

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. 12-12-50
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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Janine Bittg. 5/12/50

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THE BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY

October 1949

1. GENERAL

The month has been one of exceptional activity for the Communist Party. It has organised, through the British Peace Committee, Peace demonstrations on 2 October and throughout the week-end of 22/23 October. It has been heavily engaged in its preparations for the 21st National Congress of the Party. Preparations for the General Election have continued, candidates from the London area being presented to a meeting in Trafalgar Square on 9 October. Special leaflets have been prepared expounding Party policy on the subject of the economic cuts announced recently by the Government. Within the Party, disciplinary measures have been taken against a faction found guilty of deviationist and "Titoist" tendencies, and consideration has been given to the re-establishment of the Control Commission.

This activity has been overshadowed by concern for the health of the leadership of the Party. Harry POLLITT is suffering from a displaced vertebral disc and is likely to be away until the New Year at the earliest; John COLLAN is on sick leave with tuberculosis; and Emile BURNS has an ulcer. The recent and premature deaths of William RUST and James SHIELDS have added significance to the anxiety felt.

2. POLICY.

The Party's reaction to the economic situation since devaluation has been its customary one of calling upon the workers to defeat the attack of the capitalist class on the living standards and to demand that the burden of the crisis be put on the rich. The economic cuts recently announced are described by the "Daily Worker" as the catastrophe which the Communist Party has prophesied since 1945, and as exceeding the "notorious" economy cuts of 1931. It has criticised the Government statement for proposing a microscopic cut in military expenditure and for putting the main hardships on the homeless, the badly housed, the children and the sick. A prominent Communist in the building trade has stated that the curtailment of the housing programme will raise the fear of unemployment. The exhortation to work longer hours is condemned by the "Daily Worker" as brazen audacity.

The Communist Party is preparing a leaflet on this policy and its effects.

3. 21st NATIONAL CONGRESS.

The 21st National Congress of the Party will be held at St. George's Hall, Liverpool, on 26 - 27 - 28 November, 1949. Invitations have been issued to the Press and to the B.B.C. About 511 delegates from the Communist Party will attend. Representation is based on one delegate per 150 members and three representatives from each District Committee. The cost per delegate is £4.10s.

Preliminary arrangements for the Congress were in the hands of Mrs. Jane SAXBY of Liverpool, but she has now handed over her duties to Reuben FALBER, assistant National Organiser of the Party, to whom all communications are to be addressed at Communist Party headquarters.

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A draft of the political report to be presented to Congress by the General Secretary has been sent to all members of the National Executive Committee of the Party for consideration and discussion at the November meeting of the Executive. In its present form the report comprises 9 sections. In the section headed "The Communist solution of Capitalism's Crisis" is included the sentence, "it is idle to speculate on how the revolution will come; the main point should be how to speed up the process". It is thought that this may have been included to forestall criticism that the Party has social-democratic tendencies; but the passage is of interest in that the revolutionary aims of the Party have until now been given no emphasis in its overt propaganda for many years.

4. THE GENERAL ELECTION.

Latest figures show that the Communist Party now has in the field nearly all of its 100 candidates. Of these no fewer than 33 will contest the London constituencies.

Communist Party headquarters, having received "inside information", believed that the General Election would take place this year. Nevertheless, preparations in the constituencies are far from complete. Criticism has been expressed not only of Party organisation but also of the lack of understanding among Party members as to why the Party is fighting the Election at all. Apathy is reported from provincial constituencies, and, with the notable exception of Chesterfield, where the local Party is energetic and well informed, many branches have apparently little or no idea how to develop their campaigns and build the Party. In some areas no constituency committee has been formed: others are without an election agent; while many have not begun to face the financial responsibilities involved. A headquarters official who has just returned from visiting constituencies where Party members numbered 2,400 said that the amount in the Election funds totalled only £210.

5. THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

Approximately 1,000 delegates attended the Peace Congress during the weekend 22/23 October. Resolutions passed were as follows:-

1. To make a protest at the American Embassy during the "war" meeting of the American Ambassadors which began on 24 October and to demand the disbandment of the U.S. Air Base at Burtonwood.
2. To carry the message of the Congress to every factory and home.
3. To form peace committees linked closely with the "broad Labour Movement of Great Britain".
4. To see that every Parliamentary candidate in the General Election receives and answers questions on the "peace or war" issue.
5. To secure the co-operation of all national peace organisations, and to launch a peace ballot to express "the deepest feelings of the British people in their desire for peace and their determination to outlaw war".

