that a union may at any one time have claims for non-wage benefits in progress somewhere.

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(3) 'The Sociology of Industrial Relations' - Allen, 1974.

(4) Ibid., p.39-40.

Similar comments would seem to apply to holiday entitlements, redundancy payment provisions and pensions though perhaps not so much to hours of work, but all of these must have some bearing on the wage per unit of time spent at work. It is doubtful however if in the general case they are considered part of the money wage or more accurately, are seen on a week-to-week basis as influencing the monetary return to employment. Thus Allen's argument, while it does not answer the questions posed at the beginning of the previous paragraph, at least has the merit of emphasising that while the weekly or monthly wage is part of a greater cost imposed on the employer and in this sense is internal to the employment relationship, it is precisely because it is the most immediate part of that cost which is realised externally to the employment relationship that it is of ever-present concern and importance to both workers and union. Workers may, indeed probably do, view most non-wage benefits as "icing on the cake" - if they are made redundant the icing stays with the employer.

The economic aim is best summed up as that view which highlights the external as well as the internal dimension of the employment relationship under capitalism and barring external fringe benefits (which can be reduced to income), this means highlighting the monetary wage.

2. Political analysis

By and large political theories of union purpose emphasise some aspect of industrial government as the central aim of trade unions. One writer, Ross, has argued the importance of internal political processes of unions, directed at their organisational survival, in understanding their aims, but since he applies this specifically to wage policy his theory is held over to Chapter VIII where it is contrasted with Dunlop's 'income maximisation' theory.[5]

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(5) 'Trade Union Wage Policy', Ross, 1948, and 'Wage Determination under Trade Unions', Dunlop, 1944.

An early statement of a governmental theory is found in the work of Commons[6] who regarded unions not as bearers of tyranny and monopoly, but as liberating forces which helped establish constitutional government in industry and delineated the power of one party over the other.[7] Clegg, writing in 1951,[8] has offered what is essentially a similar view. The main problem associated with these views is that while it could be accepted that unions have introduced order out of chaos in industry or, with greater emphasis, have by their organisation of workers reduced the arbitrary powers of the employer, it is not clear what is meant by government. What sort of governmental structure is it, in which the unions are, to paraphrase Clegg, a permanent opposition, never to become the ruling party? Why should unions remain a loyal opposition and not democratically or otherwise bid for power? It can be held of course that this situation is the best of all possible worlds, therefore eternal and unchanging, but that does not follow from a theory of government unless it is defined as the acceptance by unions of some sort of perpetual benevolent dictatorship. The concept of constitutional government seems more applicable to what is currently called workers self-management, and seems close to the guild socialist position of Cole[9] and the syndicalists.

Perlman, writing in 1928,[10] postulates the concept of "job-conscious unionism", that "all unions sooner or later stress 'shop rights', which to the working man at the bench, are identical with 'liberty' itself - since, thanks to them, he has no need to kowtow to foreman or boss, as the price of holding his job".[11] Flanders,[12] writing in 1970, argues a similar but much broader thesis and given its central importance to

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(6) 'The Economics of Collective Action' - Commons, 1925.

(7) See 'Industrial Relations Theory - A Critical Review' - Blain & Gennard, BJIR, Nov. 1970.

(8) 'Industrial Democracy and Nationalisation' - Clegg, 1951

(9) 'The World of Labour' - Cole, 1913.

(10) 'A Theory of the Labour Movement' - Perlman, 1928.

(11) Ibid.

(12) Flanders, op.cit.

the debate on union aims is here extensively quoted:

> "... in defining union purpose ... the best way of finding the right answer is to look at the behaviour of trade unions, to infer what they are from what they do ... Here one thing is certain, and it applies to all trade unions and has applied throughout the greater part of their history. The activity to which they devote most of their resources and appear to rate most highly is collective bargaining ... Collective bargaining may be what the words imply - that depends on how we define bargaining - but it is also a rule-making process ... In other words, one of the principal purposes of trade unions ... is regulation and control. They are interested in regulating wages as well as raising them; and of course, in regulating a wide range of other issues appertaining to their members' jobs and working life ... The effect of rules is to establish rights, with their corresponding obligations. The rules ... secure for employees the right to a certain rate of wages; the right not to have to work longer than a certain number of hours; the right not to be dismissed without consultation or compensation and so on ... (The) basic social purpose of trade unions is job regulation and control." (13)

It may aid the later analysis of the behaviour of the case-study union if at this point a digression is undertaken into wider social and political theory for, as Fox notes, the pluralist foundation which underlies Flanders' postulate of job regulation and control is itself part of a pluralist theory of society, a view made explicit by one of Flanders' major collaborators, Clegg.(14) A very wide literature exists on rules, rights, obligations etc. embracing social, political, moral and philosophical texts and a critical survey is well outside the scope of this enquiry. It is not argued therefore, that the two approaches which will be outlined, the pluralist and the marxist, are in any way exhaustive of the possibilities, only that they represent central and competing perspectives in modern British industrial relations theory. Nor is it argued that all the authors mentioned with respect to one or other perspective would admit to every aspect given here.

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(13) Ibid.

(14) 'Pluralism in Industrial Relations', Clegg, B.J.I.R., Vol, XII, no. 3, 1975.

3. Pluralism and Society

3.1 Continuous Compromise

Pluralism constitutes a political perspective which is applicable both to society in general and to industrial relations in particular. This perspective advocates viewing society

> "as fractured into a congeries of hundreds of small special interest groups, with incompletely overlapping memberships, widely differing power bases, and a multitude of techniques for exercising influence on decisions salient to them ..." (15)

This interest group structure is integrated into a society in two principal ways. Firstly, the central authority, usually the government, since it relies on the support of, or is elected by, the interest groups, ensures that in its dealings with them it arbitrates the competing claims or imposes a solution so as not to isolate the offended group or groups from the political process. Clegg puts this position thus:

> "There are no definitive decisions by final authority only continuous compromises with landowners, farmers, financiers, industrialists, workers, the church, the army and many other pressure groups or with coalitions of two or more".(16)

Secondly, the interaction of interest group conflict or competition and resolution - continuous compromise - is itself a mechanism, perhaps the main mechanism, through which society is maintained as are its political freedom and adaptability. No one interest group or coalition has priority in claims or for that matter continuous dominance over other groups. The interaction of conflict and resolution among groups of more or less equal power, or at least where there is a power imbalance, it is short-lived or not so great as to rupture the interest group structure,

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(15) 'Community Power and Political Theory', Polsby, 1963, quoted by Fox in 'Industrial Relations: A Social Critique of Pluralist Ideology' in 'Man and Organisation', Child, 1973.

(16) Clegg, op.cit., p.309. See also the discussion of pluralism in Fox, ibid.

is self-reinforcing since all groups receive rewards from the process of compromise and thus they develop a

> "commitment to the process by which (the rewards) were secured, and by which more may be had in the future". (17)

The concept of commitment is taken by some writers to mean more than simply an interest group's desire for survival driving it to acquiesce to the process of compromise in a society in which life is "poor, nasty and brutish". Commitment is taken to mean that all interest groups see the process of compromise as legitimate, that they compete in the spirit of goodwill, and honour their obligations consequent upon the compromises they reach; in effect all interest groups have what Fox calls "a consensual code of ethics".(18) Flanders would seem to come close to this latter view when, in the field of industrial relations, he argues that collective bargaining - the process of compromise in industry - protects not only the material living standards of workers

> "but equally their security, status and self-respect - in short, their dignity as human beings ... (Collective bargaining) establish(es) rights, with their corresponding obligations". (19)

It is but a short step from concepts such as security, status, self-respect, dignity and rights and obligations to those of goodwill and honour.

Group conflict or competition is not always seen by pluralist theorists as a negative feature to be overcome by compromise. Many, if not all, would agree with Coser that:

> "Conflict, rather than being disruptive and dissociating, may indeed be a means of balancing and hence maintaining a society as a going concern .. A flexible society benefits from conflict because such behaviour, by helping to create and modify norms, assures its continuance under changed conditions". (20)

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(17) Ibid.

(18) Fox, op.cit.

(19) Flanders, op.cit.

(20) 'The Functions of Social Conflict', Coser, 1954, quoted in Hyman, 'Marxism and the Sociology of Trade Unionism', p.23-24, 1971.

Pluralism thus constitutes a political analysis of society in which interest group conflict is continually resolvable with the central authority playing a mediating rather than coercive role. Conflict arises from disputes over the sharing of rewards both material and cultural, and is resolved on the basis of a propensity to compromise, a self-legitimating propensity derived from the integrative pull of reward-sharing inherent in the process of compromise.

3.2 Pluralism and Trade Unions

Of pluralism as applied to industrial relations, Clegg concludes that

> "the rules of collective bargaining can be seen as the industrial equivalent of the political rules governing the operation of pressure groups." (21)

It is within this framework of pluralist rule-making that Flanders' emphasis on collective bargaining must be set. For Flanders and the others of the "Oxford school"[22] the "basic social purpose of trade unions is job regulation and control", and this unions attempt to achieve, indeed by and large do achieve, through collective bargaining. Collective bargaining as the previous quote from Clegg hints at, is the industrial equivalent of the process of compromise in society at large. Flanders makes this clear when he discusses bargaining between political parties, between governments, between unions and employers etc., thus:

> "Any of these forms of 'bargaining', whether in industry or politics, are in the modern idiom 'pressure group' activities, and the resulting deals, though they may be called 'bargains', are in reality compromise settlements of power conflicts ... The process of negotiation is best described as a diplomatic use of power." (23)

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(21) Clegg, op.cit.

(22) Blain and Gennard, op.cit.

(23) 'The Nature of Collective Bargaining', Flanders in 'Collective Bargaining', Flanders (Ed.) p.17, 1969.

This collective or negotiated compromise is at the root of industrial stability in that the process of reward-sharing integrates the bargaining parties sufficiently to enable them to so deploy their relative strengths at any point in time such that they do not force the other party to revolt, i.e. they use their power diplomatically. This seems implicit in Clegg's criticism of Fox for asserting that the balance of power between employers and workers is typically unequal and in favour of the former. Clegg argues that:

> "In most instances the only means of discovering where the balance lies is to wait for a conflict in which both sides deploy all their resources and to note which side wins, or whether the outcome is a stalemate ... In most industrial situations there is room for endless argument over where the balance of power lies." (24) (emphasis added)

Trade unions, themselves coalitions of interest groups, are, along with employers' organisations and government, the main organisations in the process of compromise in industry and as such their role is crucial as one of the authors of the output of compromise, the rules of collective bargaining. Unions and their memberships are thus integrated into the industrial process in particular and into society in general, on the basis of achievements in the field of job regulation and control. Indeed for Flanders the process of integration has reached the stage where British trade unions are

> "an essential part of the mechanism of social control." (25)

Finally, while pluralism need not rest on an end of ideology postulate or on some such purported historical break or change, there is a sense in which it implies a maturity of the social order. For example, Clegg argues that pluralism works best in the advanced industrial societies where interest groups possess sufficient resources

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(24) Clegg, op.cit., p.303.

(25) 'The Reform of Collective Bargaining: From Donovan to Durkheim', Fox and Flanders, B.J.I.R., Vol. VII, No.2, 1969.

> "to make concessions to new groups without driving established groups to revolt." (26)

This sort of historical change is often asserted with respect to the history of industrial relations and could be used to suggest that pluralism in industrial relations works best under late rather than early capitalism. The following quote puts the case neatly:

> "Contrary to Marx, industrial conflict peaks early, not late, in the process of industrialisation. Rather than facing greater and greater conflict ending in revolution, industrialising societies face more and more peace once the early period of industrial unrest has been passed. Problems get solved, attitudes get changes, mechanisms get developed." (27)

4. Marxist Political Economy

4.1 Rules and Class Power

For Marx and Engels the state

> "is by no means a power forced on society from without ... It is simply a product of society at a certain stage of development. It is the confession that this society has become hopelessly divided against itself, has entangled itself in irreconcilable contradictions which it is powerless to banish. In order that these contradictions, these classes with conflicting economic interests, may not annihilate themselves and society in a useless struggle, a power becomes necessary that stands apparently above society and has the function of keeping down the conflicts and maintaining order". (28)
> (emphasis added)

But this power, this state, is not impartial. It rules in the interests of the dominant economic class. Thus, on the rule of law and the labour contract, Engels says:

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(26) Clegg, op.cit., p.309.

(27) 'Labor and Management in Industrial Society', Kerr, p.xx, 1964.

(28) 'The Origin of the Family', Engels, p.206, Kerr Edition, 1902.

> "The labour contract is said to be voluntarily made by both parties. But it is considered as voluntary when the law places both parties on equal terms on paper. The power conferred on one party by the division of classes, the pressure thereby exerted on the other party, the actual economic relation of the two - all this does not concern the law. Again, during the term of the contract both parties are held to have equal rights, unless one has expressly renounced his right. That the economic situation forces the labourer to give up even the last semblance of equality, that is not the fault of the law." (29)

Further and more generally:

> "In such a state, wealth exerts its power indirectly, but all the more safely. This is done partly in the form of direct corruption of officials ... (and) through universal suffrage. For as long as the oppressed class, in this case the proletariat, is not ripe for its economic emancipation, just so long will its majority regard the existing order of society as the only possible one, and form the tail, the extreme left wing of the capitalist class." (30)

It is perhaps worth noting at this point that a number of modern industrial relations scholars working from what is called a "radical perspective" would seem to accept almost all of the above, only stopping short of the implicit prediction of revolution contained in the phrase "not ripe for its economic emancipation". Fox, for example, explicitly adopts this position.(31)

Thus the classical marxist perspective sees the rule of law and the democratic machinery of capitalist society as structured by class division. Society remains more or less stable and adaptable, to the extent that a majority of the oppressed class are ideologically captured(32) through corrupted officials, i.e. opinion-formers including trade union officials, and the apparent freedoms of capitalist society such as universal suffrage.

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(29) Ibid., p.87-88.

(30) Ibid., p. 210-211.

(31) Fox, op.cit.

(32) That is, are induced to have a 'false consciousness'. See 'Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution', Foster, p.3-7, 1974, for a modern marxist view on false consciousness.

Industrial strife is nevertheless endemic due to conflicting economic interests, and the coercive organs of the state are used to put down revolts when necessary.

If marxists see the aim of ruling class ideological penetration of the working class as being to bind the latter, or a majority of it, to capitalism, then the main creation of such penetration, through which the opinion-formers operate and workers perceive their own relevance within society, is a multitude of "sectional interests" with their own "identities". Trade unions are seen as representing some of these sectional interests or groupings of them.(33)

Marx and Engels predict, however, that circumstances will occur within which sectional identities will be submerged in a class identity, and the working class forced to overcome capitalist democracy - "win the battle of democracy"(34) - to take state power, usually by armed struggle against the coercive organs of the capitalist state, and reverse the unequal power relationship in favour of themselves. Political society may indeed by a system of rules and a rule-making process but under the workers' state these will favour the workers. Lenin puts this position thus:

> "(In) capitalist society we have a democracy that is curtailed, wretched, false, a democracy only for the rich, for a minority. The dictatorship of the proletariat, the period of the transition to communism, will for the first time create democracy for the people, for the majority, along with the necessary suppression of the exploiters, of the minority." (35) (emphasis added)

4.2 Marxism and Trade Unions

None of the classical marxists produced a text wholly on trade unions. The most complete summary of the views of Marx and Engels is to

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(33) Lenin, 'Collected Works', Vol. V, p.404, 1961. See also Foster ibid.

(34) 'Communist Manifesto', Marx and Engels, p.74, Moscow, 1977.

(35) 'The State and Revolution', Lenin, p.82, Moscow 7th Printing, 1972.

be found in Lozovsky[36] and that of Lenin in his text "What is to be Done?"[37] Engels writing in 1844-45 says:

> "(The) object (of trade unions) were to deal, en masse, as a power, with the employers; to regulate the rate of wages, according to the profit of the latter, to raise it when opportunity offered ... " (38)

Marx writing in 1847 argues:

> "Large scale industry assembles in one place a crowd of people who are unknown to each other. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of their wages, this common interest which they have against their employer, brings them together again in the same idea of resistance - combination".(39)

In another text:

> "Trade unions work well as centres of resistance against the encroachments of capital. They fail partially from an injudicious use of their power. They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organised forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system."(40)

It is interesting to note that Engels talks of both regulation and raising wages, indeed Marx talks of unions obtaining "contractual conditions" from employers,[41] hence they did have a positive conception of workers and unions obtaining rights in industry and thus imposing duties on employers. Their enthusiastic support and campaigning for the 10 hour day indicates not only that they had a positive conception of

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(36) 'Marx and the Trade Unions', Lozovsky, 1935.

