

RAPPORT:  
Van: Ka-Ra  
Aan: HKB en HB  
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Onderwerp: Overzicht betreffende de Britse  
Communistische Partij (Maart '52).

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8 MEI 1952  
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1. U gelieve hierbij aan te treffen een overzicht, dat Sardine ons doet toekomen, betreffende de Britse Communistische Partij (Maart 1952).
2. U kunt dit exemplaar behouden.

7-5-52, H.

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THE BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY - MARCH 1952.

## 1. General.

a) During the month the Party has devoted most of its attention to its anti-Budget campaign and to continued preparations for the National Congress. The report of the Executive Committee, a printed document of 60 pages, price one shilling, has been on sale throughout the month and this will be formally presented at the Congress. The new draft of the introduction to the "British Road to Socialism" has been completed, as has been the draft of the revised "Party Rules". These three documents and a discussion of the tasks facing the Party in the coming year will be the most important part of the agenda at the Congress. *← don't say all summary.*

b) William GALLACHER, the Chairman of the British Communist Party, arrived in Adelaide, Australia, on the 3rd March and has made several speeches at public meetings in that country.

c) The 1952 registration of Party members has not yet reached 100% of the figures for last year, but in some districts increases have been obtained. It now seems possible that the number of new recruits will exceed the losses and that, therefore, the total number of registered members for 1952 will be greater than that for 1951, although it is by no means certain that the Party's target of a 10% increase by the date of the Congress will be achieved. It is interesting to note that many of the 1952 recruits (i.e. those who were not members in 1951) have been members at some previous time. In one area this is true of nearly one third of the newcomers.

## 2. The Party and the Budget.

For some weeks before the Budget, the Party was engaged in organising a campaign of protest against it which was to start immediately after the Budget was announced. The Organisation, Propaganda and Industrial Departments at Party Headquarters circulated advice to all the district organisations as to how the campaign was to be carried out. Suggestions were made for the layout of leaflets and the use of slogans. In many places preparations were made so that duplicated sheets could be produced as quickly as possible after the Budget proposals were known. Demonstrations by various groups outside the House of Commons were planned, and it was arranged that a small group of experts should remain on duty at King Street throughout the evening of Budget Day to be able to give telephonic advice on any questions which the Budget campaigners might have to ask during the course of their activities. In fact, "Operation Budget", as it was known to the Party, was not quite as effective as the Party had hoped because some aspects of the Budget, for example the increase of allowances, caught them by surprise, and made some of the previously prepared propaganda unusable. Since the Budget, however, the campaign has proceeded actively. Communist literature has been filled with articles directed against one or other aspect of the Government's financial policy, and numerous speeches have been made by Communists at public meetings and at factories throughout the country. Much emphasis has been placed on the value of strike action as a political weapon with a very strong implication that it should be used as widely as possible.

## 3. The Daily Worker.

Recent information makes it clear that what are referred to as the "week-end" sales of the paper do not include the normal Saturday circulation. The full Saturday circulation, therefore, includes the number of copies sold as normal daily circulation plus extra copies distributed by members of the Party over the week-end. The previous figures quoted in these notes may, therefore, have been misleading.

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At present, the average daily circulation (excluding extra Saturday sales, copies sent by post and copies sent overseas) is slightly over 80,000 and the extra copies sold on Saturday slightly under 50,000. Thus full Saturday sales approach 130,000. The average of total daily net sales for the period July to December 1951 is stated by the Audit Bureau of Circulation as having been just over 97,000. This is a drop of about 5,000 daily below the average for the previous six months and is less than half the maximum circulation that the paper ever achieved.

4. Industry

a) World Federation of Trade Unions (W.F.T.U.)  
attempts at interference in the Textile Industry.

It became clear in 1951 that the Clothing and Textiles Trades Union International (T.U.I.) of the W.F.T.U. was particularly keen to foster relationships with suitable contacts in this country. At this time Edouard AUBERT, the French Secretary of the T.U.I. planned to come here, but eventually Jacques AMELAINE, another Frenchman and an official of the T.U.I. was sent instead.

