

## TRADES UNION CONGRESS

## INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

From T. Jenkins Department International  
To J.A. Hargreaves Date October 19, 1973.

## SUBJECT

Chile - Telegram from ICFTU

1. The ICFTU sent ussa cable on October 18 stating that LO, Denmark, had initiated a collection of funds for solidarity work for Chile and that the LO had requested the ICFTU to create a worldwide fund for immediate rescue and relief of Chilean trade unionists. The ICFTU state that they would immediately proceed with a worldwide appeal and concrete preparations as soon as TUC agreement to co-operate is received.

2. Further ICFTU action is reported on page 4 of the attached note.

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Position before the Coup

1. At their meeting in August the International Committee considered the developing situation in Chile and they agreed to express the support of the British trade union movement for the democratically elected Popular Unity Government of Chile and for the Chilean trade unions in their resistance to attempts to overthrow that government. This expression of support was brought to the attention of the ICFTU, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Labour Party, the CUT, and the Chilean Ambassador in Britain.

2. The Chilean Ambassador wrote on September 3 expressing his gratitude to the General Council for their expression of support which he had conveyed to his Government and to the Chilean trade union movement.

3. On September 6, Congress carried an emergency motion congratulating the Chilean trade unions in their support of President Allende's Popular Unity Government in the firm stand they were taking in strongly resisting attempts to overthrow the democratically elected Chilean People's Government.

TUC action after the coup

4. On September 12 - the day after the coup - we wrote to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary informing him of the emergency motion on Chile adopted by Congress, condemning the coup, and urging the Government to take all possible steps to help secure the restoration of constitutional government in Chile.

5. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary replied on September 18 stating that he regretted that violence should have erupted in Chile with its long tradition of democracy



and that it was very sad that President Allende had died in an atmosphere of distrust and violence. The Government did not consider that it would be wise or indeed possible to intervene in the internal affairs of Chile and while the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary shared our hope that constitutional government would soon be restored in Chile, that was a task which had to be left to the people of Chile themselves, with the good wishes for their success of the British Government.

6. The contents of our letter to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary were brought to the attention of the ICFTU, the Labour Party and the Chilean Ambassador, and they were given wide publicity.

7. On September 20, the ICFTU wrote welcoming the forceful letter written to the British Foreign Secretary by the TUC. The Labour Party acknowledged our letter on September 19, and on October 11 they sent us a copy of a statement issued by their National Executive Committee which condemned the undermining of the Chilean economy before the coup by US multinational companies, international monetary institutions and Governments (including the British Government), which attacked the hasty recognition of the Chilean regime by the British Government, and which called for only minimal consular facilities to be maintained in Chile, which declared opposition to the restoration of credits and to all British aid or trade with Chile, and which called on the Government to press for the release of all political prisoners and for an end to the present reign of murder and terror in Chile.

#### Letters from Unions

8. The T&GWU wrote on September 17 bringing to our attention a resolution recorded by their General Executive Council calling upon the British Government to refuse to recognise the Military Junta in Chile and to cancel all British Government aid to Chile. The resolution also strongly urged the TUC and the ICFTU to take all possible action to restore the constitutional government in Chile, including an urgent request to the American trade union movement to bring pressure upon the American Government in this direction.

9. The letter also asked that the TUC might consider carrying out a study of the ITT involvement in the Chilean affair.



10. The National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile Workers wrote on September 19 bringing to our attention a resolution deploring and condemning the actions of the Military Junta in Chile, which was passed by their Executive Committee, and expressing the hope that the TUC would seize every opportunity of condemning the actions of the Military Regime.

11. The Civil and Public Services Association wrote on September 21 conveying a resolution condemning the coup d-etat in Chile, expressing concern at the denial of the democratic rights of the Chilean people, stating that it was imperative that steps should be taken to return to democratically elected government, and enquiring whether the General Council is taking any action on the subject.

12. The AUEW (Engineering Section) wrote on October 3 stating that as sponsors of the Emergency Resolution at Congress the union in reiterating their opinion felt justified in requesting the TUC to take every step towards its implementation.

