

A.C.D.

O.D. 1593.

Afschrift van de eerste 5 bladzijden van
overzicht December 1949 in O.D. 36, of verwijzing
daarvan naar O.D. 1593.

De leden van het Executive Comité o.k.
Bittg. 12-12-50

NOTA

Van: KA-R.A.

Aan: Hoofd B.

No. E.469.

ONDERWERP: Maandelijks overzichten Engeland.

1. Lang gewachten toch gekregen!!
2. Hierbij de maandelijks overzichten Engeland van Juli - December 1949 en Januari 1950.
3. De volgende overzichten zullen ons maandelijks worden toegezonden.

In het overzicht over 27-2-50.
Dec. 1949 komt een verslag
van het Congres voor
Bittg. 28.2.50
datw. 28.2.50

BIJLAGEN: 7

Aan ~~KB~~ A.k.

~~KB~~

Deze maandoorslagen wijken af van het door ons gevolgd systeem. Er zijn kennelijk ook gegevens in verwerkt, afkomstig uit geheime bronnen. Men er is goed geïnformeerd, ook over het geen zal gaan gebeuren.

Voor het Partij-congres wordt in het overzicht van Nov. '49 een extra. rapport aangekondigd, dat hier niet bij is. Ik zou K.A.R.A. willen vragen, om toezending er van te verrichten. Bittg. 2.3.50

OP KAART
ACD/809
DAT: 27-1-51
PAR: R.M.

4.21 21-01-1951
1001 830 14
3 maart 1950
ACD/80924Z

Janine Bittg. 5/12/50

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THE BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY

July 1949.

THE DEFENCE OF LIVING STANDARDS.

General

Since Harry POLLITT announced, in December 1947, the end of the period of Communist co-operation in industry and launched the campaign in defence of living standards, the Communist Party's industrial activity has become increasingly aggressive. At first the Party denied repeatedly and at length that its change of policy implied an intention to hinder production. Now, at the conclusion of the Canadian seamen's strike, it is jubilant that a general stoppage took place in the docks on an issue which, whilst owing its origin to an alleged attack on Canadian living standards, represented no direct threat to British standards. Its preoccupation with the dock strike has obscured all other Party activity during July.

General Activities of the Communist Party in connection with the Strikes of Canadian Seamen and British Dockers.

In May and early June Bristol, Avonmouth and Liverpool were the chief centres where British dockers struck in support of Canadian seamen. In all three ports the Communist Party assisted the Canadian seamen and encouraged British dockers to strike in their support. The dockers' strike in Liverpool ended on 12 June, and at Bristol and Avonmouth on 14 June. Although in May and June the London dockers had persistently refused to work the Canadian ships "Argomont" and "Beaverbrae" the stoppage did not spread to other vessels in the London docks until the end of June. To this development, as to the dockers' refusal to work the Canadian ships, the Communist Party gave its full support.

In July the Party continued its campaign to assist the striking Canadian seamen. Party members in cultural organisations were detailed to entertain them and to house them. Hospitality committees were organised to collect food, money and clothes in London and in other parts of the country.

The main emphasis in Party activity, however, was on agitation in the docks. A scheme was put forward at Party headquarters whereby Tamara RUST, National Women's Organiser, was to organise support for the strike among the dockers' wives and encourage them to form a committee of their own. Arrangements were made to set up a panel of Party speakers in cafes and canteens during the lunch hour. Michael SHAPIRO, Stepney Borough Organiser for the Party, issued a circular to Party dockers urging them to stir up as much trouble as possible; when the Emergency Powers Act was brought in SHAPIRO destroyed all the remaining copies. The Party also organised financial assistance for the strikers and is believed to have tried to extend the strike to other parts of the British Isles; various Party branches issued leaflets demanding support for the Canadian seamen and the London dockers.

During the last few days of the dock strike there were signs that the Party was becoming increasingly cautious in its activities. It apparently considered itself powerless to give
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a lead as a Party without infringing the emergency regulations and therefore issued a note of warning to Party members not to participate openly in agitation at the docks.

Party Dockers Prominent in the Strike.

Of those dockers who have played a prominent part in the strike, two of the ten members of the unofficial Lock-Out Committee, Ernest THOMAS and Edward DICKENS, are known Party members. Harry CONSTABLE and Victor MARNEY, also members of the committee, are almost certainly Party members, whilst Archibald STEVENS, one of the strike committee of four of the Watermen, Lightermen, Tugmen and Bargemen's Union is also a Party member, as is William LINDLEY, the General Secretary-designate of the W.L.T.B.U.

Contact between the Communist Party and the
Canadian Seamen's Union.