AMELAINE formed the initial links in the Clothing Industry in Leeds with James ROCHE, at present the Communist Party District Secretary, and in London with MYER @ Mick MINDEL, an official of the National Union of Tailoring and Garment Workers (N.U.T. & G.W.).

He proposed that unofficial "action committees" be formed in both cities and further that, where possible, their activities should be co-ordinated. Some initial progress was made, but neither ROCHE nor MINDEL have shown much drive.

In March of this year AMELAINE planned a second visit to this country and to Belgium. From papers in his possession when he was refused permission to land in the U.K., it is clear that his mission was of current importance to the T.U.I., and that he planned to renew contact with ROCHE and MINDEL and with Hyman KANTER, another N.U.T. & G.W. official in London, and to visit Lancashire to meet Harold DICKINSON, the Secretary of the Burnley Weavers Association.

Whereas on his previous visit to Yorkshire he had mainly concerned himself with the clothing industry, he was, on this occasion, interested in making contacts in the woollen textile industry in Yorkshire, for which he had the following plans:-

1. The establishment of a Liaison Committee.
2. The co-ordination of branches.
3. The evolution of a plan of campaign.
4. The collection of addresses.
5. Instructions for the comrades to get in touch with textile workers in Nigeria.

Apart from a disregard for elementary security precautions, AMELAINE's visit was carefully planned and was of an exploratory nature. It is clear that the T.U.I. is interested in exploiting for political purposes the unrest in the industry, especially in the North, which has resulted from the severe recession of trade. A further attempt to send an emissary to ensure the adequacy of the T.U.I.'s links in this country will probably be made.

b) The World Federation of Scientific Workers Executive Committee meeting that was to have been held in Cambridge in the third week of March, did not take place as the Home Secretary refused to allow the foreign members of the Committee to enter the United Kingdom.

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c) On 10th March 1952 a large number of apprentices in the shipyards and engineering works of Glasgow and the Clyde went on strike in support of their wage claim of £1 per week increase. On the first day the "Daily Worker" claimed that eight thousand were on strike; by the 13th they were claiming thirteen thousand. It is probable that these figures were exaggerated, but the exact figure is difficult to assess. The strike was still in progress at the end of the month.

Efforts were made to spread the strike. On the first day two hundred apprentices at Ambrose Shardlow & Sons, Sheffield, went on token strike and strikes subsequently took place at Cammell Lairds, Birkenhead and several other places in Lancashire and Sheffield. The strike however was on the whole poorly supported in England. The "Daily Worker" for 27th March reported that one thousand apprentices were on strike in Belfast.

This strike had been worked for since December by the Young Communist League with the support of the Communist Party. On 15th December at a mass meeting in Glasgow the apprentices were told to form cells in their factories. On 7th February a demonstration was held in Glasgow which was organised by Sid KAUFMAN, Editor of "Challenge", who visited Glasgow for the purpose. On 2nd March conferences of apprentices were held in Glasgow, London and Manchester. The London and Manchester conferences were failures. As early as 6th March it was known to the "Daily Worker" that the Glasgow apprentices intended to strike on the 10th. The ringleaders were Jimmy REID and Eric PARK, both Glasgow members of the Young Communist League, and among the National officials of the Young Communist League, Vic EDDISFORD, Dick NETTLETON, Sid KAUFMAN and Desmond LOCK were prominent.

This strike, though not an entire success, is the first national industrial stoppage which the Communist Party has been able to bring about for several years.

## 5. Peace

a) The British Peace Committee is to hold its National Conference in the St. Pancras Town Hall on Sunday, 18th May. The main subject of discussion is to be "the road to peace and rise in living standards". In the invitations being sent out, particular emphasis is being placed on the economic situation and the cost of re-armament. These will be used to provide arguments to support the campaign for negotiating a pact for peace between the Great Powers.

