

A.C.D.

O.D. 1593.

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overzicht Achemblen 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.

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21-01-1951
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3 Maart 1950
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Janine Bittg. 5/12/50

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THE BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY.

September 1949.

1. POLICY.

In the devaluation of the pound the Communist Party sees a further attack by the agents of capitalism on the living standards of the workers. A statement issued by the National Executive of the Communist Party on 19 September declared that devaluation would lead to even greater sacrifices by the people and would hasten the development of mass unemployment. This policy, it continued, "must be fought and defeated by the people of Britain if a worse crisis than that of 1931 is to be averted and our national independence restored"; the only alternative to what was described as "the present disastrous course" was the policy of the Communist Party. Of particular interest were the statements that the fullest support should be given to railway men and to the Confederation of Ship-building and Engineering Unions in their demands for wage increases and that "all trade unionists should now go into action to fight for increased wages, both to offset the effects of rising prices and as part of the fight to mitigate the effects of the developing slump by raising the purchasing power of the workers".

2. PREPARATIONS FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION.

Because of the political situation arising from the devaluation of the pound, Harry POLLITT has warned District Committees of the Communist Party to be prepared for a general election this year. Emphasising the fact that each constituency must be financially independent and responsible for the deposit of £150 in addition to the expenses of the campaign, POLLITT said that, in spite of the warning at the meeting of the Extended Executive Committee earlier this year, the amount in the election fund of some constituencies was less than £2.

The Education Department of the Communist Party has arranged courses for Party candidates and election agents. These will be held from 24 October to 25 November and early in December.

3. THE FIGHT FOR PEACE.

The British Peace Committee.

The peace campaign of the Communist Party is conducted through the British Peace Committee. This was formed in June 1949 as a result of the Paris World Peace Congress of April 1949, at which delegates were instructed, as part of the international peace campaign, to form national peace committees in the countries which they represented. The British Peace Committee is the successor to the British Cultural Committee for Peace, which was formed in November 1948 after the Congress of Intellectuals held at Wroclaw. Its chairman is J.G. CROWTHER, the treasurers are D.N. PRITT and Thomas RUSSELL, and Mrs. Joyce SMITH is its full-time Secretary. The Executive comprises two full-time officials of the Communist Party, 6 prominent trade unionists who are members of the Communist Party, 4 women, one of whom is a Party member, the Secretary of the British Soviet Society, who is a member of the Communist Party, and 3 well-known fellow-travellers. In addition to those listed above there are 46 full members of the Committee, the majority of whom are either Party members or fellow-travellers. A few local organisations, such as peace committees, trade councils, and trade union branches, are "associate organisations".

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The organisation of the Peace Congress to be held in London on 22 - 23 October has been described in Party circles as "the Peace Committee's most important task", and Communist Party headquarters has been assisting in the preparations. The Cultural Committee and the Organisation Department of the Communist Party have both circularised Districts instructing them to compile lists of organisations and of selected individuals to be invited to the Congress. Although many invitations have been sent out by the Committee, the number of acceptances has been disappointing. It was hoped that 1,000 delegates would attend the Congress, but by 19 September only 64 had been elected.

The Committee is anxious about the state of its finances. This is not surprising since associate members of the Committee subscribe only 1/-, whilst those who wish to receive the information bulletin subscribe 5/-. The foreign visitors who are to be invited to the Congress are regarded as a financial liability, since they will be the non-paying guests of the Committee. Additional financial anxiety has been caused by the request of the World Peace Committee for a subscription from the British committee of 1,000,000 francs.

International Peace Day

In the second information bulletin issued by the Peace Committee, it is stated: "Wherever possible, local meetings, big or small, indoor or outdoor, should be held on Saturday October 1st Sunday (October 2nd) morning and evening should see local demonstrations, while Monday October 3rd will be consecrated to a special day of peace actions in factories, schools, colleges, etc." In the London area it has been decided to hold a march from Hyde Park to the Cenotaph. Jean LAFITTE, General Secretary of the World Peace Committee, has recently visited London, and it seems likely that he persuaded the British Committee to make more active preparations to ensure the success of the demonstration.

The Peace Bus

Although the Communist Party appears to regard the tour of the Peace Bus organised by the International Women's Day Committee in July as a success, and is priding itself on having "brought new hope and confidence to thousands of women", financially the tour has been a failure. A total of approximately £625 was collected during the fortnight, but, after expenses had been paid, the balance was a mere £13.

4.

THE NATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE.

To counter what the Communist Party believes to be a widespread feeling in Jewish circles that the Soviet Union and New Democracies are anti-Semitic, active steps are being taken to revive Party influence amongst Jews. Presenting a report from the National Executive of the Communist Party to a Jewish Conference on 1 September at the Beaver Hall, Phil PIRATIN said that the new policy of the Communist Party was to concentrate on work in Jewish organisations which had a mass character. Party activity should centre on the Jewish ex-servicemen's organisation and its off-shoots, which should include the "43 Group" and the British Legion, youth organisation, and cultural and friendly societies. The Communist Party should endeavour to secure office in these organisations with the eventual object of capturing more seats on the Jewish Board of Guardians.

The old National Jewish Committee of the Communist Party has been dissolved and a new committee of 21 members appointed. Its secretary is Abe LAZARUS, whilst Phil PIRATIN is to act as its chairman. The new committee will be responsible for reviving the "Jewish Clarion".

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5. THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE RAILWAY DISPUTES.