(37) Moscow, 9th printing, 1973.

(38) 'The conditions of the working-class in England in 1844' - Engels, p.215, 1966 Reprint.

(39) 'The Poverty of Philosophy' - Marx written in 1846-7. See p.145 of the Martin Lawrence Edition.

(40) "Wages, Price and Profit', Marx, written in 1865, first published in 1898.

(41) Quoted in Lozovsky, op.cit., p.16.

rules but also that some rules were seen by them as a major inroad both to the economic power of the capitalists and to their political control.(42)

It is clear, however, from the foregoing quotations and from much else in their writings that Marx and Engels saw the competitive struggle between capitalists both domestically and internationally for markets, and within this the struggle around wage costs, as the key to understanding the development of capitalism and hence trade unionism. The dynamic process of capitalist development - "the unceasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes (the workers') livelihood more and more precarious" and "the growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating" - is seen on the one hand, as continually undermining the contractual conditions unions have obtained from employers and through this on the other, continually regenerating militancy and trade union consciousness around defence and improvement of the wage. This regeneration of trade union consciousness, precisely because it can never do more than provide a resistance against the encroachment of capital, is seen as preparing conditions for the acceptance by workers of the need for political action; "in the struggle ... the mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself", "what the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers."(43)

Workers and trade unions are thus seen by the classical marxists as subject to two sets of opposing forces, one which stems from the ruling class and the other from the struggle over wages. The former includes all those techniques and organisations, among them the corruption of officials, the 'freedom' of the ballot box and the 'impartial' state, which can be grouped under the heading of ideological controllers or

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(42) See 'Inaugural address of the International Working Men's Association', Marx, Selected Works, Vol. 1, p.382-3.

(43) All quotations in this paragraph are from the 'Communist Manifesto' op.cit.

mechanisms of social control, and which bind workers to capitalist society. The latter arises from the irreconcilable struggle over wages and forces sections of the workforce to combine in unions and periodically undertake militant activity which may bring the coercive organs of the state into action; the continual regeneration of trade union consciousness is eventually transformed into a political challenge to capitalism, a class consciousness emerges among workers and across unions which leads them to challenge for state power.

Hyman, in a pamphlet(44) which subjects both the classical marxists and later marxist theorists to a lucid critique, designates the views of Marx and Engels as the "optimistic tradition" and goes on to review those other marxists who, for Hyman, to some degree or other relegate trade unions from the potentially revolutionary forces, e.g. writers such as Lenin, Trotsky, Gramsci and more recently Anderson,(45) and whom he sees as representing the "pessimistic tradition".

Without dealing with Hyman's arguments in detail, his major assertion is that Marx and Engels hold that the forces arising from the economic struggles of workers and unions, i.e. those tending to make unions revolutionary, would outweigh those tending to bind unions to capitalism, i.e. the ideological controllers, whereas the other writers hold the reverse. These writers all argue that capitalism controls unions through penetrating them, and they use such concepts as "embourgeoisement", the "labour aristocracy", the "iron law of oligarchy" and "incorporation" in their explanations of the processes involved in ideologically binding unions to capitalism.(46) It is not clear that Lenin actually falls with the pessimistic tradition in that while he argued

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(44) Hyman, op.cit.

(45) Ibid.

(46) Ibid.

for an explicit difference between the revolutionary political party of the working class and the class itself and hence also the unions, he does strike an optimistic note:

> "Trade union organisation not only can be of tremendous value in developing and consolidating the economic struggle, but can also become a very important auxiliary to political agitation and revolutionary organisation." (47)

The point of all this is - what is it that trade unions do under capitalism when viewed from the perspective of marxist political economy? The answer must be that two opposing views are held by marxists: the first, the optimistic tradition of Marx, Engels and Lenin, views trade unions as potentially revolutionary bodies continually undergoing regeneration in the class struggle in industry, primarily around wages, which parallels the competitive development of capitalism, and when led by revolutionaries and imbued with socialist consciousness(48) will actually become revolutionary The second, the pessimistic tradition, sees the incorporation of unions, particularly union leaderships, as leading to unions becoming "lieutenants of capitalism" and their leaders as "political police", thus collaborationist, non-revolutionary or overtly counter-revolutionary.(49)

This latter view brings the argument close to Flanders' thesis that unions are an essential part of the mechanism of social control. If union leaderships and memberships are, for whatever reason, class collaborationist, then they may in fact be interested in joint rule-making, in perpetuating capitalism by compromising with it.

5. Pluralism, Marxism and the TASS Experience

5.1 Aims and objections

In terms of day-to-day trade union activity there can be little doubt that TASS members, including the leadership were involved in

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(47) Lenin, op.cit., p.113-114.

(48) See Chapter I, p. 11 and 12.

(49) Hyman, op.cit.

something akin to the process of compromise in industry, in obtaining contractual conditions from employers. But there can also be little doubt from the mass of evidence that the main field of concentration both in terms of policy and practice was wages. While leadership, union negotiators and those members who participated in negotiations must have been concerned to reach agreement on a whole range of issues affecting working conditions, the wage issue was pre-eminent. The overwhelming emphasis placed on wages in RC Conference, both in terms of debate and policy, in the union's journal and Vacancy List, the consistent opposition to any form of incomes policy post-1950, the annual wage campaigns built around the many strikes/high strike pay policy used to pattern bargain or where possible pattern-impose settlements across companies, the sophisticated wages data-bank and the unilaterally-set minimum wage rates, the sheer amount of time and effort devoted by leadership, organisers and activists, apparent from RC Conference reports and monthly journals, all lead to this conclusion. It would not stretch the evidence at all to conclude that this union's experience under 'left' leadership, offers concrete support to the conventional answer to the trade union purposes question rather than to the job regulation and control postulate. That is, the union was out to raise, not to regulate, wages. That it had in most cases to compromise with employers or their representatives, to enter into accommodations with them, is not proof of regulation as an aim, a point returned to below.

The conclusions reached in section 4 of Chapter V with respect to the leadership's aims go beyond this emphasis on wages, however. The leadership held that emphasis on wages, a militant wages strategy and militant activity were conducive to building trade union consciousness and when coupled with socialist ideology, would produce class consciousness. The leadership's central aim was a class consciousness among the membership, and others outside the union, directed at establishing socialism. This question of socialism was not as some writers would have it, rule number

one in the rule book or inscribed on the H.Q. banner to be seen but not argued or worked for, but was held particularly during the period 1964 to 1970, to be a real alternative strategy open to the membership and working class in general. While the union did not have a "blueprint" of the new socialist order ready to hand(50), the debates at RC Conference and the resolutions passed, some of them fairly detailed, make it clear that socialism or policies which were seen as opening up the prospect of socialism, were held as immediately applicable and were not visions of some sort of "promised land" to be held up as a moral exhortation never to become a reality.(51)

It could be argued that since the leadership was professedly marxist in outlook it is no real conclusion that the union adopted a militant wage strategy and socialism as aims. The point would seem to be, however, that from the early 1940s onwards, wages lay at the centre of the union's official policy as regularly accepted by RC Conference, that while the 'left' purchased a militant response to the wages aim in the 1950s it felt confident enough to move to an independent wages strategy in the early 1960s after having defeated the 'rightwing's' ambivalence to wage militancy in the late 1950s, that the 'left' carried the day over incomes policy under the difficult conditions imposed by legislation in the late 1960s, in a phrase, that the mass of the membership accepted that raising wages was central to their trade unionism. That the 'left' initially induced wage militancy is not proof that the mass of the membership did not hold that raising wages was a prime aim or that they did not come to see militancy as a legitimate method of achieving it.

Further, as already noted with respect to the industrial militancy/ socialist ideology connection, there is no evidence that the 'left' was seen as anything other than legitimate by the mass of the membership,

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(50) See 'Management and Unions', Flanders, op.cit.

(51) Ibid.

that the latter were coerced or subverted by the former or that the 'left' was somehow separated from the membership so that it had to connect with it. Rather the relationship of 'left' to membership was much more complex than a straightforward connection. While bearing this complexity in mind, it is nevertheless more difficult to sustain an argument for the proposition that the mass of the membership accepted socialism as an alternative to the policies pursued by the 1964-70 Labour Governments for example, than it is to sustain one on the wages aim. Yet it would be incorrect to maintain that the union's policy on this issue was wholly artificial and detached from the membership. While it may be true that had a referendum been held a majority would have rejected it, the facts are that socialism or policies which were held would open up the road to it, were regularly accepted by RC Conference and propounded in the union's journal and at TUC and Labour Party conferences. That is, socialism was a democratically decided policy of the union, it was not hidden from the membership indeed most if not all must have appreciated that their union was 'leftwing', yet did not provoke a mass revolt from them. That many, if not most of the membership may have been much more interested in wages and much less so, if at all, in socialism, is not to deny the consistently 'leftwing' stand taken by TASS for over twenty years and which was seen by many outside the union and doubtless by many inside it, as relating to the union as an organisation rather than simply to the leadership. To argue that this union's experience under this particular leadership is somehow outwith the range of "pure and simple" trade unionism[52] is to deny its obvious place in the recent history of the wider British trade union and labour movement.

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(52) Ibid.

5.2 Compromise and Legitimacy

There can be little argument that for the leadership and activists the process of compromise was not seen as legitimate, rather it was something to be acquiesced to because there was little or no alternative. The whole machinery of the union's wages strategy suggests that, as Bain et al. note, some unions may prefer unilateral regulation(53) and that this union did, but was constrained to compromise not because it saw it as legitimate, but because it was not always powerful enough to do otherwise. The pattern bargaining which Roberts et al. argue was directed at collective bargaining and thus in line with pluralism,(54) can be interpreted as an attempt at unilateral regulation.

Moreover, the discussion in the union's journal in the late 1960s over the conditions under which the law ought to be obeyed, suggests that if the leadership was not able to convince the mass of the membership that an anti-capitalist ideology rather than a consensual one, was a necessary prerequisite for solving their problems, it was able through, among other things, its advocacy of and limited success in obtaining, illegal activity on wages under statutory incomes policy to at least raise the issue among sections of the membership and generate discussion on it. This question of the degree of legitimacy given to the process of compromise by the membership as distinct from the leadership and activists can be put another way. Fox has argued that some union leaderships adopt a "continuous challenge frame of reference"(55) and while this concept could be applied to the 'left' leadership in TASS, the leadership's commitment to the overthrow of the capitalist system would seem to go beyond what is implied by continuous challenge. The concept could, however, be applied to the mass of the membership, as deriving from on the one hand, the propaganda and agitational work carried out by the leadership in the

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(53) 'Social Stratification and Trade Unionism', Bain, Coates and Ellis, p.88-89, 1973.

(54) See the quote from Roberts et al. on p. 47.

(55) 'Beyond Contract: Work, Power and Trust Relations' Fox, 1974.

union over a long period of time and to some extent built into the fabric of the union, and on the other, the membership's own experience of practising militancy over the same time period.

The amalgamation of TASS with the AEU and others in 1970, does not fit easily into the pluralist framework of coalitions of interest groups. Much more easily acceptable would have been amalgamation with one of the other white-collar unions with which negotiations were held but rejected by TASS. The 1970 amalgamation though probably facilitated by the specific conditions of the late 1960s as already argued on p.139, remains unique in British trade union history, and was seen by the TASS leadership, and openly reported as such in the union journal, to be the welding together of a higher form of class organisation, the industrial union. The argument that one of the reasons put forward by the leadership was the need for TASS members to be assured of blue-collar support in the workplace, i.e. to strengthen TASS members' bargaining positions, and that it was this rather than the political motive which swayed the membership, may indeed be true but it would only support the continuous challenge position already argued as encompassing the mass of the membership.

A final point can be made which while not directly related to the pluralist perspective on trade unions, indeed is held by some scholars in opposition to the pluralist position, is that the leadership and for that matter the membership, constitute what in political theory is called an elite or a highly articulate minority within the industrial labour force in Britain. Based on this special attribute the union would then be seen as capable of adopting extreme policies and practices and carrying them successfully in a labour and trade union movement which did not have either the general industrial conditions or the expertise to pursue such a course. A careful reading of Mortimer's history of the union suggests that this sort of outlook may have unconsciously been held by him. Similarly, the leadership's view of the result of the ballot on the 1970 amalgamation, given on p. 63, could be interpreted in this way.

5.3 Optimism v. Pessimism

The experience of the case-study union offers concrete support to the optimistic tradition within marxist political economy with respect to trade unions. The long, bitter battle for policy and executive control conducted by two 'parties', the revolutionaries and the collaborationists, the democratic victory of the former as against the undemocratic practices of the latter, the success of the militant wages strategy and the discussion among the membership over the rule of law, etc., are precisely the kinds of developments predicted by the optimistic tradition. There is no evidence from the period under consideration that the 'left' were subject to capitulation, to incorporationist tendencies, although the 'right' did collaborate over the 1947-50 incomes policy. The 'left' in fact continually fought against such tendencies, for example, in their rejection of the N.E.D.C. in 1962, incomes policy and institutions in 1965, and 'In Place of Strife' and the Commission on Industrial Relations in the late 1960s. Further, the 'left' leadership was prepared to initiate what in pluralist terms would be a coalition of interest groups, the campaign run by the five white-collar unions against incomes policy in 1965-66 detailed on p.100, and the union officially supported the Liaison Committee for the Defense of Trade Unions in the late 1960s; both of these campaigning bodies would be seen by marxists as rooted in the development of working class, the modern equivalents of the Minority Movement in the 1920s and 1930s for example, the dialectic opposites of the forces internal to the working class leading to class collaboration.

This having been said, the final and most difficult question must be posed: did all this do more than generate a fairly high level of trade union consciousness? Does the TASS experience help in providing an answer to the question:

> "Under which conditions and for which reasons do workers, whether manual or white-collar, come to see themselves as socially connected with interests

> in common, and under which conditions are those interests perceived to involve a confrontation with the existing social order?" (56)

It has already been argued in section 4 of Chapter V, and some of the material used there has been reiterated earlier in this section, that the union adopted policies over a long period which were in effect class policies opposed to the continuation of the capitalist system. It has also been indicated that, given the concentration in this thesis on the 'left' leadership and its role in forming the policies and practices of the union, insufficient information exists on the membership to draw firm conclusions regarding class consciousness. But what can be stated with some degree of certainty is that if the membership did go beyond trade union consciousness, and the activity in support of union policy under the 1964 to 1970 Labour Governments, the result of the amalgamation ballot in 1970 and the actions against the Industrial Relations Act 1971 suggest that for brief periods they did, then a key factor in the equation was the existence of a legitimate, articulate 'left' leadership in the union.

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(56) Bain et al., op.cit., p.157.

CHAPTER VIII

THE 'ROSS/DUNLOP' TRADE UNION WAGE POLICY DEBATE

While there exists a very extensive literature on the economics of labour there is however a relative dearth on the economics of organised labour, trade unions, particularly on union wage policy. At the most general level the majority of commentators would probably agree with Rees that the classic statement of union wage objectives is that unions always want more - more than employers want to pay and more than non-union workers are getting.(1) The questions arising from this statement are worthy of attention. For example, how much more do unions want, does the 'want' vary in intensity between unions or at different points in time for the same union, or how is the 'want' made 'effective'? Perhaps more importantly, given that trade unions tend not to be monolithic and that bargaining takes place at various levels, it is possible to isolate a 'trade union wage policy' separate from the rhetoric of the official leadership? Does the monetary 'wage' anyway correctly identify the 'want' as against the underlying but often unspecified concept of 'net advantage'? Indeed is this latter concept identifiable by a union?

Some of these questions will be taken up in this chapter through a critique of two long-standing orthodox - as opposed to Marxist - theories, Dunlop's 'maximising' approach and Ross's 'political' approach.

1. THE ECONOMICS OF THE WAGE OBJECTIVE

Dunlop's approach was originally formulated in his book 'Wage Determination Under Trade Unions' and is essentially a 'maximising' model of a trade union. He attempted to integrate the collectivist nature of trade union wage policy into a framework similar to that of the neo-classical

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(1) 'The Economics of Trade Unions', Rees, p.49, 1968 reprint.

analysis of price and output in the firm. It was argued in conclusion that "the most suitable generalised model of a trade union for analytical purposes is probably that which depicts the maximisation of the wage bill for the total membership", more generally, "this model viewed the union as an economic decision-making unit having as its primary objective the maximisation of some wage or employment dimension of its members, or some optimum combination of wage rates and employment".(2)

Dunlop's basic contention was that the union would be faced with a 'normal' demand curve for labour such that any change in the wage rate would entail inverse changes in employment. He outlined a 'membership function'-"showing the total amount of labour that will be attached to the labour organisation at each wage rate", - and indicated six possible union objectives:-

a. The achievement of "the largest possible wage bill from the particular segment of the economy, quite regardless of whether all wage earners - as specified by the membership function - are employed."

b. Assuming union concern for workers unemployed, "the trade-union objective may be the largest possible wage bill from the segment of the economy including funds from the public support of the unemployed".

c. Again assuming concern for workers unemployed, the "objective may be the largest private payroll to employed members, deducting from their wage income an amount to pay out-of-work benefits to unemployed members".

d. "To secure the largest possible amount of employment, given its membership function".

e. "The attainment of the highest average wage income for each unit of labour affiliated with the union", and

f. To maximise the collective wage 'rents' of those employed".(3)

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(2) 'Wage Determination under Trade Unions', Dunlop, p.44, 1966 reprint, and 'Determining Forces in Collective Wage Bargaining", Levinson, p.3, 1966

(3) Dunlop, op.cit., p.33 and 36 to 41.