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The Russian delegates to the Congress were: -

Nicolas V. LATOVSKY:	historian
Alexei SURKOV:	poet and journalist; editor-in-chief of "Ogonyk".
Pavlo TYCHINA	Ukrainian poet and translator.
Dmitri KABALEVSKY:	composer; Stalin prizewinner.
I. FANYUSHKIN:	secretary of the delegation.

The funds of the British Peace Committee have improved somewhat during the month, possibly as a result of the visit to this country of Jean LAFITTE. The official Party policy towards the Peace Committee and its activities is that there should not be too much overt Party association. The Committee should concentrate on disseminating the report on the Peace Congress; meetings should be organised on the widest possible basis; and the issue of peace should be raised whenever possible in order to incline local organisations towards Party policy.

6. THE COMMUNIST PARTY & INDUSTRY.

The Scottish Trades Union Congress.

The Communist Party was elated with the results of its work at the Scottish Trades Union Congress, which was held at the end of September. A number of resolutions moved or supported by Communist delegates were carried. These included resolutions demanding trade with the New Democracies, the nationalisation of ship-building, road transport and the building industry, and a purge of 'Tories' from the Boards of nationalised industries. The success of this last resolution, however, did not prevent the carrying of a motion which attacked political discrimination in private employment and the civil service. Motions or amendments attacking devaluation, the ban placed on the Scottish U.S.S.R. Society by the General Council of the Scottish T.U.C., and rearmament, were defeated, but substantial votes were recorded in their favour: 205 to 228 in the case of the first, 104 to 170 in the case of the second, and 139 to 183 in the case of the third.

William PEARSON, the secretary of the Scottish Area of the National Union of Mineworkers, and a well-known member of the Communist Party, was elected as the new President of the Scottish T.U.C. Since however he was Vice-President of the Scottish T.U.C. in 1948, it is believed that his election to the office of President followed more or less as a matter of course, and therefore does not signify any special support for him by the Congress delegates.

Activities among Dockers.

The first numbers of two new publications, the "Port Workers' News" and the "Portworkers' Clarion", were issued in the Port of London during the month of October, both being printed by the same firm of printers. The former is published by the London Portworkers' Committee, the body formed from the "Lock-Out Committee" which led the London dockers in their strike earlier this year, while the latter is published by the Portworkers' Rank and File Committee. It appears, however, that the publication of these two journals, issued with the same ostensible purpose, reflects a clash between the Communist and Trotskyist factions in the London docks; the first being represented by such Communist Party members as Ted DICKENS, Victor MARNEY and Ernest THOMAS, the second by Bert AYLWARD, the well-known extremist, and his brother Robert Henry AYLWARD. It is believed that the two AYLWARDS are being assisted in their venture by the Revolutionary Communist Party. It is reported that the political rivalry between these two factions is intense and that both will endeavour to exploit any dispute that may arise in dockland in order to gain the balance of power.

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7. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES WITHIN THE PARTY.

Seven members of the Communist Party have been dismissed by the London District Committee for what is described as their "Titoist activities". Charged with having organised factional activity in opposition to Party policy and leadership, they had criticised the Party for being insufficiently revolutionary and for having social democratic tendencies. One of those dismissed, Tom BELL, is employed by "Soviet Weekly", published by the Press Department of the Soviet Embassy, where he continues to work despite his rift with the Communist Party.

The leadership of the Party is exceedingly anxious lest indiscipline spreads, and believes that the alleged conspiracy just uncovered is not confined to London. Measures for tightening up the Party's security are being considered, as is the reconstitution of the Control Commission.

8. LONDON DISTRICT HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

At a meeting of the London District Health Advisory Committee of the Communist Party it was decided that, "the health service being a glaring example of the results of right wing social democracy", the Party should fight for:-

1. Immediate priorities for modernising existing and building new hospitals, health centres and additional day nurseries.
2. A campaign against tuberculosis.
3. More democracy in the administration of the health service.
4. The development of home nursing schemes.
5. Immediate increases of wages for nurses and student nurses and betterment of conditions.
6. Restoration of the priority dental service.

The methods to be used to realise these demands were as follows:-

(a) Amongst health workers

- (i) To urge 100% T.U. membership and democratic conduct of union affairs.
- (ii) To form units in the hospitals to supply Borough organisations with data on key issues.
- (iii) To continue the fight for better pay and conditions.

(b) Amongst organised groups of the Labour Movement

- (i) Trades Council consultative committees to keep in touch with hospital management committees.
- (ii) To co-operate with health workers in the campaign for better pay and conditions.
- (iii) To publish local schemes for health centres, and local surveys of the health services, and to follow up and maintain pressure for these schemes.

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(iv) To organise petitions and lobby Councillors and M.P.s for the demands.

(o) Amongst doctors.