After the rejection, on 8 September, of the railwaymen's wage claim by the Government-appointed Conciliation Board, resolutions demanding "work-to-rule" or strike action were passed by branches of the National Union of Railwaymen in various parts of the country. Members of the Communist Party were active in several of these areas, notably Warrington, Glasgow, Dundee and London. In the Warrington area several Party members tried to cause stoppages, while two meetings of local railwaymen were dominated by Party members or sympathisers. The secretary and several of the members of one of the N.U.R. branches in the area are known Party members, as are David BOWMAN, the chairman, and Alexander WILLIAMSON, the secretary, of the Dundee branch of the N.U.R.; both these branches took "work-to-rule" or strike action. According to the "Daily Worker" BOWMAN and WILLIAMSON addressed an open letter to all railway workers, attacking the decision of the Conciliation Board and demanding a national token stoppage. In Glasgow a leading Communist railwayman, Andrew BARR, was particularly active. Several members of the London District Council of the N.U.R., which organised the mass meeting on 19 September at which it was decided to "go-slow" from midnight on 21 September, are known Party members or sympathisers. Sid BIDWELL, who may have left the Revolutionary Communist Party for the Communist Party, and Arthur GREEN, who have both been particularly active, are members of the Executive Committee of the Council, as is William Morgan WILLIAMS; Tom AHEARNE, a member of the Council, is also a Party member.

The Communist Party was hopeful of spreading the "go-slow" movement in the London area through its 550 members in the N.U.R. in London. But it was ill-prepared and achieved little, for only 100 of the members received any guidance. It is known, however, that Peter KERRIGAN, the Party's National Organiser, who is in charge of rails work, held a meeting of railway comrades at Party headquarters on 15 September. Those attending included Tom AHEARNE and Arthur RIDYARD, a member of the Executive Committee of the N.U.R., who is in constant touch with the Party. At least one other such meeting was probably held, and a meeting of those Party borough secretaries who have some connection with rails work is believed to have been held on 14 September. A meeting of railway representatives from Party Districts, however, is not to take place before 15 October; a preparatory meeting of railway members in London is to take place on 6 October. Party propaganda has been, and will be, directed to convince the railwaymen that only by action will they get what they want. The Party is believed to have been active in fostering, though not openly, the "work-to-rule" committees formed at certain railway depots, while on the morning before the London "go-slow" was due to start the Earls Court branch of the Party distributed 1,500 copies of a leaflet supporting the railwaymen in their proposed action.

6. THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS.

In spite of its preparations the Communist Party achieved little at the Trades Union Congress at Bridlington. It now has no representative on the General Council of the T.U.C., since A.F. PAPWORTH, who was previously the only Party member on the Council, was not re-nominated for election.

Seventy Party members are known to have attended the Congress as delegates.

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7.

PROGRESSIVE TOURS LTD.

*See also page 11
Kempson by my report
By me 10/10/48
ABC*

PROGRESSIVE TOURS LTD. was registered as a private company on 11 March 1948 under certificate number 450807 to carry on business as tourist and travel agents. The nominal capital of the company is £100 and the directors are Alfred Frederick GRANDJEAN (National Treasurer of the Communist Party), James GRAY (Communist Party Accountant) and Louis KENTON. The registered offices of the company are at 81, Chancery Lane, W.C.2., but business is carried on from Louis KENTON's flat at 1, Gunnersbury Mansions, 586, High Road, Chiswick, London, W.4. The foundation of the company was the outcome of discussions held by the Organisation Department of the Communist Party, which, impressed by the success of the visit of several hundred Party members to Paris in July 1947, wished to put the arrangements for this annual visit on a proper business footing and to inaugurate conducted tours for Party members and sympathisers to other countries.

In 1948 the following tours were planned by the new company:-

- (a) Holiday in Yugoslavia, 12-27 June 1948, at an inclusive cost of £35.
- (b) Holiday in Paris, including participation in Bastille Day celebrations, 10-17 July 1948, at an inclusive cost of £15.15.0d.
- (c) Holiday in Czechoslovakia, 1-15 August 1948, at an inclusive cost of £35.

Only the Paris visit materialised. It was, however, regarded as a great success both financially and politically. Nearly 1,000 comrades and sympathisers took part, and a special boat and special trains transported the party.

This year the annual visit to Paris for Bastille Day has again been the principal undertaking of the company. In addition a short trip was arranged to enable Welsh miners to attend the Rugby Union international match in Paris between France and Wales, and on 3 September 1949 a party of 80 left the U.K. to spend a fortnight at Sestri Ponente near Genoa, under arrangements made by the company.

PROGRESSIVE TOURS LTD. budget for a profit of 30/- per head on each tourist, although it seems that only the Paris trip shows a net profit of as much as this, profits on other tours being largely offset by overhead expenses.

The profits from the Paris trip this year were allocated as follows:-

1. To each Party District 9/- for each tourist from the District.
2. The remainder was divided equally between the "Daily Worker" and Party headquarters, amounting to about £385 each.

The total profits were over £1,100.

The activities of PROGRESSIVE TOURS LTD. are directed and controlled by the Organisation Department at Party Headquarters and Louis KENTON is merely a full-time paid Party official who attends to the practical details of organising the tours.

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8. THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE.

At a National Committee Meeting held on 18 September, Harry POLLITT was invited to become President of the League, Joe CLARKE was co-opted to the National Committee and Barbara FURKISS was elected National Treasurer.

An Organisation Sub-Committee has been set up to deal with questions of finance, membership and the publication of an Organisation Bulletin. Its first meeting was to be held on September 17. Dick NEPTLETON, Peter THOMPSON, Joe CLARK and Barbara FURKISS were invited by Ron LEVEN to attend.

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