It was admitted by Dunlop that in general terms the wage which resulted depended on the exact specification of the 'demand' and 'membership functions' and it is on the specification of these that the challenges to Dunlop's position have hinged.

One point can be made before developing a critique of this model: Dunlop's neo-classical approach to this area of work, i.e. trade unions, leaves him open to the usual criticisms made of the neo-classical theory of the firm and the criticisms which follow are very much in this vein. His defence of course could be that the maximising principle is in effect a paradigm - not testable but highly illuminating.

2. CRITIQUE OF THE ECONOMIC MODEL

2.1 Economic Criticisms

a. Perhaps the best-known criticism is that of Ross and is fundamentally a criticism of the 'demand function'.

Ross rejected the 'maximisation hypothesis' on the grounds that

> "the volume of employment associated with a given wage rate is unpredictable before the fact and the effect of a given rate upon employment is undecipherable after the fact. The employment effect cannot normally be the subject of rational calculation and prediction at the time the bargain is made, and union officials are normally in no position to assume responsibility for it",

and concluded

> "the typical wage bargain (with certain significant exceptions) is necessarily made without consideration of its employment effect."(4)

Although Ross rejects the "maximisation approach" he does not argue that there will be no employment effect ex post, but only that union negotiators will not, except in extreme cases, take it into consideration ex ante. Thus Ross points out the difficulties facing a union in assessing

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(4) 'Trade Union Wage Policy', Ross, p.80, 1948.

the elasticity of demand for labour in anything other than very simple cases.

b. The logical point that no analysis is possible under conditions of uncertainty is well formulated by Reder; that is, even assuming a specified 'membership function', "the maximand (income) itself is by no means unambiguous in any but the most simple situations. In real situations, income is a stream of payments expected to accrue at various moments in the future, and such payment is of uncertain size. A maximiser must decide whether he prefers a steady income stream of minimum size, but with a comparatively small mathematical expectation, or the reverse ... Behaviour will be different, depending upon the maximiser's preference for risk with the possibility of high reward versus safety and low rewards ... The consequences of this ambiguity in the maximand can be readily indicated: either the theory will have to be so emptied of content as to preclude virtually no behaviour, or it will be wrong ... What the union will do in a given situation cannot be deduced from the premise that it is trying to maximise member income: for this postulate is compatible with virtually any type of union wage policy".(5)

c. Criticism has also been made of the postulated 'membership function'; namely, that by suitably specifying the "function" ex post, "almost any pattern of behaviour can be reconciled with the postulate of income maximisation". Thus, unless the 'membership function' is specified by the union ex ante, so that deviations from it can be seen (in principle at least) then virtually no kind of union wage-membership behaviour is excluded even in the "static case".(6)

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(5) 'Theory of Union Wage Policy', Reder, Review of Econ. and Stats., p.35, Feb. 1952.

(6) Ibid.

2.2 Political Criticism

Dunlop appreciated the difficulties raised in (c) above. When dealing with the 'membership function' he asks: "What range of wage earners are taken into specific account by trade unions when formulating wage decisions?" And answers "This problem cannot even be approached until the decision-making unit has been specified. The wage earners from one department in a firm ..., a local union, an international union, or some joint unit with other unions are all possibilities ... Several variants must be kept in mind as the position of the membership function appropriate to decision formulation may be altered depending upon (a) the formal bargaining unit, (b) the degree of unionisation of the wage earners, (c) membership restrictions, and (d) locus of political power within a trade union concerning the wage rates".(7)

If it is accepted that Dunlop's 'demand function' is valid, i.e. there is no elasticity assessment problem, the above statement surely indicates that a fundamental role must be given to political processes within a union in setting wage policy to the extent that a specified 'membership function' appears in wage policy at all.

2.3 Maximising as a Historical Explanation?

Dunlop's partial static approach would nevertheless seem to provide certain illuminations on empirical phenomena in the field of trade union wage policy. For example:-

a. The wage-cut/employment expansion case. It is possible to argue from Dunlop's model that a union may instigate a wage cut in order to expand employment and thus membership, or at least take a wage cut in order to protect the employment of existing employed members, either in a plant, firm or industry. The widespread use of sliding-scale wage agreements in 19th century Britain might be cited as evidence of this, though it is likely

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(7) Dunlop, op.cit., p.43 and 44.

that it was viewed by both managements and unions as less costly than lockouts or strikes and provided an ongoing bargaining relationship. The following quotation gives a point of view from the union side: "(The organiser) was advising them to maintain the sliding scale method of regulating wages according to trade conditions, as against the old method of 'haggling' when prices varied which method too often led to disputes". From the employers: "The continual haggling over prices of steel and wages was disturbing and unsatisfactory, and that with the (sliding) scale wages would regulate themselves".(8)

Evidence from Britain's coal industry might also be cited. Over the period 1955 to 1970 approximately, certain grades of miners in certain coal fields accepted money wage reductions in order that certain grades in other coalfields could receive wage increases; there was a general 'levelling' of wage rates to produce "national rates of pay for each job in the industry".(9) It is not clear however whether this was directly conditioned by the declining employment prospects in the industry during the period, i.e. to protect employment in the high-cost coal fields, or was an expression of growing wage solidarity among miners as a social group. In periods of rising demand for labour, however, unions may put emphasis on expanding membership rather than wages so that the 'wage-cut/employment expansion' effect may take place in this relative sense.

b. The maximum income per member employed case. Although this example is not specifically developed by Dunlop it follows the same lines. That is, a union may seek to maximise the income per member employed without concern for the unemployed (i.e. the 'membership function' is specified). The extreme case would be where the maximum income was achieved for the last member employed. If the objective is reformulated in terms of the average income of original members, the decline in numbers would be controlled at

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(8) 'Men of Steel', 1951, p.365 and 106. See also Reder, op.cit., p.42-45 and Ross, op.cit., p.15.

(9) 'A Special Case?', Hughes and Moore, p.13-23, 1972.

the rate at which retirals, resignations and deaths took place. The result would still be the same. Some unions do of course limit the intake to the trade.

Coincidentally the example quoted by Rees[10] which seems to lend support to this case, i.e. the United Mine Workers in the US, can also be offered from British experience. Some members of the NUM do seem to have argued during the 1972 wage negotiations that if employment declined due to the higher wages then at least those left in employment will be better off than before. It is not necessarily the case however that they accepted the ubiquitous nature of the employment effect, rather that they were expressing a point of view on the political control over their industry which they saw as responsible for the long-run decline in coal-mining.

c. Shifts in the demand curve case. Some support has been adduced for Dunlop's contention that unions appreciate the wage-employment trade-off from evidence that some unions do undertake campaigns of one kind or another to shift the product demand curve to a more favourable position.

3. THE TASS CASE

These 'illuminations' have been quoted in order to give some idea of the sort of evidence which is usually held to weigh favourably for the 'maximising thesis'. None of them seem to apply to the case study union.[11] How far then does the history of wages policy in TASS 'fit' the maximising model?

3.1 Rhetoric and the Wage-Employment Trade-Off

Firstly to return to one of the questions asked in the introduction to this chapter: given that trade unions tend not to be monolithic and that bargaining takes place at various levels, is it possible to isolate a 'trade

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(10) Rees, op.cit., p.52.

(11) Though TASS demands that the Government support and maintain Leyland Cars for example could be interpreted as a variation on (c).

union wage policy' separate from the rhetoric of the official leadership? The material presented in the four historical chapters of this thesis effectively restricts this question to one of rhetoric; that is, no evidence is available on the specifics of negotiations by union members at industry, firm or plant level, all the evidence relates to policy formation and its organisational implementation and thus no answer can be given as to whether or not in specific negotiations, negotiators took into consideration the employment effect of wage movements. All that can be said is that wage policy as formulated by RC Conference, the EC and the union journal over many years, contains no mention of Dunlop's postulated employment effect. Even in the early post-1945 years when the leadership is on record as supporting the 'wage freeze', no direct connection was made explicit between wage increases and unemployment. To the extent that there was acceptance of such a connection it expressed itself via the macro-economic linkage of wages/ inflation/economic deflation/unemployment, rather than the micro-economic concept of a 'normal' inverse relationship between wages and employment. More importantly, in terms of the extent to which the official union attitudes set a framework within which members actually conduct negotiations, the micro-economic employment 'effect' was not something which the leadership felt compelled to take into consideration. There was no challenge in the union's policy literature in the most recent period (1972-1976) when the micro-economic 'effect' was being stressed alongside the macro-economic 'effect' by many commentators. Nevertheless no conclusion can be drawn on the question as to whether or not the leadership or members considered the employment effect in actual negotiations, particularly those at firm level where the Dunlop model applies primarily. On the other hand while much of the leadership's pronouncements could be termed rhetorical, there is little doubt from the evidence to hand that the stated policy on wages - 'controlled' militancy even to the extent of breaking the law - was sincerely held by the leadership who went to great efforts to carry through the policy.

It was not simply rhetoric.

Secondly, the leadership's objective in its all-round work was to make the membership class conscious and wage militancy was seen as playing a key role in achieving this. Wage policy, maximising or not, was thus subordinated to a political and ideological end.

3.2 A MEMBERSHIP FUNCTION?

Membership growth prior to the late 1960s was never of major concern to the leadership. Although the union changed its title in 1960 in order to facilitate membership expansion, membership was not treated with the same degree of urgency as wage militancy. It is doubtful therefore whether the leadership had a conception of a 'membership function' in Dunlop's sense; that is, given that membership was not seen as a serious problem, i.e. in decline, the leadership's aim was to make those in membership class conscious. Far from viewing wage cuts as an appropriate method of increasing employment and hence potential membership, or in times of rising demand for labour, concentrating on recruitment rather than wage increases, the leadership at no time up until the late 1960s pushed recruitment with consistent vigour. Instead they believed that recruitment was aided by the militant wages policy as witnessed by the union's recruitment literature.(12) Returning to a point made earlier in this chapter on the question of membership functions, the TASS leadership argued that new members would be "attached" (to use Dunlop's terminology) due to wage increases won by militancy but they never argued or admitted that members would be so lost. Nevertheless it is possible that different membership functions were used at different levels within the union, by the leadership at a policy level and by negotiators at bargaining levels.

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(12) Such literature often indicates the need for collective strength and places emphasis on the union's dispute payment record.

3.3 DUNLOP'S WAGES OBJECTIVES

To be more specific with regard to Dunlop's postulated six possible union wage objectives, nowhere do the concepts 'the largest possible wage bill' or 'the largest private payroll' or 'the collective wage "rents"' appear in the union's literature or in policy debates. The leadership did however believe that the distribution of income could be shifted in favour of wages and thus they had some underlying concept of a total wage bill. Whether this related to some aggregate national wage bill ("labour's share") or only to the membership was never made explicit.

With respect to Dunlop's view on unemployment benefit, both from the union and Government, being taken into account by leaderships when determining wage policy, TASS does pay benefit and as Mortimer notes this was an attraction to recruits in the early 1930s as well as an inducement to those members made unemployed to remain in the union. In the early 1970s the union, as well as providing unemployment benefit from normal income, levied employed members specifically to pay for unemployment benefit which was rising rapidly. While there is no direct evidence to suggest that the leadership took such payments into account when deciding wage policy or took Government unemployment benefit into account, when it did become possible for strikers to claim social security benefits the leadership used this as one of the arguments for reducing strike pay.(13) So they may also have taken both sorts of unemployment benefit into account when considering wage policy.

Of Dunlop's six objectives, the one which comes closest to fitting TASS policy is 'the attainment of the highest average wage income for each unit of labour affiliated with the union' and to this would need to be added 'and still in employment', since the employment effect does not seem to have been taken into direct consideration. The leadership's emphasis on average-wage-for-age returns from CMs census forms and the unilaterally

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(13) The debate which took place around the 'state subsidy theory of strikes' would seem to have proved inconclusive. See for example Durcan and McCarthy, 'The State Subsidy Theory of Strikes', BJIR, Mar. 1974 and Hunter, 'The State Subsidy Theory of Strikes: A Reconsideration', BJIR, Nov. 1974.

set minimum-wage-for-age-scales testifies to this concern for averages. If the perverse "wage increase/membership attachment" membership function is added to this, then perhaps all that can be said is that the union tried to obtain an annual wage increase for all current employed members. They did this through the centralised strike policy (pattern-setting and pattern-following) and argued that this was the only way to achieve maximum wage increases and at the same time recruit as a consequence. With a time horizon of only one year the leadership did not seem to take longer-term considerations into account. In effect the argument arrives back at Rees' formulation - unions always want more than employers are prepared to pay. How much more? - the only trend that seems to stand out from TASS's history is that having considered those firms suitable for pattern-setting with or without strike action, the leadership opted for "a little more than last year".(14)

The maximising critique can be rounded out by two final considerations. Firstly, the use of the centralised data bank at union headquarters by the membership and the weekly 'vacancy list' could be fitted into the Dunlop model. That is, the union's concern was with the wages of its current employed membership while trying to get its unemployed members to accept only those jobs meeting the union's unilaterally-set minimum wages or above. Thus members made unemployed for whatever reason had their chances of new employment considerably enhanced through access to the data bank coupled to the free national advertising of vacancies provided in the weekly "TASS NEWS", even to the extent of having an advantage thereby over unemployed non-members. Furthermore, stress was continually placed by the leadership on the membership to use the data bank in a regular way to change their jobs for better paid ones. These two uses of the data bank, added to the dynamic factors implicit in Ross's criticism of Dunlop's 'demand function',

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(14) See p. 57 above.

may, it could be argued, have 'blinded' the leadership to the question of the wage/employment trade-off.

Secondly, as Ross points out, Dunlop seems preoccupied with wage-cut situations[15] and these have been few and far between in TASS's post-Second World War history. In 25 years of relatively high demand for union-organised labour it could be argued that the leadership had no need to concentrate on 'the maximisation of the wage bill' or 'some optimum combination of wage rates and employment', rather that it could concentrate on maximising 'the average wage income' of the employed membership and it approximated this by pursuing its militant wage strategy and obtaining an annual wage increase for all employed members. It would take into consideration the unemployed membership by providing unemployment benefit even to the extent of levying the employed and perhaps also weighing in the balance the provision of, for example, earnings related supplementary benefit by the Government.

In concluding this section it has to be restated however that the actual wages policy pursued, no matter how it is interpreted within the maximising paradigm, was predicated on a political ideology opposed to the capitalist market system and directed at producing a class consciousness which would lead to the system's overthrow. Of course it might be claimed that the leadership's stated goal of socialism also falls within the paradigm to the extent that socialists claim that it will, inter alia, provide much higher standards of living than capitalism can. Finally, maximising or not, the union's development of its particular wage strategy over the whole of the post-1945 period does not have the "feel" of maximising about it which does obtain even in the more esoteric areas of 'modern theories of the firm'.

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(15) Ross, op.cit., p.54-55.

4. THE POLITICS OF THE WAGE OBJECTIVE

Perhaps the best-known statement of a 'political model' of trade union wage policy - written in reaction to Dunlop's maximising model - is that of Arthur M. Ross. His basic contention was that trade unions are fundamentally political institutions in which the main objective is the future viability of the union, that disputes as to the best ways of ensuring such viability are resolved politically and that this circumscribes the choices open to the union leadership in terms of (wage) policy and thus makes (more) difficult the subsidiary objective of the leadership, that of the latter's perpetuation. The leadership is seen as attempting to achieve both these aims by resolving the various pressures thrown up by the membership and others - pressures generated in the main through adverse comparisons with other groups and called 'orbits of coercive comparison' - through the attempted implementation of "just" and "equitable" settlements which thus satisfy the pressure groups.