To obtain the support of the doctors and persuade them to voice their demands to local Councillors, M.P.s and Executive Councils.

At a private meeting addressed by John MAHON on 6 October, nine doctors agreed to raise £1,000 towards the Party's London Election fund.

9. THE NATIONAL CULTURAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY. !!

A conference was held by the National Cultural Committee of the Communist Party at Beaver Hall, E.C.3., on 24/25 September. The conference on 24 September was open to those holding delegate credentials and was attended by 124 representatives of Party cultural groups.

The necessity for organised work in order to prepare material for use by the Party in the educational, propaganda, and election fields was stressed and as a result the various cultural committees are already demanding more purposeful work on the part of their members.

An open meeting on 25 September was addressed by Miles BURNS as chairman of the conference. He drew attention to the main considerations to be taken into account for the immediate future:-

1. Members should pay special attention to the struggle for peace and should work for the British Peace Committee.
2. Owing to the approach of a General Election members of the specialist groups should try to bring their work into relation with the general work of the Party.

10. YOUTH & STUDENTS.

National Students' Conference.

The National Students' Conference of the Communist Party took place in London on 17/18 September. Approximately 64 delegates attended, representing 28 Party branches, together with fraternal delegates from the Young Communist League, the Communist Party and the students of Canada and Ireland. A report - "Students and the Political Situation" - was prepared for the conference by the Party Political Committee, and gave, at some length, an analysis of world and student affairs. Its suggestions were embodied in a draft resolution supplied to the delegates which was accepted, with little alteration, as a 6-point programme for the coming year, urging various educational reforms and unity in the Student Movement. George MATTHEWS, who attended as the representative of the Party Executive Committee, criticised the Conference discussion in his report to the Political Committee as insufficiently practical, as failing to appreciate the role of the National Union of Students and the Student Labour Federation, and as over-emphasising differences between Party students and the Y.C.L. The National Students' Conference will be asked to discuss these questions further and to refer them if necessary to the Political Committee.

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The National Youth Advisory Committee

A National Youth Advisory Committee meeting of the Communist Party (chairman George MATTHEWS, secretary John HOSTETTLER) was held in London on 25 September, and was attended by representatives from 14 Party districts, together with leading Young Communist League and student comrades. A report was presented by Bill BROOKS on "Youth and the General Election" and by John HOSTETTLER on "Building the Y.C.L." The resolutions of the Committee included a decision to increase the influence of the League in industry and to organise Youth Brigades to assist the Party in those constituencies which it will contest in the General Election.

11.

THE PEOPLE'S PRESS PRINTING SOCIETY

The eighth half-yearly report of the People's Press Printing Society Ltd, gives as the reason for the need to extend the sales of the "Daily Worker" the urgent necessity for exposing the policy of the Government which threatens the independence of Britain and spells economic disaster for the people. The report will shortly be presented to the Society's shareholders at meetings throughout the U.K.

Membership of the Society, which has increased by 339 since the last half-yearly report, is shown in the report as 29,890, which includes 29,123 individuals and 767 organisations. Share capital stands at £164,882, loan advances total £24,501, and non-interest bearing loan capital advanced by the fighting fund is £51,985; total capital resources are shown, without full regard to the demands of mathematical accuracy, as £241,378.

The report expresses pride at the Society's achievement in having only once failed to reach the monthly target of £3,500 for the fighting fund. It emphasises, nevertheless, that this figure is the bare minimum, and that the Committee is relying on the sum of £9,500 from the Christmas bazaars which will allow the Society to "break even for the year and avoid the need to draw on our reserves as we had to do in 1948".

12.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY.

A new organisation called "The Socialist Fellowship" was formed, under the influence of the Revolutionary Communist Party, in July 1949. It was financed and organised by a group known as "Victory for Socialism". Membership of the new organisation is confined to Labour Party members.

The provisional committee of the organisation passed a resolution in July that "An Association of Labour Party members be formed, to be called the Socialist Fellowship, with the object of working within the movement for accelerating the speed with which we work towards the attainment of a socialist society". The aims of the organisation are the attainment of (a) the socialisation of the whole economic system, (b) control of industry by workers and technicians, and (c) the abolition of the inequalities of income distribution. The Fellowship stands for "internationalism including the establishment of a Socialist Europe, complete colonial liberation, the equality of all peoples regardless of race and colour, and the prevention of war".

Local groups of the Fellowship have been formed in North London, South London (to include Surrey), East London (to include Essex), Reading, Luton, Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester and Liverpool. These groups are now divided into branches within their respective localities. There has been a good attendance and response at the early meetings held by some of these groups.

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Subsidiary of the Communist Party. This is an offshoot of the CP. It is a front organisation for the CP.