Further information is now available about contact between the Communist Party and members of the Canadian Seamen's Union. As early as November 1948 the late James SHIELDS, of the International Department at Party headquarters, was trying to get in touch with Jack POPE, although it is not known for what precise purpose. In June of this year, William ARLAND, a prominent member of the Central Strike Committee of the Canadian Seamen's Union in the United Kingdom, was in constant touch with leading Party members. He is known to have discussed plans with Harry POLLITT and George ALLISON at the time of the agreement between the Strike Committee and the Canadian ship-owners. Harry WATSON, who is in charge of Party work among dockers, was in constant touch with members of the Canadian Seamen's Union, especially with Jack POPE and Joseph McNEILL. McNEILL had been active in British ports for some time. In the latter half of May a Party member from the north of England, who had seen him at work, expressed great satisfaction with what McNEILL had done. Shortly afterwards arrangements were made for Harry WATSON to bring McNEILL to Party headquarters. It is known that in June McNEILL was in Hull, where he met Joseph LATUS, secretary of the Hull branch of the Party. As a result of this meeting, LATUS sent a leaflet to local Party members urging full support for the striking Canadian seamen and advertising a meeting of the branch at which McNEILL was to speak.

Communist Party Activity on Merseyside in
connection with the Strike.

More has now been learned about the part played by the Communist Party in the disputes on Merseyside. As early as April of this year, Party members were trying to arouse sympathy for Canadian seamen who were on strike at Liverpool, and members of the Canadian Strike Committee visited local Party headquarters. Party members played an active part in the strike of Merseyside dockers which took place at the end of May and opposed the decision to return to work; Joseph BYRNE, a known Party member, was a member of the dockers' strike committee. With the outbreak of the London dockers' strike, the Party renewed its agitation; BYRNE and Jack COWARD, an official of the Merseyside area of the Party, who were

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visited by representatives of the London dockers, made strenuous attempts to persuade the Merseyside dockers to strike again. In the middle of July, Jack ASKINS, Industrial Organiser for the Lancashire and Cheshire district of the Party, made urgent requests to Party headquarters for a docker comrade to assist him in these attempts. At the same period two or more Party members from London were already in Liverpool for the same purpose; it is reliably reported that they were accompanied by a Canadian seaman, and it is believed that, together with Hyman LEE, Industrial Organiser for the North-East Party district, Sid FOSTER, organiser of the Merseyside area of the Party, and Jack COWARD, they attended a meeting of the local dockers' branch of the Party to give them instructions.

Conclusions drawn by the Party from their

Industrial Activities.

The Party appears to have considered that the dock strike presented a good opportunity for promoting strikes in other industries. Towards the middle of July a plan was put forward at Party headquarters to persuade road haulage workers to strike in sympathy with the London dockers; it was thought that, since the success of an earlier haulage strike was due to the support of the dockers, the haulage workers were under compulsion to help the dockers. George ALLISON, the Party's Industrial Organiser, was in touch with Bert SLACK, a Party member and a member of the General Executive Council of the Transport and General Workers' Union at this time, whilst at a meeting of Smithfield Market employees held on 18 July, two Party members tried to persuade the men to strike. The Party was also anxious to induce railwaymen to regard as "black" all material handled by troops. It was confident that the Manchester railwaymen would do this if properly approached.

The Communist Party's opinion of the docks strike, now that it is over, appears to be that it was an unqualified victory for the dockers. It is believed that, as the next stage in its campaign, the Party will try to persuade the dockers to refuse to load vessels with armaments destined for Malaya or China.

Statements about the dock strike made in private by prominent Party officials and members emphasise the aggressiveness of Party industrial policy. John MAHON, London District Secretary has said recently, in contrast to a statement by Harry POLLITT on the same subject at the Industrial Conference of the Communist Party in 1948, that every worker in industry must never forget that he is a Communist first and a trade unionist second. Phil PIRATIN, addressing a private meeting in Stepney while the dock strike was still in progress, said that Communists should be the leaders in giving support to the strikers and in explaining that only the Communist Party represents the true Labour movement. A member of the National Executive Committee of the Communist Party is reported to have said that the Party must not be officially identified as organising a dispute, that everything must be done to weaken Britain's position in relation to the United States and that every Communist must remember that his first loyalty is to the "Socialist Fatherland".

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RAPPORT:

Van: KA-R.A.

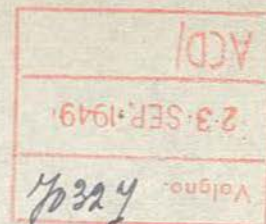
Aan: Hoofd B via H.B.V.D. en KB.

No. E.248.

ONDERWERP: Engelse overzichten.

1. Wij ontvingen van Sardine bijgaande overzichten:
- Communist activities in connection with strikes by Canadian Seamen in British Ports
 - The British Communist Party - July 1949.
2. De inhoud van bijgaande overzichten is gedeeltelijk samengesteld aan de hand van geheime inlichtingen. De inhoud is derhalve alleen voor eigen gebruik.

21-9-49. *Wf*



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