Ross applies this framework to the particular field of union wage policy and argues: "The central proposition, then, is that a trade union is a political agency operating in an economic environment ... The real significance of the economic influence ... is to be found elsewhere than in a continuous functional relationship between wage rate and employment in the bargaining unit ... The economic environment is important to the unions at the second remove: because it generates political pressures which have to be reckoned with by the union leader. The effect of any given change depends upon how it fits into the general constellation of pressures ... The policies adopted by particular unions do not represent different degrees of enlightenment but different ranges of choice and cannot be understood until we recognise the primary importance of organisational survival as the central aim of leadership."(16) Thus a particular wage policy or set of policies

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(16) Ross, op.cit., p.53.

will be implemented by the leadership in order to achieve organisational survival.

Before developing a critique of the Ross model it may be as well to state that which can easily be forgotten - Ross is dealing implicitly only with American trade unionism (of the pre-1948 period) and hence he accepts the "business union" philosophy which at first glance ought to put him close to Dunlop. He notes the general lack of ideological divisions within US trades unions such as are commonly found in British trade unions as outlined in Chapter II. Thus his coercive comparisons stem mainly from economic rather than political factors. Whilst not wishing to underestimate the role of the labour movement in US society, the lack of a mass working class-based political party, the existence of laws prohibiting Communist Party members holding union office and the predominance of a capitalist free-enterprise ideology would seem in combination to make the US labour movement less prone to ideological conflict than its UK counterpart.(17)

5. CRITIQUE OF THE POLITICAL MODEL

There are three main criticisms which can be levelled at Ross's model. The first has to do basically with whether it can be made operational or not, i.e. is it testable or does it have to rely on a pardigm defence and, if it is testable, can its central core, coercive comparisons, always be considered 'strong' enough to exert any independent effect on a union's wages policy? The second and related criticism has to do with whether or not the implied time-scale of action ("orbits of comparison") and reaction (the leadership's response) is too short to be of any real value in analysing leadership wage policy in the general case. Finally, Ross's specification emphasises a uni-directional flow of 'coercion' from, for example, the membership to the leadership but thereby underestimates the impact of the reverse flow.

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(17) See for example, 'Consciousness and action among the western working class', Mann, op.cit., p. 34-38.

5.1 COMPARISONS - COERCIVE OR NOT?

There is a sense in which Ross defines this problem out of existence - presumably 'coercive comparisons' do coerce. On the other hand the whole analytical value of the theory can be challenged along the lines of attack taken against the maximising hypothesis - how can it be tested? Ross's statement of aims and central proposition have been so challenged, for example, by Reder, as being of: "no greater heuristic value than ... (the) maximisation theory. The political theory precludes only such behaviour as is downright subversive of the union organisation, e.g. deliberate attempts to disrupt the union or attempts by union officers to line their own pockets at the expense of both organisation and its membership. Any form of member income maximisation policy, for example, could easily be encompassed by the political theory as an attempt to satisfy membership sentiment. In short, the objectives of union behaviour, in (both Dunlop's theory and) Ross's are so general and vague as to be of little use in understanding union wage policy!"(18)

Reder's criticism seems open to at least two interpretations. Firstly, the logical one about the impossibility of analysis under conditions of uncertainty; neither the political nor the maximising theory can meet the necessary criteria. Yet while this criticism is valid with respect to uncertainty and leadership action, Ross offers more than simply a theory of leadership action in that he expects changes in the leadership or some other form of protest by the membership if they remain dissatisfied. When Reder says that any form of member income maximisation could be encompassed as an attempt to satisfy membership sentiment, Ross could retort that an attempt to satisfy is not what is required - satisfaction is what is required. Thus Reder begs the question of whether or not the membership feel that the leadership has satisfactorily responded to it. Certainly this does not lead to a theory of union wage policy in the predictive sense,

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(18) Reder, op.cit., p.36.

but it does at least offer a subsidiary hypothesis to the political model which is not available to the maximising one. It therefore admits the possibility of the postulation of different wage strategies by groups contending for leadership within the membership or of some other forms of action not readily encompassed by the maximising model and these are surely worthy of attention.

Secondly, it could be interpreted as holding only where the 'orbits of comparison' are 'weak'. Dunlop, in the introduction to the second edition of his book, offers a rejoinder to Ross which is essentially the same as this second interpretation, namely that: "in the normal case of collective bargaining, the independent effect on wage rates of internal political considerations is not large. There are no doubt cases, at one end of the spectrum, particularly in the short run in new unions where rivalry and factionalism are rampant, where the independent effect of political considerations is even dominant. But the perspective of the full range of collective bargaining relations ... reduces this factor to relatively minor significance."(19)

Thus the Reder/Dunlop criticism of the political model can be viewed as revolving around the strength of the comparison effect: where the effects are 'strong' a degree of prediction with respect to wage policy is accepted; where they are 'weak' little if anything can be predicted. Ross however holds that the 'orbits' so circumscribe the leadership as to preclude any actions other than those which are "resolving" through just and equitable settlements, otherwise members leave the union, potential members join other unions or the leadership is removed - the comparisons are generally 'strong'.(20)

Accepting the problems of testing Ross's model, there still exists the

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(19) Dunlop, op.cit., p.v, in Preface.

(20) Ross, op.cit., p.63-68, on "rival unionism".

paradigm defence that this is perhaps most powerfully put by Flanders who argues: "Recognition of the force of comparisons in negotiation is now common ground among all students of industrial relations. Whether or not the phrase "orbits of coercive comparison" can be given a rigorous interpretation and a solid empirical foundation, no one denies that the parties to collective bargaining, in searching for a compromise between the conflicting interests they represent, are frequently looking over their shoulders at the result of other settlements as a further guide to their own... It is further accepted that both political and social factors are involved in accounting for their evident force... External and internal rivalries in the trade union world ... (and) ... equalising tendencies ... resulting from the force of ideas - concepts of equity and justice (are also considered important)"(21)

Thus as with the maximising model, the Ross model does provide certain 'illuminations' in the field of trade union wage policy.

5.2 THE TIME-SCALE OF RESPONSE

Even if it is accepted that a situation exists in which the comparisons are 'strong', Ross's conclusion about changes in leadership necessarily following from an inability to resolve these pressures, i.e. to satisfy (sections of) the membership, does not seem justified. A much more detailed analysis than can be undertaken here of power and authority relations - both from a political and sociological perspective - would need to be undertaken within the framework of the constitutional set up of individual unions in order to conclusively prove or refute Ross's contention for any individual union and such an analysis would have to consider changes at all levels in a union. Suffice it to say that Ross's implied time-scale for "change of leadership", consequent upon an inability to satisfy (even sections of)

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(21) 'Collective bargaining', Flanders (Ed.) p.27-28.

the membership even under great pressure, seems much too short to be a useful way of analysing most UK unions' national policy decisions, particularly wage decisions. Specifically, there is likely to be the creation of "unofficial" centres of leadership, a shift of power away from the constitutional leadership to regional or local leaderships, or to shop stewards. These shifts may take place without in any way, (other than in the longer-run which is usually the death or retirement of the constitutional leadership), affecting the position of the constitutional leadership and thus without influencing national wage policy. (The situation may be different in the US due to election/appointment procedures.) The following examples are not dealt with in a detailed way but are simply included to indicate the sequence of leadership changes which have taken place in some UK unions which could possibly be interpreted as providing evidence against Ross's implied time-scale of response. Firstly, the replacements of Tiffen (who served briefly after Deakin) by Cousin in the TGWU and of Carron by Scanlon in the old AEU, both of which represented major political/ideological shifts in the leaderships of those unions, took place upon the death or retiral of the 'rightwingers'. No doubt there had been major internal battles over strategy and tactics in both unions prior to the changeovers, including perhaps unofficial power centres[22] and the building up of private political 'contacts' and of 'machines', yet there is little indication that the replacements would have occurred <u>when they did</u> if elections had been held between the old "rightwingers" and the 'leftwingers' rather than between new 'right' and 'leftwingers' consequent upon the death and retiral of the respective old 'rightwingers', as did happen.

Secondly, an example which could be stretched to fit the 'decline in membership' and the 'change in leadership' aspects of Ross's model and yet would tell against his implied time-scale is the NUGMW. This union,

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(22) See for example, Roberts, p.192-193, in 'Workers Control', 1973; and Clegg, 'The System of Industrial Relations in G.B.' p.94-99 for a discussion on 'parties and factions' in trade unions.

the third largest in Britain, has had a generally stagnant membership since around the late 1940s with a fairly high membership turnover. This could be attributed to the contraction of traditional areas of membership only being offset by recruitment, though since the union seems to have emphasised or has been forced by circumstances to emphasise the recruitment of female workers, there is a prima facie case that male workers are leaving or are not interested in joining. The union also pursued a more cautious policy with respect to amalgamations than did its major "general" rival, the TGWU, which has grown from a similar membership base to the NUGMW of 800,000 25 years ago, to roughly 1,800,000 today. Within Ross's framework it could have been expected that "orbits of coercive comparison" would have manifested themselves at an early stage and forced the NUGMW leadership to change its policy or the membership to change the leadership, yet both leadership and policy did not change until fairly recently, though when that did happen the "decline in membership" aspect seems to have played a part. The following statement puts a national journalist's point of view on the recent change:-

> "Britain's third largest union, the 840,000-strong General and Municipal Union, could move away from its entrenched Rightwing position with the election of Mr. David Basnett, 48, a national industrial officer of the union, as the next General Secretary ... Within minutes of his election being announced ... Mr. Basnett said: "You are not going to see any dramatic switches in policy like those which have occurred in the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. We have a continuity policy in this union which I hope will be maintained but I would look to the union being somewhat left of centre ..." Mr Basnett ... said he will endeavour to take the union membership beyond the 1.M. mark".(23)

5.3 UNI-DIRECTIONAL COERCION?

A final criticism can be levelled at the Ross framework. That is, he tends to view the role of the constitutional leadership in a one-sided way, as reacting to pressures thrown upon them rather than themselves getting involved in structuring the sources of pressure. While he mentions

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(23) 'Financial Times', 8th Nov., 1972.

the possibility that a leadership may become actively involved in attempting to establish 'orbits of comparison',[24] the overall impression derived from his work is that a union leadership, like one version of the classical monopolist, yearns for the quiet life and thus only reacts to events rather than initiating and structuring them. It follows that a constitutional leadership pursuing the quiet life may only be prepared to be active in those fields e.g. the union journal, T.V., the press etc., which allow them to produce comparisons which maintain the quiet life![25] Ross summarises his position thus: "Trade union wage policy is a function of the leadership. It is expressed in the various operating decisions which officials are required to make in the course of wage bargaining. In making these decisions, the officials must harmonise various pressures which are focused upon them in the bargaining process. These pressures emanate from a complex of political relationships surrounding the officials; relationships with the rank and file, with the employers, with other organisational levels of the unions, with the labour movement, and with the government ... (The officials) attempt to reconcile the pressures in such a manner as to contribute most to the survival and growth of the organisation." Hence a tendency for the pressures to be uni-directional, focused on the leadership and not really viewed as sometimes, or at most times, initiated and structured by them.[26]

6. THE TASS CASE

Turning once more to TASS wages policy and viewing it with respect to the concept of coercive comparison related to Ross's "future viability" aim, it may be as well to recall that in the earlier treatment of the maximising model it was concluded that while it was possible to interpret

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(24) Ross, op.cit., p.34-38 and p.68-69 on "front runners".

(25) See Ross, op.cit., p.71 on "leadership protection" arising from multi-union bargaining.

(26) Ross, op.cit., p.43. This criticism of the Ross model may be misplaced, in the sense that conditions may have changed in US unions since the period when Ross originally wrote about them.

TASS wages policy within that framework it nevertheless remained impossible to explain why at any point in time a particular claim of a particular magnitude was lodged or a settlement reached. All that could be said was that the leadership seemed to carry out a survey of the likely pattern-setting claims available to it, bargained for those it chose including strike-support if necessary, and then attempted to pattern-follow these settlements across the membership. If anything determined the magnitude of the particular claims it seems to have been a rule-of-thumb - a little more than last year. If this is then interpreted as short-run maximisation of average wage per member employed it can neither be proven nor refuted.

6.1 "Harmonisation" v. Political Struggle

Ross's interpretation would however be couched in the language of "constellation of pressures", "orbits of coercive comparison", "reconciliation of pressures", "harmonisation of pressures", etc., yet for the best part of 12 years (1958 to 1970) the TASS leadership itself did the pressuring to implement its militant wages policy and far from "harmonising" the pressure from the government upon it during the incomes policy of the 1960s, the leadership went out of its way to counteract the pressure by, for example, resorting to open illegal tactics. Even in the 13 years 1945 to 1958 under a "rightwing" majority EC there was no "harmonisation" of pressures but a straight though protracted war between "right" and "left" over how and when to implement the "left's" wage strategy which was in fact the union's stated policy as early as 1945. These two views of wage policy in the TASS leadership are more easily encompassed in the Ross model than in Dunlop's however. Similarly in the support of the 'rightwing' for the wage freeze of the late 1940s there is little evidence of the "rightwing" leadership "harmonising" the pressures from Government on the one hand and from the "left" on the other. They openly supported the Government against the "left" but in doing so had to suffer a "left" victory in this policy area as a

consequence.

Perhaps the most important aspect of TASS history which tells against Ross is that at no time was the future viability of the union an issue in any concrete sense. Certainly the pre-1958 "rightwing" leadership probably attempted to perpetuate their rule (Ross's secondary leadership aim) but they lost the struggle for control to the "left" in 1958. The struggle between them could be couched in Ross-type terminology but it could also be explained in different terminology. All that matters is that the "right" lost control and there is little indication that anything but a very small minority of the membership were involved in bringing about their defeat although both sides doubtless claimed to represent the interests and desires of the majority of the membership. The claim made by Wootton(27) that after the "left's" 1958 victory the "right" threatened to lead a breakaway is interesting but not significant - it did not take place. Again in the late 1960s when there is some evidence that members were leaving the union and/or expressing dissatisfaction with the "left's" policies the question of viability never became an issue. As Clegg notes there is little evidence from British trade unionism in general that people vote with their feet(28) and the history of TASS seems to confirm this.

There seems little point in analysing in detail TASS experience vis-a-vis the time-scale-of-response criticism. The "left" emerge in the early 1940s, have policy control by the early 1950s but not executive control and only achieve this in 1958. To say that the "coercive comparisons" were not therefore strong enough is to underestimate the complexities of the matter, to say the least.

But something needs to be said about the criticism of "uni-directional coercion", because if there is a general case that leaderships only respond

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(27) See p. 33 above.

(28) Clegg, op.cit., p.93 and 94.

if pressurised then the post-1958 leadership in TASS is the exception. On almost every major policy issue the leadership did indeed lead the membership, using all the facilities at their disposal to win the membership for action on and support for union policies. That there was a two-way interchange of views between the active membership in the areas and divisions with the EC at and between conferences, that the union journal was open to comments by all membership, in a word that the democracy of the union was operational, is not in doubt: nevertheless the leadership did in effect set up the "comparisons" across a whole range of policy issues. Specifically in the union's use of pattern-setting and pattern-following techniques Ross's framework could be made to "fit" TASS behaviour, though again the pressures emanated from the leadership as much as if not more than from the active membership.

In concluding this chapter it is held that while both the maximising and the political models offer insights into trade union wage policy formation, neither of them warrant the title of '<u>the</u> theory of TASS wage policy formation'. The former model contains a number of difficulties which make it unlikely even in the general case that union leaderships, either nationally or locally, do more than consider the employment effect of wages and there is no evidence that the TASS leadership considered it at all. This is not to say that economic factors played no part in TASS wage policy formation; neither is it to say that the employment effect did not exist; the argument is simply that the employment effect did not seem to be a major determinant of TASS national wage policy given all other influences, when viewed ex ante by the TASS leadership.

This latter position is taken up in the second model though as has been shown, Ross's postulated relationship between leadership aims and political mechanisms is not helpful. Nevertheless without developing the argument in detail, there is a prima facie case that political differences are important in British unions in a way that may not be true in the US.

One final point. Mitchell[29] notes:

> 'There is a substantial literature which purports to resolve the apparent conflict between the Ross and Dunlop models ... In the main, the reconciling literature fails to deal directly with the key aspect of the controversy: the ability of unions to perceive a trade-off in the wage-employment relationship. Here the Ross and Dunlop models can be easily differentiated - Ross unions cannot perceive the trade-off, while Dunlop unions can'.(30)

On the basis of the analysis in this chapter this differentiation is false. Ross's model does not rest on the non-perception of the trade-off, though perhaps his way of stating his case suggests this, but on the recognition that even if the elasticity of demand for labour is known there is a fundamental political process to be gone through to decide what course of action to pursue and in whose interests. The fact that Ross fails to provide a realistic political process in no way invalidates the political component of wage policy, to the extent that a 'policy' exists.

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(29) 'Union Wage Policy: The Ross-Dunlop Debate Reopened', Mitchell, Industrial Relations, Feb., 1972.