The number of signatures for the appeal for a Five Power Peace Pact is now claimed to be over a million and every effort is being made to increase this substantially before the Conference takes place.

b) A Spring Fair and Bazaar organised by the British Peace Committee is to be held at the Shoreditch Town Hall on 15th April. Food, second hand clothes and, in fact, anything saleable is being asked for from supporters of the peace movement. The proceeds of the Bazaar will be used to bolster up the shaky financial position of the Committee.

## 6. National Assembly of Women

About 1,400 women attended the first National Assembly of Women in London on Sunday, 9th March. The main meeting was in the St. Pancras Town Hall, but an overflow group of about 400 met at Woburn Hall. The Assembly was organised by the National Committee for the Celebration of International Women's Day, a Communist "front" organisation, and preparations for it throughout the country had the active support of the Communist Party. The chair at the main meeting was taken in the morning by Mrs. Monica FELTON, who achieved notoriety after her visit to North Korea in 1950, and in the afternoon by Mrs. D.N. FRITT, wife of the well-known Q.C. who is an active

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Communist supporter. Most of the foreign delegates who were to attend the Assembly were refused leave to land when they arrived at British ports and a resolution protesting against this action was passed early in the proceedings. The overt object of the Assembly was: "Through the celebrations of International Women's Day .... to bring women together to voice their demands, to direct the attention of all British people to their problems, demands and aims, and on the basis of agreement and unity to further the common interests of all women workers, citizens, housewives and mothers". The demands were based on the Women's Charter published in 1945, which ostensibly concerned itself with establishing the equality of women with men in matters of pay and opportunities for occupation, with provision of health services and good housing, and good conditions for children. The real aim of the Assembly, however, appears to be the establishment of a large body of women who will support Communist sponsored campaigns (such as those against re-armament, against the Budget, for the withdrawal of British troops from Korea and for the establishment of a Five Power Peace Pact).

The Communists appear to be well satisfied with the attendance at the Assembly and with the effect of the many emotional speeches that were made there, in several cases by those who are not Communist sympathisers. It appears to be their intention to establish the National Assembly of Women as a permanent women's organisation which will have less apparent connection with Communism than, for example, the National Committee for the Celebration of International Women's Day. The full details of the proposed organisation have not been settled, but the Communist Party are considering diverting the activities of some of their leading women in the districts to help with its formation. A new London Women's Assembly Committee has already been set up. It is clear that the Party is hopeful of creating a new "mass" organisation which will be subject to Communist domination.

7. World Conference on "The Defence of Children"

This Conference, instigated by the Women's International Democratic Federation (W.I.D.F.), is to take place in Vienna on 12-16 April, and will undoubtedly be used for Communist propaganda purposes. The British Committee of the W.I.D.F. has got together a number of people who are prepared to sponsor the Conference. A group of the sponsors has been formed into a Sponsoring Committee, which is engaged in publicising the Conference in Great Britain, enlisting support for it and preparing a British delegation to attend it. Sponsors have received active help from the National Committee for Celebration of International Women's Day, and from the National Assembly of Women. Some of the most active supporters are Communists or Communist sympathisers, but many of the sponsors appear to be taking part solely because of their genuine interest in the welfare of children.

8. International Economic Conference.

A British Preparatory Committee with Headquarters in London has been organising a delegation from Britain to attend the International Economic Conference which is to be held in Moscow on April 3rd to 10th. To begin with, the main emphasis was placed on arousing the interests of economists in the Conference, but later business men and trade unionists were included. At that time several Communist business men began to take an active part in the British preparations, notably Jack PERRY and Bernard BUCKMAN. Publicity in the press has shown that the Conference is sponsored by Communists and this has caused many of those who at first wanted to go or were supporting it in other ways to change their minds. However, although the delegation will contain some Communists or Communist sympathisers, it is expected that several of those who go will do so in good faith, out of curiosity, or for mercenary motives.

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9. National Council for Civil Liberties.

The Annual General Meeting of the Council is to be held on 19 April at the Beaver Hall, Cannon Street, at which the new Executive Committee and next year's officers will be appointed. During the last few weeks the Council has been considering the refusal by the Government of leave to land to foreign delegates to Communist sponsored conferences in this country, and this subject is likely to receive attention at their meeting.

3.4.52.

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