13. The National Union of Journalists wrote on October 3 urging that when the General Council make further representations about the Chilean situation, reference be made not only to the apparently appalling treatment of trade unionists but also to the attacks on press and journalistic freedom perpetrated by the new regime.

14. The AUEW (Construction Section) wrote on October 4 asking the General Council to use all efforts to secure the release of all political prisoners and a halt to executions of leading Labour Movement figures which had been reported as being imminent.

14(a). The SLADE wrote on October 17 bringing to our attention a resolution from their Liverpool Branch and which was supported by their Executive Committee, for the consideration of the General Council. The resolution condemns British recognition of the Chilean regime, calls for only minimal consular facilities to be provided in Chile for the protection of British citizens, opposes any attempt to restore credits denied to the Allende government, calls for the release of political prisoners and for the end of the mass murder of Chilean citizens by the military forces, demands UK Government pressure to be brought on the regime to allow the Red Cross and Amnesty International into Chile, to lift bans on political parties, to restore trade union freedom and to return to a democratically elected civilian government. The resolution also calls on the SLADE Executive to make representations to the TUC encouraging industrial action by the banning of goods from and to Chile. The SLADE letter asks the TUC to make representations to the government urging them to withdraw the recognition that they have given to the regime.



15. In a circular dated September 17, the ICFTU appealed to affiliated trade union organisations to request their governments to withhold recognition from the Chilean military Junta until democratic life is resumed. The ICFTU also stated that they were collecting material with a view to bringing the matter before the ILO and the UN, and that they would be watching closely the actions of the World Bank in regard to Chile. Mr. Kersten was to attend the annual International Fund/World Bank meeting in Nairobi at the end of September, where he intended to emphasise by all possible means that World Bank credits should not be resumed until a democratically elected government is in place in Chile.

16. The ICFTU have submitted an official complaint to the ILO regarding the dissolution of the CUT by a law issued by the military regime on September 17, and they have protested to the regime against the summary detention and execution of trade unionists.

17. It has been reported that the Chilean authorities have confirmed that a number of people have been executed after Court Martial in various areas, that others have been shot while trying to escape, and that over 5,000 people have been detained since September 11, 120 of which would be tried soon. One case which has received a large amount of publicity is that of Luis Corvalan the General Secretary of the Chilean Communist Party who is to be tried for treason and subversion and who faces the death penalty. All political parties which had supported the Popular Unity Government have been banned and their leaders are sought by the military authorities.

18. In a circular dated October 11, the ICFTU have urgently requested affiliated organisations to bring pressure to bear on their respective governments to instruct their embassies to provide asylum, as those of the Scandinavian countries have done, for trade unionists and workers seeking to escape the repression, and to obtain for those who take refuge in the embassies the necessary safe conduct to leave the country, the ICFTU having requested that the United Nations second such an effort.

19. A mission of the Socialist International, which included an ICFTU representative, have recently returned from Chile. Their report, which was communicated to the UN, states that there never was any plot by the Allende government against the Chilean armed forces, that the serious economic crisis which Chile faces was deliberately brought on and intensified by those very forces who form or sustain the new regime, and that to the thousands killed in the first few days must be added the numbers undoubtedly higher than the regime will admit of those being summarily shot all over the country.



20. The Committee might wish to endorse the actions taken by the ICFTU, and ask them to examine the activities of multinational companies in Chile.

British Recognition of the Regime

21. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary has stated that the practice in considering the resumption of relations with a new government after a coup d'etat has been to take into account primarily whether it is the effective government of the country, and that recognition does not imply approval. Another consideration in the case of Chile was the protection of British interests - there are over 4,000 British citizens in the country, and British investment is reported to be about £15 million. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs has stated that immediately after recognition on September 22 the British Ambassador was instructed to make representations to the regime explaining the very strong feelings in the country over the death of President Allende and others, and over the many people who had been arrested.

22. It was reported that on September 23 Mr. Murray had stated that it was deplorable that the British Government should have rushed to extend recognition to the military regime and that recognition which may seem to be a neutral diplomatic act to the government would be interpreted by trade unionists as acquiescence in the regime.

Aid

23. The Government have stated that they do not give military aid to Chile and that they ~~did~~ not consider that it would be in the best interests of the people of Chile that development aid (which includes the training of Chilean students in this country) should be suspended.