(30) Ibid., p.48.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis set out to explore, with reference to wage militancy, the relationships between a national union leadership, the membership of that union and the influence within it of radical or revolutionary politics. The method of study - a historical enquiry based on certain of the union's records - was chosen so as to be able to answer certain questions posed with respect to 'left wing' activity in the union. These questions having been tackled, the results obtained were used to investigate the more general relations between leadership, radical politics and wage militancy by setting the results against certain industrial relations controversies connected with wage militancy. To the extent that the TASS-specific questions (those relating to 'left wing' activity in the case study union) were answered, this was done in Section 4 of Chapter V. The questions raised by the wage militancy-related areas of industrial relations controversy (the 'blue collar/white collar' debate, the 'pluralist/marxist' debate and the 'Ross/Dunlop' wage policy debate) were evaluated in Chapters VI, VII and VIII respectively. All that remains to be done here is to summarise the conclusions drawn earlier.

The TASS-specific questions

The three questions posed with respect to the development of TASS were:

a) What conditions or circumstances allowed the union to promote and sustain a 'left wing' leadership?

b) What aims did the 'left' pursue and what place had wage militancy within them? and

c) What was the 'left' leadership's estimate of its success in pursuing its aims and how far does the estimate accord with the factual record; in particular, how far did the 'left' generate the militancy displayed by the membership and how far did it determine its form?

The first of these questions was taken in conjunction with a proposition found in British industrial relations literature, namely that the 'left' has gained power in British unions where it was able to connect some version of socialist ideology with independently generated industrial militancy. The conclusion drawn was that the relationship between socialist ideology and industrial militancy as expressed in the development of TASS was much more complex than the straightforward 'connection' proposition in any of its four variants. In particular, the de facto legitimation of the two-party system within the leadership levels of the union before the rise of wage militancy, and the dichotomy between 'left' leadership on policy and 'right' leadership on policy implementation interacting with the democratic practices of both 'right' and 'left' as militancy built up during the 1950s, are factors not easily encompassed by the 'connection' proposition. The 'left's' path to power in TASS was a complicated and often twisted one in which these factors among others played a part. That the 'left' did connect its ideology with an early militant wage policy does not detract from the actual complications of moving from opposition to majority control, nor does it necessarily account for the rise of wage militancy in the 1950s and 1960s which was almost certainly generated by the 'left' leadership.

On the question of aims it was noted in Chapter V that no one document enshrined a comprehensive statement of aims. In broad terms, the 'left' saw the ultimate protection of the membership's interests as a consciousness among them aimed at overthrowing capitalism and establishing socialism. The 'left' pursued courses of action over the period 1945 to 1970, more particularly from 1958 to 1970, predicated on the view:

a) that industrial action, centrally controlled, maintained and increased wages in a way which was significantly different from what they would otherwise have been,

b) that industrial action built membership confidence in trade unionism via solidarity and discipline, leading to trade union consciousness, and

c) when combined with a marxist political perspective led to class consciousness.

In attempting to carry policies based on this view into practice, the 'left' utilised the full machinery of the union and by and large openly stated its political philosophy, calling for and largely receiving positive responses from the mass of the membership.

While there is evidence particularly in the late 1960s that the 'left' leadership adopted a holier-than-thou approach to amalgamation with other white collar unions - a certain arrogance attaches to some leadership pronouncements - there is no evidence that the 'left' was generally arrogant with respect to its role either in the union or in the wider labour movement. Neither is there evidence that it saw its aims as subversive and requiring secrecy - Harold Wilson might have applied his phrase "a small tight-knit group of politically motivated men" to the 'left' in TASS, the 'left' and the bulk of the membership would have rejected it - nor is there evidence that it adopted particular strikes on the basis of bloody-mindedness. Rather, the 'left's' actions, as it saw them, were a necessary feature of trade unionism under capitalism and debates on policy while punctuated with rhetoric were sober and intense. There was no revelling in the difficulties facing Labour Governments, for example, nor little in the defeats which TASS and others on occasions inflicted on them.

It is more difficult to evaluate the successes the 'left' had in carrying through its aims. The 'left' itself while extremely critical of the previous 'right wing' leadership and often of its own actions,

nevertheless felt that it had achieved major advances in raising the level of consciousness of the membership as witnessed by its evaluation of the 1970 vote on amalgamation with the AEU and others. There can be little doubt that TASS was in fact one of the most wage militant unions over the period 1945 to 1970 in terms of strike activity as well as one of the most 'left wing' in broader policy terms. This latter feature was a direct 'left' success and allowed the leadership to prosecute its policies in the wider movement often moving or seconding controversial 'left wing' resolutions at Labour Party Conferences and TUCs with some success, no mean feat for a small white collar union. Indeed the union's standing in the wider movement saw its general secretary elected to the TUC in preference to other often better known union leaders, and a subsequent general secretary was the first Communist Party member to be elected to the General Council since 1945.

However, the position is not quite so clear-cut on the question of the generation of wage militancy. There can be no dispute that the form which wage militancy took under the 'left' in TASS - a centrally controlled high strike pay/many strikes strategy adequately summed up by the pattern bargaining concept - was the direct result of 'left' control, but it cannot be held on the basis of the material presented in this thesis that without the 'left' there would have been little or no wage militancy. What can be said is that it is highly probable that the actual record of wage militancy displayed by the TASS membership, while not artificially manufactured by the 'left', was induced by it. The 'left' purchased strike activity through paying 100% net wages in the 1950s; it also articulated grievances which would otherwise not have been taken so far by the membership, indeed it may also have identified areas of wage bargaining not apparent to sections of the membership and almost certainly through the demonstration effect inherent in pattern bargaining raised the wage aspirations of some sections

of the membership. Taken together, the purchase of strike activity, the central control of such activity often associated with a strike waiting list, the anti-incomes policy stand of the leadership and the illegal activity under incomes policy in the late 1960s, the 'leftwing' public policy of the union and the overwhelming vote on amalgamation represent a not insignificant success for the 'left' in what was in fact a fairly short space of time.

Industrial relations controversies

The three areas chosen allowed a fairly detailed analysis to be undertaken of propositions related to white collar wage militancy and revolutionary politics. The scope covered is sufficiently broad to argue that the material structured around the TASS-specific questions was set against not only important theoretical issues in modern industrial relations, but also a fairly comprehensive set of issues.

The white collar/blue collar debate, in which one side argues that in terms of aims and methods white collar unions have an essentially different character to blue collar unions, while the other side to the debate sees them as essentially similar, may have passed its peak in terms of academic interest. Yet the changing composition of the trade union movement and in particular of the TUC, reflecting in the main the changing composition of the labour force (not only between white and blue collar, but also between public and private sector) and also perhaps certain political features specific to the recent development of capitalism in Britain (the "concordat" approach of the 1974-79 Labour Government, the role of the TUC in national economic affairs), may once more focus attention on the postulated white collar/blue collar dichotomy or on some other such dichotomy, e.g. staff-graded/non-staff-graded, public sector/private sector. The following main conclusions can be drawn from the present study.

Firstly, the proponents of the dichotomy-type approach oversimplify the issues involved. For example, to argue that white collar unions are "conservative" in outlook is to overlook the fact that few of them have a politically homogeneous membership. TASS never had more than 47% of its membership paying the political levy in the period to 1970 - a substantial contracting out position - yet the leadership (and TASS policy) even before 'left' majority control, was always "labourite" in outlook (except perhaps in the perverse sense that the 'left' was against much Labour Government policy). Further, to hold that white collar unions only use methods which are non-militant and non-political is not simply not to do justice to the TASS experience, it is to positively ignore it. Secondly, and taking the questions of main aims and class consciousness together, then those writers such as Blackburn, who have, within the blue collar/white collar debate, attempted to construct measures of class consciousness to be used to weigh the working class consciousness of unions, have not had much success. Blackburn's attempt is not internally consistent; unions which are class conscious in terms of his seven measurement elements could in practice be sectional rather than class conscious. Moreover, in highlighting that element which sees collective bargaining as the key measure, Blackburn excludes all those unions which would favour unilateral regulation or a union like TASS which is on record for the establishment of socialism by the working class and which most definitely saw a militant, unilateral wage strategy as part of the struggle for socialism.

The pluralist/marxist debate is one facet of the ongoing discussion on the philosophy and methodology of industrial relations. While pluralists such as Flanders and Clegg have long held sway in British industrial relations theory, this orthodoxy is not without its non-marxian critics. Fox, in particular, has articulated a critique of pluralism which goes some way towards weakening its central philosophic tenet - that harmony is in

the order of things. His attack on the self-correcting thus self-perpetuating nature of pluralist society (and pluralist industrial relations systems) via its moral imperative - the self-legitimating propensity inherent in the process of continual compromise - is, however, much closer to the classical marxists than he might suppose.

Be that as it may, the marxist intellectual tradition is not a unified one. The classical marxists held that the economic imperative of capitalism, to exploit the working class, would continually break down the harmonious ideological picture handed down by the capitalist class and its various social controllers and for periods held as a reality by the majority of workers. Trade unions did indeed make contractual arrangements with employers and influence labour law, but economic pressures on workers would eventually undermine such contracts and overcome workers acquiescence to capitalism such that trade union consciousness would be regenerated and an anti-capitalist ideology emerge. This, the optimistic tradition, is challenged by others who see the ideological control of the capitalist class as always able to negate the factors making for the generation of an anti-capitalist ideology. They reject the classical marxist proposition that unions are schools of socialism, are revolutionary organisations of the working class, and indeed come close to Flanders' view of unions as part of the mechanism of social control with such concepts as unions becoming lieutenants of capitalism and their leaders political police.

The conclusions drawn from the experiences of the case-study union with respect to these theoretical approaches are somewhat tentative. It could be argued that Fox's continuous challenge frame of reference better represents the activity and outlook of the majority of the membership in the late 1960s than does the pluralist framework. For example, it is not clear that the amalgamation vote in 1970 is easily encompassed within the pluralist framework. To the extent that the vote represented

a desire for a greater sectional bargaining power rather than a class vote for class trade unionism, then it surely emphasises the continuous challenge outlook rather than the consensual outlook implied by pluralism. To the extent that the strike record, the illegal activity, the membership's acceptance of the political stance of the leadership, the challenges to the social democracy of the 1964-1970 Labour Governments and the 1970 amalgamation vote are considered as going beyond Fox's position, then the evidence supports the classical marxists rather than their pessimistic successors.

The Ross/Dunlop debate remains an interesting and important one. Initiated in its modern form by Dunlop after a period of falling money, if not real, wages, the central question - how do trade unionists (both members and leaderships) perceive the wage bargain? - remains important in an era of rising money wages. Both Ross and Dunlop direct attention to real effects of wage bargaining, the internal cohesion of unions in the former, the employment considerations in the latter. That neither approach finds vindication in the experience of TASS is perhaps not surprising since both authors allow that the other may indeed be a special case, and thus in effect allow a range of behaviour to influence wage agreements. The TASS leadership's emphasis on a militant wage policy without seeming concern for the employment consequences would support the contention of Ross that unions do not perceive a wage movement/employment trade-off. On the other hand, the almost pluralistic self-perpetuating outlook attributed by Ross to union leaderships finds little support from either 'right wing' or 'left wing' periods of leadership in TASS. Ross's strength is surely in emphasising the politics of wage settlements and Dunlop's in that employers will almost certainly respond to wage changes irrespective of union perception.

The questions posed in this thesis while perhaps not original, have illuminated a number of interesting features of modern British trade unionism, in particular the extent to which a small union when well led,

can play an important part in the wider trade union and labour movement. That the leadership was in this case from the socialist wing of the trade union movement raises interesting areas of analysis in terms of the militancy displayed by other unions in recent years, unions like N.U.P.E. which also openly subscribes to a socialist transformation of society.

APPENDIX I

DRAFT LIST OF JOB TITLES IN T.A.S.S. - compiled August, 1972[1]

Acceptance Engineer
Accessory Technician
Accident Investigator
Accoustician
Accoustics Technician
Administration Clerk
Administration Technician
Administrative Assistant
Administrative Supervisor
Administrator
Advance Project Technician
Advance Provisioner
Aerodynamicist
Aero Engineer
Aero Engine Planner
Air-Conditioning Engineer
Aircraft Engineer
Airworthiness Engineer
Allocating Engineer
Analyst
Analyst Programmer
Analytical Engineer
Analytic Chemist
Apparatus Engineer
Applications Engineer
Applicator
Appraisal Engineer
Apprentice Instructor
Apprentice Training Officer
Approvals Engineer
Architectural Assistant
Architectural Draughtsman
Architectural Surveyor
Architectural Technician
Artist
Assembler
Assembly Controller
Assembly Foreman
Assembly Inspector
Assembly Planner
Audio Systems Engineer
Authorised Person
Automatic Setter

Bearing Engineer
Blade Engineer
Blading Engineer
Board Inspector
Boardman
Bolt Lister
Budget Analyst
Building Engineer
Building Maintenance Surveyor
Building & Site Manager
Building Surveyor
Building Technician
Buyer
Buying Assistant
Buying Engineer

Calculating Machine Operator
Calculations Engineer
Calculator
Calibration Engineer
Calibration Technician
Camera Operator (Industrial)
Canteen Manager
Capital Control Officer
Cartographer
Cartographical Draughtsman
Catalogue Compiler
Cataloguing Technician
Catalogue Writer
Certification Engineer
Change Note Engineer
Chargehand
Chartered Engineer
Chassis Engineer
Chassis Liaison Engineer
Checker
Chemical Analyst
Chemical Laboratory Technician
Chemical Technician
Chemist (Industrial)
Chemist's Assistant
Circuit Design Draughtsman
Circuit Delineator
Circuit Draughtsman
Circuit Specialist
Civil Engineer
Civil Engineering Surveyor
Clay Modeller
Clerical Assistant
Clerical Estimator

(1) This list was provided by the T.A.S.S. Research Department.

Clerical Stock Controller
Clerk
Clerkess
Clerk of Works
Clerk/Typist
Climatic Laboratory Technician
Code Controller
Codification Technician
Coding & Classification Supervisor
Coding Clerk
Coding Engineer
Coding Officer
Coil Engineer
Collator
Colourist
Combustion Engineer
Commercial Assistant
Commercial Clerk
Commercial Engineer
Commercial Equipment Engineer
Commission Engineer
Commissioning Engineer
Commitment Acceptance Engineer
Commitment Acceptance Supervisor
Communications Engineer
Company Programmer
Compass Scheduler
Compiler
Compositor Operator
Comptometer Operator
Computer Controller
Computer Liaison Officer
Computer Operator
Computer Programmer
Computer Room Supervisor
Computer Supervisor
Computer Technician
Concession & Modifications Controller
Construction Engineer
Contracts Despatch Clerk
Contracts Assistant
Contracts Clerk
Contracts Controller
Contracts Engineer
Contracts Estimating Engineer
Contracts Programmer
Contracts Shipping Engineer
Control Clerk
Control Engineer
Controller
Control Programmer
Control Systems Engineer
Conveyor Belt Technologist
Conveyor Engineer
Co-ordinating Engineer
Co-ordinator
Copywriter
Cost Administrator

Cost Accountant
Cost Analyst
Cost Clerk
Cost Controller
Cost Engineer
Cost Estimator
Costing Engineer
Cost Investigator
Cost Reduction Engineer
Craftsman
Craft Technician
Cri-Dan Specialist
Critical Path Analyst
Customer Liaiser

Dark Room Technician
Data Analyst
Data Control Computer Operator
Data Control Engineer
Data Engineer
Data Logger Technician
Data Processer
Data Reduction Technician
Defect Investigation Engineer
Defects Controller
Defects Engineer
Defects Investigator
Demonstration Engineer
Demonstrator
Depot Manager
Design Analysis Engineer
Design Assistant
Design Checker
Design Draughtsman
Design Engineer
Designer
Despatcher
Despatching Order Planner
Despatch Superviser
Detail Draughtsman
Detailer
Development Engineer
Development Fitter
Development Foreman
Development Manufacturing Engineer
Development Physicist
Development Technician
Development Technologist
Diagram Assistant
Dial Analyst
Die Liaison Engineer
Direct Labour Supervisor
Draughting Assistant
Draughting Clerk
Draughtsman
Draughtsman Checker
Draughtswoman

Drawing Controller
Drawing Office Assistant
Drawing Office Checker
Drawing Office Clerk
Drawing Office Engineer
Dynamicist
Dynamometer Technician

Editor
Editorial Assistant
Electrical Apparatus Engineer
Electrical Applications Engineer
Electrical Contracts Engineer
Electrical Design Engineer
Electrical Designer
Electrical Draughtsman
Electrical Engineer
Electrical Estimator
Electrical Foreman
Electrical Methods Engineer
Electrical Spares Engineer
Electrical Technician
Electrical Tester
Electronic Calibration Engineer
Electronic Designer
Electronic Engineer
Electronic Instructor
Electronic Maintenance Engineer
Electronics Inspector
Electronic Technician
Electronic Test Engineer
Electroplating Technician
Engine Design Draughtsman
Engineer
Engineering Advisor
Engineering Assistant
Engineering Change Controller
Engineering Chemist
Engineering Clerk
Engineering Co-ordinator
Engineering Designer
Engineering Draughtsman
Engineering Instructor
Engineering Liaison Officer
Engineering Specialist
Engineering Technician
Engine Sales Recorder
Environmental Engineer
Erection Estimator
Erection Planner
Estimating Engineer
Estimating Manager
Estimator
Equipment Approval Engineer
Equipment Engineer
Equipment Planning Engineer
Evaluation Engineer
Exhibition Draughtsman
Expeditor
Experimental Assistant
Experimental Engineer
Experimental Fitter
Experimental Officer
Experimental Planner
Export Liaison Officer
Export Representative
Export Sales Technician

Fabrication Engineer
Facilities Design Engineer
Facilities Engineer
Facilities Supervisor
Factory Layout Engineer
Factory Planning Engineer
Factory Services Engineer
Fabrication Controller
Factory Planner
Field Engineer
Field Service Co-ordinator
Filing Clerk
Film Reader
Filtration Engineer
Financial Analyst
Fire Officer
Fire Protection Engineer
Fitter
Fitter/Turner
Flight Analyst
Flight Development Engineer
Flight Test Engineer
Flight Test Observer
Flow Measurement Engineer
Fluid Power Engineer
Foreman
Foreman Fitter
Foreman Setter
Foreman Technician
Forging Machine Operator
Form Designer
Foundry Loader
Foundry Technician
Fuel Engineer
Fuel Technician
Fuel Technologist
Full-Scale Draughtsman
Furnishing Design Engineer.

Gas Technician
Gear Tooling Engineer
Gear Tooling Specialist
Gearing Specialist
Generation Assistant
Glass Technician
Goods In Supervisor
Graphic Artist

Graphic Designer
Gratiscule Draughtsman
Grinder
Ground Support Equipment Engineer
Group Engineer
Group Inspector
Group Production Engineer

Handling Engineer
Heating Engineer
Heating & Ventilating Engineer
Heat Treatment Engineer
Heat Treatment Superintendent
High Altitude Laboratory Technician
Hydraulic Engineer
Hydraulics Technician
Hydrometer Assistant

Illustrating Draughtsman
Illustrator
Improver
Industrial Chemist
Industrial Enginer
Industrial Relations Officer
Inside Sales Engineer
Inspection Classifier
Inspection Engineer
Inspection Methods Engineer
Inspection Planner
Inspection Planning Engineer
Inspector
Installation Engineer
Installation Planner
Instructor
Instrumentation Engineer
Instrumentation Planner
Instrumentation Technician
Instrument Engineer
Instrument Maker
Instrument Mechanic
Instrument Technician
Instrument Technologist
Insurance Engineer
Interchangeability Engineer
Interchangeability Inspection Engineer
Internal Sales Engineer
Interpreter
Inventory Recorder
Investigation Engineer
Investigator
Invoice Clerk
Invoice Typist

Jig Engineer
Jig & Tool Demonstrator
Jig & Tool Design Engineer
Jig & Tool Designer
Jig & Tool Draughtsman
Job Assembler

L2000 Operator
Laboratory Analyst
Laboratory Assistant
Laboratory Attendant
Laboratory Engineer
Laboratory Technician
Laboratory Supervisor
Lathe Turner
Layout Artist
Layout Draughtsman
Layout Engineer
Layout Inspector
Layout Methods Engineer
Layout Technician
Lecturer
Legislation Engineer
Liaison Draughtsman
Liaison Engineer
Liaison Officer
Liaison Representative
Librarian
Library Manager
Licence Technician
Life Test Technician
Lift Technician
Lister
Lithographic Designer
Lithographic Technician
Loadcoll Technician
Loading Controller
Loftsman
Log Compiler

Machinability Services Investigator
Machine Engineer
Machine Load Estimator
Machine Operator
Machine Project Engineer
Machine Shop Foreman
Machine Shop Planner
Machine Shop Superintendent
Mains Records Draughtsman
Maintenance Assessor
Maintenance Clerk
Maintenance Engineer
Maintenance Foreman
Maintenance Manager
Maintenance Specialist
Maintenance Superintendent
Maintenance Supervisor
Maintenance Technician
Management Services Officer
Manufacturing Development Engineer

Manufacturing Draughtsman
Manufacturing Engineer
Manufacturing Technician
Manufacturing Unit Manager
Marketing Engineer
Market Research Engineer
Material Controller
Material Handler
Material Handling Engineer
Material Lister
Materials Engineer
Materials Laboratory Technician
Materials Scheduler
Materials Standards Engineer
Material Stores Supervisor
Mathematician
Measurement Control Engineer
Measurement Engineer
Measurer
Mechanical Contracts Engineer
Mechanical Design Engineer
Mechanical Designer
Mechanical Detail Draughtsman
Mechanical Development Technician
Mechanical Draughtsman
Mechanical Engineer
Mechanical Handling Engineer
Mechanical Project Engineer
Mechanical Service Engineer
Mechanical Technician
Mechanical Test Engineer
Mechanisation Engineer
Metal Failures Engineer
Metallurgical Technician
Metallurgist
Metal Planning Liaison Engineer
Meter Test Engineer
Methods Engineer
Methods N.C. Programmer
Methods Planner
Methods Study Engineer
Method Studier
Method Study Associate
Methods & Procedures Assistant
Methods Research Technician
Metrication Coder
Metric Standards Engineer
Metrologist
Microbiologist
Microfilmer
Microfilm Operator
Microscopist
Miller
Model Maker
Model Shop Technician
Modifications Clerk
Modifications Compiler
Modifications Controller
Modifications Engineer
Modifications Co-ordinator
Modifications Investigator
Modifications Officer
Modifications Planner
Modifications Progress Co-ordinator
Modifications Recorder
Module Training Controller
Monitor Analyst
Motor Body Stylist
M.T.O. Compiler
Multilith Duplicator Supervisor
Multilith Operator
Municipal Sales Clerk

Naval Architect
N.C. Co-ordinator
N.C. Methods Engineer
N.C. Part Programmer
N.C. Programming Engineer
N.C. Tape Punch Operator
N.C. Technician
New Projects Controller
Noise Engineer
Nuclear Engineer
Nuclear Power Draughtsman
Nuclear Scientist
Numerical Codifier
Numerical Control Programmer
Numerical Control Specialist
Numerical Engineer.

Office Manager
Operations Assistant
Operations Superintendent
Order Controller
Organisations & Methods Analyst
Organisation & Methods Engineer
Organisation & Methods Officer
Outside Contracts Engineer
Outside Erection Engineer
Outside Representative
Overseas Engineer
Oxygen Laboratory Technician

Packaging Engineer
Packaging Technician
Packer
Paint Chemist
Paint Engineer
Panel Design Draughtsman
Part Programmer
Parts List Compiler
Parts Lister
Parts Service Supervisor
Pattern Controller
Pattern Engineer
Pattern Maker
Payload Engineer

Performance Engineer
Performance Technician
Permatracer (Printed Circuits)
Photographer (Industrial)
Photographic Controller
Photographic Printer
Photographic Production Technician
Photographic Technician
Photolithographer
Photoprinting Operator
Physicist
Physicist Engineer
Planned Maintenance Engineer
Planner
Planning Administrator
Planning Draughtsman
Planning Engineer
Planning Estimator
Planning Methods Engineer
Planning Programmer
Planning Ratefixer
Plan Printer
Plans & Records Engineer
Plant Development Engineer
Plant Engineer
Plant Layout Draightsman
Plant Layout Engineer
Plant Load Engineer
Plant Purchase Engineer
Plant Project Assessor
Plant Service Engineer
Plant Technician
Plastics Engineer
Plating Technician
Plotter
Polymer Technologist
Polyurethane Technologist
Preliminary Designer
Preplanning Engineer
Pre-production Methods Engineer
Press Load Engineer
Pressure Vessel Draughtsman
Preventative Maintenance Engineer
Price Control Technician
Pricing Officer
Printed Circuit Draughtsman
Printer
Printing Supervisor
Print Machine Operator
Print Room Supervisor
Process Auditor
Process Clerk
Process Controller
Process Development Engineer
Process Engineer
Processing Technician
Process Planner
Process Planning Engineer
Process Ratefixer
Process Writer
Procurement Engineer
Procurement Planner
Product Controller
Product Cost Engineer
Product Description Supervisor
Product Design Engineer
Product Engineer
Product Estimator
Production Adviser
Production Buyer
Production Clerk
Production Control Clerk
Production Controller
Production Co-ordinator
Production Coster
Production Engineer
Production Equipment Controller
Production Gear Specialist
Production Liaison Engineer
Production Metallurgist
Production Methods Engineer
Production Planner
Production Programmer
Production Specifications Engineer
Production Statistician
Production Superintendent
Production Termination Controller
Production Test Engineer
Product Standards Engineer
Product Support Assistant
Productivity Service Analyst
Productivity Services Engineer
Productivity Services Officer
Product Liaison Engineer
Product Provisioner
Product Systems Technician
Product Technician
Profit Budget Analyst
Programme Analyst
Programme & Budget Controller
Programme Clerk
Programme Controller
Programme Co-ordinator
Programme Engineer
Programme Planner
Programmer
Programme System Analyst
Programme Technician
Progress Assessor
Progress Chaser
Progress Clerk
Progress Controller
Progress Co-ordinator
Progress Engineer
Progresser
Progressman
Progress Planner
Progress Planning Engineering Clerk

Progress Representative
Progress Technician
Project Author
Project Controller
Project Co-ordinator
Project Cost Engineer
Project Designer
Project Development Engineer
Project Draughtsman
Project Engineer
Project Estimator
Project Leader
Project Manufacturing Controller
Project Planner
Project Secretary
Project Surveyor
Project Technician
Proposal Development Engineer
Proposal Engineer
Propulsion Engineer
Prototype Assembly Technician
Prototype Wireman
Proving Engineer
Proving Operator
Proving Technician
Provisioning Engineer
Provisioning Technician
Provisions Engineer
Publications Engineer
Publications Technician
Publicity Assistant
Pump Engineer
Punch Card Operator
Purchase Progresser
Purchaser
Purchase Research Engineer
Purchasing Engineer
Purchasing Manager
Purchasing Officer

Quality Analyst
Quality Assurance Engineer
Quality Auditor
Quality Control Engineer
Quality Controller
Quality Control Manager
Quality Control Officer
Quality Control Supervisor
Quality Engineer
Quality Observer
Quality Planner
Quality Planning Engineer
Quality Technician
Quality Surveyor
Quotations Engineer

Radiographer
Radiographic Technician
Radiologist
Ratefixer
Rater Setter
Rationalisation Engineer
Raw Material Controller
Reader
Recorder
Recording Draughtsman
Records Clerk
Refrigeration Engineer
Reliability Engineer
Reliability Liaison Engineer
Reliability Representative
Repair Engineer
Representative
Reproductive Technician
Requisitioner
Research Assistant
Research Chemist
Research & Development Design Enginee
Research Engineer
Researcher
Research Investigator
Research Metallurgist
Research Officer
Research Physicist
Research Technician
Resistor Designer
Rheometer Operator
Rig Shop Liaison Engineer
Rig Shop Technician
Rig Test Technician
Road Test Driver
Road Test Engineer
Road Test Observer
Rotary Section Supervisor
Routiner
Routing Engineer
Rubber Technologist

Safety Engineer
Safety Officer
Sale Liaison Engineer
Sales Assistant
Sales Clerk
Sales Co-ordinator
Sales Correspondent
Sales Engineer
Sales Office Manager
Sales Promoter
Salvage Engineer
Sample Maker
Scaler

Schedule Clerk
Schedule Compiler
Schedule Engineer
Scheduler
Scheduling Controller
Scheduling Co-ordinator
Scheduling Engineer
Scientist
Scrap Material Co-ordinator
Secretary
Section Buyer
Section Engineer
Security Officer
Service Controller
Service Engineer
Service Liaison Engineer
Service Manager
Service Manuals Supervisor
Services Engineer
Services Manager
Service Supervisor
Sheet Metal Worker
Shift Engineer
Shipping Clerk
Ship Repair Accounts Clerk
Shop Floor Co-ordinator
Shop Floor Production Engineer
Shop Lister
Shopload Clerk
Shop Loader
Shop Loader Engineer
Shop Planning Engineer
Shop Production Engineer
Shop Superintendent
Shop Tooling Engineer
Shorthand Typist
Sieracotes Operator
Site Engineer
Site Liaison Engineer
Site Service Officer
Software Systems Analyst
Soil Chemist
Spares Assessor
Spares Cataloguer
Spares Compiler
Spares Controller
Spares Department Manager
Spares Engineer
Spares Evaluator
Spares Manuals Supervisor
Spares Orders Supervisor
Spares Provisioner
Spares Provisioning Engineer
Special Assignments Engineer
Specialist Assistant
Specialist Engineer
Special Projects Engineer
Special Purposes Electrical Draughtsman
Special Purpose Electrical Engineer
Special Purpose Machinery Draughtsman
Special Purpose Machinery Engineer
Specification Compiler
Specifications Analyst
Specifications Engineer
Specifications Writer
Spectographer
Staff Designer
Staff Engineer
Staff Inspector
Standards Engineer
Standards Officer
Statfile Operator
Statistical Analyst
Statistical Clerk
Statistical Quality Inspector
Statistician
Steel Buyer
Steel Designer
Stock Control Clerk
Stock Controller
Stock Cost Controller
Storekeeper
Stores Controller
Stress Analyst
Stress Calculator
Stress Engineer
Stressman
Structural Analyst
Structural Detailer
Structural Draughtsman
Structural Engineer
Structural Test Engineer
Structure Designer
Studio Manager
Stylist
Sub Assembly Compiler
Sub-Contract Draughtsman
Sub-Contracts Engineer
Suggestions Engineer
Superintendent
Supervision Test Engineer
Supervisor (Technical)
Supplier Control Engineer
Supplies Controller
Supplies Representative
Support Engineer
Surplus Utilisation Engineer
Surveyor
Survey Plotter
Switchgear Development Engineer
Switchgear Estimator
Systems Acceptance Engineer
Systems Analyst
Systems Controller
Systems Co-ordinator
Systems Design Engineer
Systems Engineer
Systems Liaison Controller
Systems Programmer
Systems Supervisor

Systems Technician
Systems Test Engineer

Tape Librarian
Tape Planner
Tape Programmer
Technical Administrator
Technical Adviser
Technical Applications Engineer
Technical Artist
Technical Assessor
Technical Assistant
Technical Author
Technical Buyer
Technical Clerk
Technical Compiler
Technical Co-ordinating Engineer
Technical Co-ordinator
Technical Copy Writer
Technical Correspondent
Technical Cost Analyst
Technical Cost Engineer
Technical Cost Estimator
Technical Designer
Technical Documenter
Technical Engineer
Technical Estimator
Technical Illustrator
Technical Industrial Engineer
Technical Inspector
Technical Installation Engineer
Technical Instructor
Technical Librarian
Technical Methods Engineer
Technical Office Administrator
Technical Planner
Technical Planning Clerk
Technical Programmer
Technical Proposal Engineer
Technical Provisioner
Technical Publications Co-ordinator
Technical Publicist
Technical Rating Clerk
Technical Records Compiler
Technical Records Officer
Technical Representative
Technical Sales Engineer
Technical Salesman
Technical Sales Representative
Technical Sales Technician
Technical Sales Engineer
Technical Spares Compiler
Technical Specifications Scheduler
Technical Trainer
Technical Translator
Technical Typist
Technical Writer
Technician

Technigraphics Designer
Technigraphics Photographer
Telecommunications Engineer
Template Draughtsman
Template Maker
Tendering Engineer
Test Administrator
Test Assistant
Test Control Engineer
Test Engineer
Tester
Test Equipment Design Engineer
Test Equipment Design Technician
Test Equipment Engineer
Test Facilities Engineer
Test Foreman
Test Gear Engineer
Test Methods Engineer
Test Plant Engineer
Test Repair Technician
Test Rig Draughtsman
Test Rig Planner
Test Rig Technician
Test Specifications Writer
Test Technician
Thermoplastics Engineer
Timber Treatment Technician
Time Clerk
Timekeeper
Timer
Time Setter
Time Studier
Time Study Engineer
Time Standards Engineer
Timing Engineer
Timing Programmer
Tool Analyst
Tool Buyer
Tool Control Engineer
Tool Controller
Tool Design Checker
Tool Design Engineer
Tool Designer
Tool Draughtsman
Tool Engineer
Tool Foreman
Tooling Controller
Tool Development Engineer
Tooling Engineer
Tooling Methods Engineer
Tooling Supervisor
Tool Investigator
Tool Liaison Engineer
Toolmaker
Tool Methods Engineer
Tool Planner
Tool Planning Engineer
Tool Procurement Engineer
Tool Programmer
Tool Research Engineer

Toolroom Estimator
Toolroom Foreman
Toolroom Planner
Toolroom Superintendent
Tool Trials Engineer
Tracer
Training Analyst
Training Instructor
Training Methods Officer
Training Officer
Training Policy Officer
Transformer Designer
Translator
Translator Typist
Transmission Engineer
Transport Manager
Trials Engineer
Trimmer
Trouble Shooter
Turbine Technician
Type Engineer
Typist
Typographical Draughtsman/Draughtswoman

Utilisation Clerk

Value Analyst
Value Engineer
Valve Engineer
Varityper Operator
Varitypist
Ventilating Engineer
Vessel Engineer
Vibration Engineer
Vibration Test Engineer

Wages Clerk
Wages Supervisor
Warranty Engineer
Warranty Supervisor
Weight Analyst
Weight Control Engineer
Weight Estimator
Weights Engineer
Welding Engineer
Wind Tunnel Engineer
Wind Tunnel Technician
Wind Tunnel Test Technician
Wiring Diagram Checker
Woodwork Assessor
Woodwork Technician
Work Loading Engineer
Work Planner
Works Draft Technician
Work Loading Engineer
Work Planner
Works Draft Technician
Works Engineer
Works Laboratory Supervisor
Workshop Technician
Works Liaison Engineer
Works Manager's Assistant
Works Radiologist
Works Service Engineer
Works Standard Engineer
Works Technician
Work Studier
Works Study Engineer
Work Study Engineer
Work Study Technician

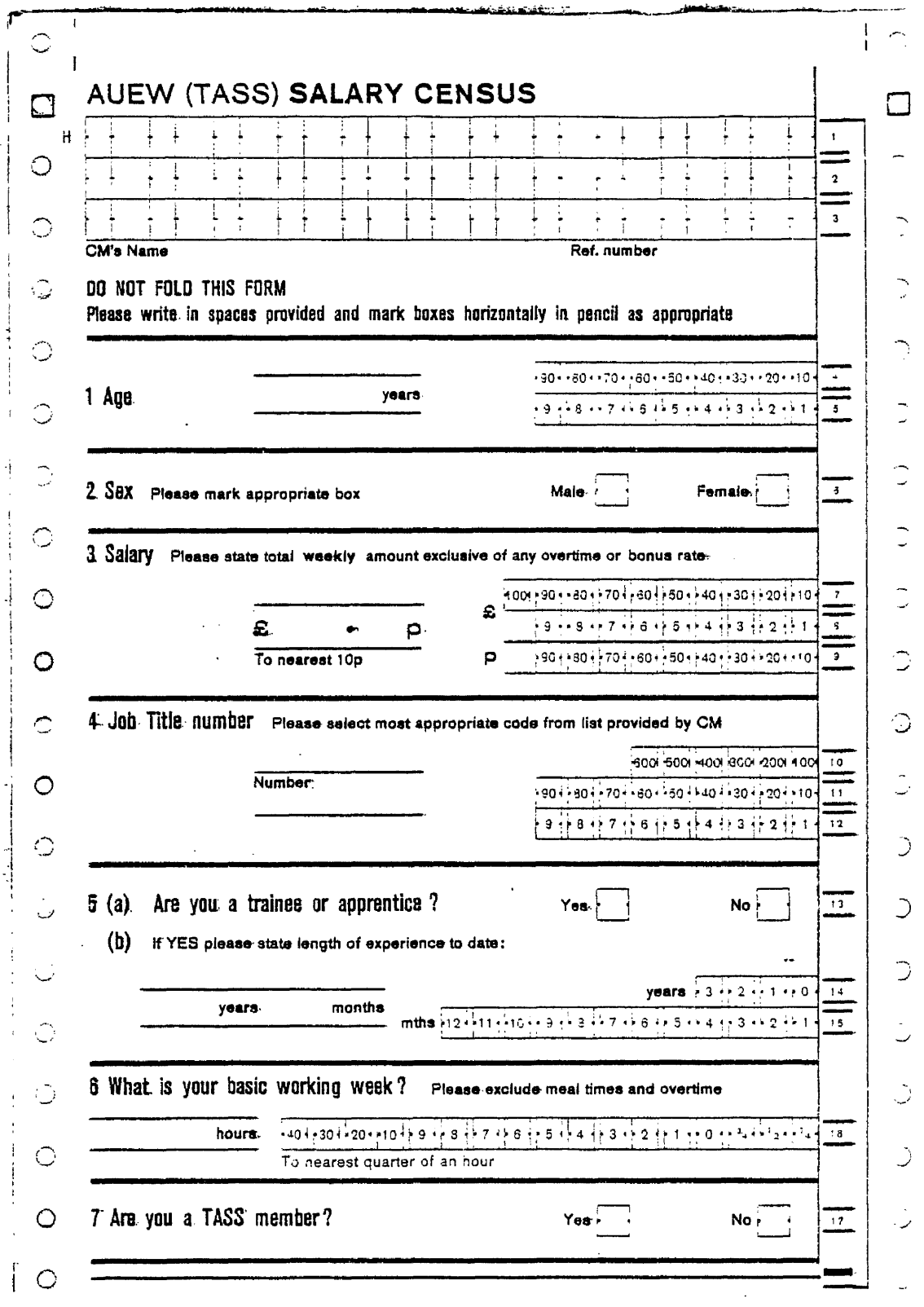
X-Ray Film Analyst

APPENDIX II

E 1 Individual member's annual salary census form, filled in privately and given to the C.M. in a sealed envelope for transmission to the D.O.*

E 2 Master census form filled in annually (or when major changes in working conditions take place) by each C.M. and sent to the D.O.*

* See note at foot of PAGE 2.



AUEW (TASS) **SALARY CENSUS**

CM's Name — Ref. number

DO NOT FOLD THIS FORM

Please write in spaces provided and mark boxes horizontally in pencil as appropriate

1 Age — years

2 Sex Please mark appropriate box — Male — Female

3 Salary Please state total weekly amount exclusive of any overtime or bonus rate

£ . p

To nearest 10p

4 Job Title number Please select most appropriate code from list provided by CM

Number:

5 (a) Are you a trainee or apprentice ? — Yes — No

(b) If YES please state length of experience to date:

years — months

6 What is your basic working week ? Please exclude meal times and overtime

hours

To nearest quarter of an hour

7 Are you a TASS member ? — Yes — No

* After 1973 both forms were sent, not to the D.O., but direct to National H.Q.

(2)

AMALGAMATED UNION OF ENGINEERING WORKERS
Technical, Administrative & Supervisory Section
ANNUAL STATISTICAL SCHEDULE

Name of FIRM in
Full: .....
Department: .....
Address in full: .....
.....

TASS Division No.
TASS Branch .....
Date .....

Name of Parent Company if any .....

1. INDUSTRIAL PRODUCT
Please give principal product or service.
.....
.....
What are the other main products or services?
.....
.....

2. EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATIONS
Please indicate if this firm is a member of an employer's organisation.
Engineering Employers Federation ☐
National Light Metal Trades Federation ☐
Fed. of Engineering Design Companies ☐
Other, please state. ☐

3. WAGE AGREEMENTS
When was your last general wage increase?
.....
When do you expect the next?
.....
Are there regular merit reviews? YES/NO
Please give frequency

4. EQUALITY
Have you negotiated an equal opportunities clause with the Company? YES/NO
Do you have a maternity/paternity leave agreement? YES/NO
Do you have an agreement on training + promotion opportunities for women? YES/NO

5. LUNCHEON VOUCHERS What is the value of these per week if issued?
.....

6. BONUS SYSTEMS
If a system operates please indicate.
Production Bonus ☐
Profit Sharing ☐
Timekeeping or other merit payment ☐
Other (please state)
.....

7. QUALIFICATION PAYMENTS What are the payments in addition to the minimum made for the following?

	£	p
City & Guilds		
O.N.C.		
H.N.C.		
Degree		
Other please state		

8. MINIMUM RATES Please give details of current minimum rates or grading scheme for all staff, indicating differences in job level or sex.

Age or Grade	Minimum	Maximum	% Prop. of Women in Grade	Age or Grade	Minimum	Maximum	% Prop. of Women in Grade

9. HOURS OF WORK

Which Days?	Starting Time	Finishing Time
LUNCH		

What is the normal weekly total excluding overtime and meal breaks? ..... hours
Do any categories of TASS staff work longer or shorter hours? YES/NO
If so please give details
.....

10. OVERTIME Is this being worked?
4/5 days per week ☐ 2/3 days per week ☐ 1 day per week ☐
Not at present ☐ Never ☐
What is the rate for overtime? Weekdays ..... hourly rate
Saturday ..... hourly rate Sunday ..... hourly rate
At what grade, rank or salary does overtime cease to be paid? .....

11. SHIFT WORK Do any staff work shifts?
None ☐ Technical ☐ Computer ☐
Supervisory ☐ Clerical & Admin. ☐
If shifts are worked, what system?
Day and night ☐ Double days ☐
Three shift ☐ Continental three shift ☐

12. PAYMENT FOR SHIFT WORK
If shiftwork is not included in the basic pay, please give details of special allowances:
.....
.....

13. HOLIDAYS
Public Holidays (e.g. Christmas, Easter)
Please give number of days .....
Annual Holidays Give number of working days (excluding Public Holidays) for each year of service.

Service	Working Days	Service	Working Days
1 year			
Maximum:	years of service		days

Please give details of extra holiday for grades, monthly staff, etc.
.....
Which part, if any, of your Annual Holiday is fixed?
.....

14. SICK PAY Please indicate difference in grades or monthly staff

Length of service	Length of Time on FULL pay	Length of Time on HALF pay

15. OCCUPATIONAL PENSIONS
Is there a scheme in operation? YES/NO
Is membership a condition of employment? YES/NO
Is the Pension Scheme Contracted in ☐ or Contracted out ☐

16. TRAINING
No of members who had any off-the-job training/paid educational leave during past year ☐ men ☐ women
Are there local TASS agreement(s), training or education? YES/NO

17 NON MEMBERSHIP Please give approximate numbers

	Male	Female
Draughtsmen & Equivalent		
Technologists		
Supervisors		
Technical Clerks & Equivalent		
Clerical & Admin.		

18 OTHER UNIONS Please indicate which other White-collar Unions have members.
No other union ☐
ACTSS ☐ MATSA ☐
APEX ☐ EESA ☐
ASTMS ☐
Other .....

19 A.U.E.W. Please indicate which other sections of the amalgamated union organise at this firm, if any
Engineering ☐
Foundry ☐
Constructional ☐
Is there a joint AUEW committee? YES/NO
Is TASS represented on the shop stewards committee? YES/NO

20 AGREEMENTS Other than National agreements, please indicate whether TASS or another union negotiates for the following staff

	TASS or name of other Union
Technician Engineers	
Technologists	
Supervisors	
Technical Clerks	
Computer Staff	
Clerical & Admin.	

Other, please state .....
Are copies of these agreements filed with Divisional Office? YES/NO

21 CONTRACT LABOUR
Is this employed? Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Never ☐
Is self-employed labour used? YES/NO If so please give number .....

12/78

NAME, ADDRESS, AND REF. NO. OF C.M. OR S.M.

RS
ECR
DCR
A

APPENDIX III

T.A.S.S. WAGE DATA: A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

The material presented in Chapters II and III suggests that two areas of the union's activity may be worthy of consideration in any statistical enquiry into changes through time in the wages paid to members of TASS. These are:-

A. The high strike pay/selective strike policy resulting:
(i) in a much higher proportion of the union's funds being allocated to strike pay than was the case for any other union over the period under consideration, and
(ii) in all strikes being official, and in general being selected by the leadership from a strike waiting list.

B. The job vacancies/wages and conditions data bank,
advertising only those vacancies offering wages and conditions equal to or above the union's unilaterally-set minimum in the former, and providing fairly sophisticated wage information in the latter.

It seems appropriate, therefore, to construct hypotheses which, while drawing on work carried out by other researchers, encompass variables which go some way towards measuring the influence of the factors in A and B on the time-series of wage data for the union membership.

1. POSSIBLE APPROACHES

A rough dichotomy can be imposed on previous theoretical and empirical work in the field of wage explanation. On the one hand, there is that approach which can be called demand-determined, and on the other, that which can be called militancy-determined.

1.1 Taking the latter first, various hypotheses have been put forward with respect to the link between militancy and wages, each usually containing its particular index of militancy. The work of Hines[1] stands almost entirely alone during the 1960s as a model based on a militancy approach. Hines' measure of militancy - the rate of change of unionisation of the labour force weighted with respect to the initial level of unionisation - even if not subject to dispute,[2] is inappropriate in the present context in that it is not possible to define and quantify the particular 'labour force' relevant to the dependent variable to be explained - some index of the rate of change of wages of the union's membership.

A more apposite approach stems from the work of Godfrey[3] whose militancy measure is the number of strikes per period or the change in the number of strikes per period. Godfrey argues that not only are his results of greater explanatory value than those of other researchers, notably Phillips, Lipsey and Parkin,[4] but that his statistical procedure is also better.

Be that as it may, Godfrey's approach is followed here. It is admitted however, that the a priori argument for expecting the number of strikes per period (or perhaps any such strike-based variable) to be positively associated with the rate of change of wages is not the only causal sequence that might be adduced. For example, it could be held that the number of strikes rises as employer resistance to wage claims increases, hence it might be expected that strikes will be negatively correlated with the

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1. See, for example, Hines,'Trade Unions and Wage Inflation in the U.K., 1893-1961' Review of Economic Studies, XXXI, 1964.
2. See Purdy and Zis, 'T.U's and Wage Inflation in the U.K. - a reappraisal', in Laidler and Purdy (eds), 'Inflation and Labour Markets', 1974.
3. See Godfrey's essay in Nobay and Johnson (eds), 'The Current Inflation', 1971.
4. See, for example, Lipsey, 'The Relation between Unemployment and the Rate of Change of Money Wage Rates in the U.K., 1862-1957' in Gordon and Klein, 'Readings in Business Cycles', 1965.

dependent wage variable. However, given the qualitative evidence surrounding the centrally-controlled strike selection practised by TASS, Godfrey's causal sequence is accepted here and his independent variables, the number of strikes per period and the change in number of strikes per period, are expected to be positively associated with the rate of change of wages.

From the material presented in Table III, p. 50 , it is possible to construct other militancy variables, although none are as 'clean' as the simple strikes variables. The amount spent on disputes each year could, for example, be used to proxy militancy but with some reservations. Assuming a standard weekly payment to all strikers, then expenditure per annum would measure the breadth of strike activity in terms of the number of strikers in the period as well as the length of strikes in terms of the number of weeks on strike. Thus strike activity of 200 strikers for one week would give the same monetary result in terms of strike expenditure as would activity of 10 strikers for 20 weeks. But the average expenditure per striker would be different. Thus the average expenditure per striker could be used to test the employer resistance hypothesis; the longer the time spent on strike the greater the degree of employer resistance, hence it would be expected that the average expenditure per striker would be negatively associated with the rate of change of wages.

Before considering the actual relationships underlying the total expenditure on disputes each year, i.e. are there qualifications to the standard weekly strike pay assumption, it should be noted that by dividing total dispute expenditure per annum by the number of strikes in that year, nothing of significance is added to our knowledge, since the resultant would not distinguish between broad strikes and long strikes. The resultant would only be significant if it could be argued that broad and long strikes measure the same thing, for example, either militancy or employer resistance, and it is not clear why a strike of 100 men for two weeks should count for either greater militancy or employer resistance than one of 10 men for two

weeks. However, if average expenditure per striker per annum were divided by the number of strikes per annum, this composite variable would seem to be as close as available statistics allow to an all round militancy variable. The greater the value of the composite variable, the greater would be the degree of employer resistance; many short, sharp strikes would be expected to be positively associated with the rate of change of wages and few protracted strikes negatively associated.

To turn to the question of the standard weekly strike payment assumption, the annual totals for dispute expenditure are built up by adding up the monies spent on strike activity each year. The union pays 100% net wages to strikers.(5) However, the gross wage(6) will vary due to, inter alia, geographic location, age and time. How does this affect the standard weekly payment assumption? There is no simple expedient to take into account possible differences over time in the relationship between gross and net wages due to tax changes etc. and no allowance for such differences has been included in the calculations which follow. Nevertheless, within limits, the annual totals for dispute expenditure will be related to the gross wage structure payed to TASS members in each year and since there is no evidence from the wider research carried out on the union that, for example, younger members were more strike prone than older members, or vice versa, or that the age distribution of the membership changed significantly over time, or that there was a peculiar geographic distribution or change in distribution of strikes, the annual totals can be assumed to relate to a relatively constant cross-section of the membership. If this assumption is close to reality, then the only other step required to relate dispute expenditure in, say, 1970 with 1951 is to deflate the former by some deflator, say, the Retail Price Index, based on 1951.

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5. Allowance is made in the statistics for changes in strike pay.
6. See below, p. 8.

While none of these qualifications necessarily remove all of the problems inherent in using annual dispute expenditure in independent variables, there is no reason given the paucity of empirical data on militancy and employer resistance, not to so use dispute expenditure.

Thus the independent militancy variables are:-

S - No. of Strikes per annum

Δs - Change in no. of strikes

E^*/M - Average Expenditure per striker

$\frac{E^*/M}{S}$ - Average expenditure per striker per strike.

(* deflated with respect to the R.P.I.)

1.2 DEMAND-DETERMINED APPROACH

The theoretical and empirical work carried out by researchers such as Lipsey and Parkin remains central to this approach. While the original Phillips' Curve is not currently viewed as having much predictive value, it does not follow that demand variables can be dismissed at either the aggregate or disaggregate levels.

The standard proxy variable for the level of aggregate demand in the economy is the rate of registered unemployment, as in the Phillips' Curve. This independent variable is used here since it has not proved possible to define and quantify one of more immediate relevance to the labour market segment from which the dependent wage variable is drawn.

Another demand proxy used by some researchers is the number of reported job vacancies per period and this approach at least has the merit from the point of view of the present study, of providing some foundation for introducing a variable relating to the second of the two components of the union's wages policy - the job vacancy/information bank component. For a number of reasons it has not proved possible to quantify a TASS vacancy index based on the number of adverts carried in the Vacancy List, for example.

In particular, adverts do not normally specify the number of vacancies and it is not clear that by adding up the number of adverts (not to mention problems of double counting when adverts appear for a number of months), an accurate index need emerge. However, since the data bank is used in the main by individual members looking for information on specific jobs, another way of indexing this second component of the wages strategy might be through the phenomenon of job-change. This often appears in the literature as quit-rate analysis, the usual problem being the separation of quits due to redundancy from those due to excess demand as in the backward sloping section of the Phillips' Curve. The analysis is further complicated by the probability of internal labour market adjustments being different under different market conditions. In effect, while it is possible in theory to separate out the various adjustments, it is not possible in practice. The usual solution is to assume that, for example, quits due to excess demand always outweigh those due to redundancy or to weight the index to take account of the various components that make it up.

With respect to the present analysis, the former approach is adopted although given the nature of the proposed index some of the more serious difficulties are not encountered. The proposed excess demand index is the 'number of completed transfers per period'.

For one reason or another,[7] the union count the number of members who change their 'work area' each year. When a member leaves a 'work area', the shop steward records this on his subscription form which is sent to headquarters, indicating the reason for leaving, e.g. redundant, transferred to another 'work area', leaving to take up a new job. There is thus a series of statistics available for 'Transfers Out' which does not include redundancies, but which does include 'quits' to take up new jobs and

---

7. Probably to trace 'lost' members.

internal labour market adjustments between 'work areas', i.e. within the same plant, but not within a particular 'work area', though it is not possible to separate out external from internal changes, i.e. quits from inter-'work area' adjustments.

When the 'transfers out' take up their new appointments, the bulk of them 'transfer in' via the subscription list of the new shop steward and headquarters also maintain a statistical series on 'Transfers In'. The fact that Transfers Out are always greater than Transfers In is to be expected; some transfers out will be to jobs outwith TASS negotiating areas and some will be to unorganised areas and thus some will allow their membership to lapse.

While a priori arguments can be made out for using either series in the present analysis, attention is concentrated at present on Transfer In.(8) This series measures "completed transfers" and it seems reasonable to suppose that all wage changes engendered by such job changes will be recorded and form part of the time-series on the dependent variable.

The problem of quits due to redundancy is not encountered and it seems reasonable to argue that "completed transfers" due to slack labour market conditions - either internal adjustments or defensive job changes to avoid redundancy - will represent such a small part of total 'completed transfers' that they can in effect be discounted. Thus the total number of completed transfers for period, T, is expected to be positively associated with the rate of change of wages of the union membership.

For reasons similar to those involved in using the rate of unemployment rather than the absolute number of unemployed in the Phillips' Curve, it is expected that "completed transfers as a proportion of the membership" will in practice prove a better explanatory variable and thus $\frac{T}{M}$ .100 is expected to be positively correlated to the rate of change of wages.

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(8) The series for Transfers Out is not, in fact, complete.

Thus the independent demand variables are:-

U - the rate of Unemployment per annum

$\frac{T}{M}.100$ - completed transfers as a proportion of the membership.

2. THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

As indicated earlier, the union has maintained a sophisticated data collection and dissemination network for nearly 50 years. Central to this has been the collection and use of wage data. This has been compiled on an average-wage-for-age basis paralleling the union's unilaterally set minimum-wage-for-age scales, such that changes in age groupings in the former reflect changes in age groupings in the latter, and this means firstly, that there is no simple single "average wage for union members" and secondly, that periodically the groupings by age were changed, e.g. for some years an average was worked out for "over 30 year olds" while for others it was for "30 year olds and over". It has been possible, however, to isolate a time-series for the "30 and over" age group, the bulk of the membership, and this is analysed for the period 1951 to 1970.

In most of the studies previously quoted, the dependent variable was either the Wage Rate or Gross Earnings. In this study the Wage refers to the average gross weekly wage paid for a standard working week excluding overtime as reported in the corresponding members annual census taken in October each year.

The formula used to convert the annual data to rate of change was:-

$$\dot{W}_{U30} = \frac{W_t - W_{t-1}}{W_{t-1}} .100$$

U30 refers to union members 30 years old and over.

This variable was refined as follows:-

$$\bar{\dot{W}} = \dot{W}_{U30} - \dot{W}_{ai}$$

where $\dot{W}_{ai}$ is the rate of change (calculated as for U30) of the average

weekly earnings of male manual workers, Oct./Oct. each year, taken from British Labour Statistics.(9)

$\overline{W}$, the difference between the two rates of change, must in some sense represent factors particular to the relevant TASS members.

The possibility that rather than $\overline{W}$, some function of $\overline{W}$, e.g. $\log(\overline{W})$ or $(\overline{W})^{\frac{1}{2}}$ etc. would be more appropriate, is also a consideration. Thus the following independent variables were considered:-

$\overset{\circ}{W}_{U30}$ and the transformations $\log(\overset{\circ}{W}_{U30})$ and $(\overset{\circ}{W}_{U30})^{\frac{1}{2}}$, and $\overline{W}$ and the transformations $\log(\overline{W})$ and $(\overline{W})^{\frac{1}{2}}$.

3. ADDITIONAL VARIABLES

3.1 STRIKE POLICY 'OFF/ON'

In Chapter III it was suggested that the period 1951 to 1962 could be characterised as one in which TASS 'followed' the manual workers, while in the period 1962 to 1970, the union set its own targets. A dummy variable, having a value of zero for the years up to and including 1961 and a value of one thereafter, was included to test for this difference.

3.2 INCOMES POLICY 'OFF/ON'

A selection of dummy variables was included to test for the impact of incomes policy. Various judgements were made as to which years policy could be considered 'on/off' or 'hard/soft'. The three variables included took the following form:-

VAR.	1951 to 1964	1965	1966	1967	1968 to 1970
1.	0	1	2	1	0
2.	0	1	2	0	0
3.	0	1	1	1	0

(9) British Labour Statistics, Tables 41 & 42 supplemented by Year Books

4. RESULTS

The results shown in Table A are typical of the total number of regressions undertaken.

No combination of the independent variables, either lagged or unlagged, provided much explanation of the dependent variable $\dot{W}_{U30}$ or of the transformations of $\dot{W}_{U30}$ or $\bar{W}$, and these lines of enquiry were dropped and attention was concentrated on the dependent variable $\bar{W}$.

It will aid exposition of the results to state here that neither $\frac{T}{M}.100$, ΔS nor the dummy variables were found to be statistically significant.

Thus Table A records results obtained from regressions relating to the equation

$$\bar{W} = \int (S.\ \frac{E}{M}.\ \frac{E/M}{S}.\ U.\ t)$$

For no regression which was fitted was the coefficient of t significantly different from zero, i.e. no time trend in $\bar{W}$ was detectable.

A constant term was invariably found to be necessary.

Regressions 1, 2 and 3 in Table A are a typical selection of results from fitting any two unlagged independent variables, and provide little if any explanation of the variation in $\bar{W}$. The economic rationale for lagging the independent variables is one which is standard in the literature on explanations of wage changes. None of the regressions undertaken using any one lagged independent variable produced a value of R^2 greater than 0.28, so they have not been tabulated.

Regressions 4 to 9 represent all possible combinations of two lagged variables from the four under consideration and of these lines, line 8 is clearly the best by a considerable amount. Adding each of the other two lagged variables separately to the regression of line 8 results in lines 11 and 13; R^2 increases but $\bar{R}^2$ decreases in both cases and it is thus

held that there is no point in preferring 11 or 13 to 8. The further combinations represented by lines 10 and 12 give R^2 and $\bar{R}^2$ lower than line 8.

Regression 14 represents the regression of all four lagged variables on $\bar{W}$ and as with lines 11 and 13, though R^2 increases, $\bar{R}^2$ decreases compared with line 8.

Regression 15 is the result of adding one autoregressive variable to the two variables in line 8. The autoregressive term was included after inspection of the time-series of $\bar{W}$ which displays a cyclical character albeit $\bar{W}$ derives from the difference between two distinct time-series. The inclusion of the autoregressive term lifts R^2 and $\bar{R}^2$ by about 33% and thus seems clearly worth including. The results of adding in the transfers variable $\frac{T}{M}.100$ and a two-year lagged autoregressive variable to line 15 produce a negligible increase in R^2 and a decrease in $\bar{R}^2$ and it is held that they contribute nothing further to the analysis.

The equation of line 15 is the best that it has been possible to devise:-

$$\bar{W}_t = 0.0924 - 0.4779(\bar{W})_{t-1} - 0.0071\left(\frac{E/M}{S}\right)_{t-1} - 0.0363U_{t-1}$$

Standard Error of Coefficient	0.636	0.0014	0.0096
t value	-2.92	-4.96	-3.78

All significant at at least the 2% level

$R^2 = 0.728$

$\bar{R}^2 = 0.666$

5. INFERENCES

All the coefficients in the equation are significantly different from zero at at least the 2% level, so it is reasonable to infer that each term represents a real effect. Taking them in turn:-

i) $-0.0362U_{t-1}$

This demonstrates that the higher the rate of unemployment nationally the more likely $\overset{o}{W}_{ai}$ is to be greater tha $\overset{o}{W}_{U30}$, and vice versa. In other words, at times of high unemployment, the rate of growth of the wage income of TASS members tends to be slower than for industry as a whole. Two explanations, among others, can be offered. Firstly, given the craft cluster of the membership and thus their place in the industrial process (dsign and development as opposed to production), the intensity of fluctuations in demand may be greater on the membership than on the labour force in general. This need not be reflected in more violent swings in employment for TASS members particularly if employers hoard the skills they represent, but rather influence the settlements obtained by union activity. It is possible, of course, that because of the craft cluster, the membership is subject to a (slightly) different cyclical pattern of demand than are workers generally which is not taken into account in the equation.

Secondly, and perhaps not unrelated to the level of demand, is the question of the precise nature of the wage settlements achieved. Any tendency for flat rate increases to become the norm for all workers including TASS members, in times of high unemployment would provide a causal explanation for the working of the U_{t-1} term in the equation. While there is no evidence that any such tendency existed and while no statistically significant results were obtained when testing the suggested 'pattern following' (1953 to 1961) as against the 'pattern setting' (1962 to 1970), the possibility nevertheless exists that 'pattern following' may have had such an effect and may have continued to operate in the later period.

ii) $-0.0071(\frac{E/M}{S})_{t-1}$

As in i) above, the more spent per member on strike per strike, the more likely $\overset{o}{W}_{ai}$ is to be greater than $\overset{o}{W}_{U30}$, and vice versa. This result

is as expected and confirms the qualitative evidence detailed in Chapter III, section 4 , that long strikes were the result of employer resistance and that short, sharp strikes chosen for their 'pattern setting' quality from a strike waiting list were central to the militant wage strategy. Thus a many strikes strategy constrained financially, entails selection so as to minimise the possibility of costly disputes.

iii) $-0.4779\ (\overline{W})_{t-1}$

This confirms that $\overline{W}$ is in successive years alternatively large and small, as can be seen by examining the data. In other words, if in one year TASS wages increases are larger than for all industry, the following year the two rates will be closer together or the all industry rate increase will be larger. Simply, this could result from TASS 'following' all other workers or the reverse. The presumption must be, given the qualitative evidence, that the former is the case - TASS followed the manual workers and reinforced this by pattern setting and following across the membership.

In concluding this Appendix it is appreciated that the extent of the statistical enquiry carried out is not very great, and that a more detailed enquiry might pay rich rewards. Nevertheless, the results obtained, if limited, are certainly interesting.

TABLE A

LINE No	DEPENDENT VARIABLE	INDEPENDENT VARIABLES COEFFICIENTS SIGNIFICANT AT THE 5% LEVEL*	CONSTANT	R^2	$\bar{R}^2$
1	$\bar{W}_t$	$0.0002(\frac{E}{M})_t$ $-0.0010S_t$	+0.0091	0.1670	0.0480
2	"	$-0.0019(\frac{E/M}{S})_t$ $-0.0143U_t$	+0.0205	0.1204	0
3	"	$-0.0117U_t$ $-0.0009S_t$	+0.0398	0.1803	0.0632
4	"	$-0.0039(\frac{E/M}{S})_{t-1}$ $-0.0004(\frac{E}{M})_{t-1}$	+0.0358	0.3112	0.2128
5	"	$-0.0008(\frac{E}{M})_{t-1}$ $+0.0013S_{t-1}$	+0.0251	0.2401	0.1315
6	"	$-0.0252U_{t-1}$ $-0.0006(\frac{E}{M})_{t-1}$	+0.0746	0.3013	0.2015
7	"	$-0.0064^{*}(\frac{E/M}{S})_{t-1}$ $-0.0013S_{t-1}$	+0.0469	0.3354	0.2405
8	"	$-0.0054^{*}(\frac{E/M}{S})_{t-1}$ $-0.0345^{*}U_{t-1}$	+0.0830	0.5499	0.4856
9	"	$-0.0377^{*}U_{t-1}$ $+0.0015S_{t-1}$	+0.0401	0.3035	0.2040
10	"	$-0.0066(\frac{E/M}{S})_{t-1}$ $-0.00003(\frac{E}{M})_{t-1}$ $-0.0013S_{t-1}$	+0.0471	0.3355	0.1822

TABLE A (contd)

LINE No	DEPENDENT VARIABLE	INDEPENDENT VARIABLES COEFFICIENTS SIGNIFICANT AT THE 5% LEVEL*				CONSTANT	R^2	$\bar{R}^2$
11	"	$-0.0058^{*}(\frac{E/M}{S})_{t-1}$	$-0.0332^{*}U_{t-1}$		$-0.0003S_{T-1}$	+0.0368	0.5523	0.4490
12	"		$-0.0366^{*}U_{t-1}$	$-0.0008^{*}(\frac{E}{M})_{t-1}$	$+0.0021^{*}S_{t-1}$	+0.0744	0.5070	0.3933
13	"	$-0.0051^{*}(\frac{E/M}{S})_{t-1}$	$-0.0334^{*}U_{t-1}$	$-0.0001(\frac{E}{M})_{t-1}$		+0.0873	0.5551	0.4524
14	"	$-0.0048(\frac{E/M}{S})_{t-1}$	$-0.0337^{*}U_{t-1}$	$-0.0002(\frac{E}{M})_{t-1}$	$+0.0002S_{t-1}$	+0.0865	0.5553	0.4071
15	"	$-0.4779^{*}(\dot{W}_{U30} - \dot{W}_{ai})_{t-1}$	$-0.0071^{*}(\frac{E/M}{S})_{t-1}$	$-0.0362^{*}U_{t-1}$		+0.0924	0.7282	0.6655

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