

SF 452 - 51 LINK A
FILE CLOSED
VOLUME 1

HISTORICAL

BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY PLANS TO PROMOTE INDUSTRIAL STRIKES - INFORMATION PASSED TO GOVERNMENT DEPTS. REGARDING THE SEAMANS STRIKE, 1966

See Also

MAIN FILE

Officer or Serial No.	Section	Date	Officer or Serial No.	Section	Date	Officer or Serial No.	Section	Date
		28 JUN 1966		PA	30 SEP 1976			
		14 NOV 1967						
		14 NOV 1967						
		27 FEB 1969						
		23 APR 1969						
		25 JUL 1969						
		12 AUG 1969						
		9 OCT 1969						
		24 NOV 1969						
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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 9 a.m. on 27 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

There has been no discussion at C.P.H.Q. during the weekend, nor is there any reaction yet to the N.U.S. current negotiations. There are likely to be developments on this front in the course of the morning.

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on _____ A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office.

A copy was also sent to Mr. Z.T. Clafo, Ministry of Labour.

Security Service

27 June 1956

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The Attitude of Unofficial Leaders

2. NORRIS has had a brief discussion with leading seamen on the strike committees and also with the press. It is clear from these that NORRIS and his negotiating committee intend to continue the negotiations and hope to extract a further concession on leave. He is noticeably reticent on the question of hours. He is confident that the main body of the rank and file will follow the lead of KENNY, SLATER and himself but he also recognises that South Coast opinion is ready to accept the current offer from the employers and that care will have to be taken to avoid a split.

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27 June 1966

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NOTE

The D.G., F.1.A and I took our draft contribution (attached) to the Prime Minister's forthcoming speech down to the Cabinet Office on 24 June. We discussed it first with Sir Burke Trend who had some hesitation about our references to Nan GREEN's flat and the ad hoc liaison committee, not so much on the grounds of risk to sources as from the fact that it gave the impression the Government was using the Security Service to spy on the trade union.

2. It was originally agreed that the draft, amended to meet Sir Burke's objections, should be circulated to the Home Secretary, the Minister of Labour and the Attorney General as well as to Number 10. However, the Prime Minister let it be known that he wished to discuss the draft before circulation and his secretary joined us in the Cabinet Office. The latter made the point that we had not included a mention of the rejection of the Court of Enquiry's recommendations before they were read, nor had we referred to the lobbying which took place by the Communist Party of members of the Executive Council. He was sure the Prime Minister would raise these points and indeed, when we repaired to Number 10, he did. To the first we replied that our information came solely from Communist sources and indicated that the Executive had decided to refuse the Pearson recommendations on the basis of what they learned through a leakage, probably on the ticker-tape. In order to check whether there was overt evidence of a leakage, the Prime Minister, at my suggestion, called for a copy of the Daily Mail in order to see whether Monty METH had had advance news of the Pearson recommendations; this proved to be the case. In any case I pointed out that this particular aspect of the affair was covered on page 3 of our draft in the word "hasty". On the second point, namely the reference to the ad hoc liaison committee, we pointed out that this was covered in the third sentence of page 3 of our draft. To go further than this would be to put our sources at risk. This was accepted by the Prime Minister and the Paymaster General who was also present.

3. The Prime Minister said that he would expand on the behaviour of the Executive Council from his own personal knowledge and this would fill in the last sentence of page 2 of our draft. In order to get over the ad hoc liaison committee difficulty he would make a general statement about the way in which the Communist Party went to work in an industrial dispute. He was not going to make an attack on the Party but rather to expose the sheepishness of the Executive Council

R. Thistlethwaite

R. Thistlethwaite.

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27 June 1966.

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I turn now to a different aspect of this problem. Almost from the moment that the National Union of Seamen submitted its claim the Communist Party proclaimed its support for the seamen. It may well be asked why the Communist Party should be so interested. It was certainly not because the Communist Party numbered among its members a large body of seamen. The N.U.S. has had an unhappy history in recent years but even now there is not a single Communist on its Executive Council and it is doubtful whether there is more than a handful of Communists in its membership as a whole. The answer is plain. The Party regarded the dispute as an opportunity to strike a blow at the Incomes Policy and this has remained its prime motivation throughout. We are however more concerned with the Party's capacity for action than its intentions. Here I must point out that this Party, unlike the major political parties, has at its disposal an industrial apparatus controlled from Communist Party Headquarters. Events in the Electrical Trades Union have shown that this apparatus can be and is used to interfere in the legitimate activities of trade unions. The present controller of this apparatus is Bert RAMELSON, who has three full time officials on his staff and in the London area, notably the docks, his principal lieutenant is Dennis GOODWIN.

I have referred to the Communist Party's numerical weakness in the N.U.S. but there is nevertheless the paradoxical situation that immediately

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after the strike began the chairmanship of the strike committees in the country's two major ports, London and Liverpool, was secured by two Communists, Jack COWARD and Roger WOODS. In the N.U.S. negotiating machinery the leading member of the negotiating committee who was elected from the floor of the Annual General Conference, was also a Communist, namely Gordon NORRIS, who in recent years has also gone under the name of George GOODMAN. There are two aspects of this dispute in which Communist influence has been exercised - the attempts to influence the Executive Council of the N.U.S. and to extend the area of the stoppage.

To deal first with the Party's efforts to influence the Executive Council of the N.U.S. Although there are no Communists on the Council, it has within it a hard core of militant but relatively inexperienced members. The militancy and inexperience of this group presented the Communist Party with its opportunity and its instruments were Joseph KENNY and James SLATER. They live in Liverpool and South Shields respectively and when they attend Executive Council meetings in London they stay at the flat of a veteran Communist, known in Party circles as Nan GREEN. Residing at the same flat is Jack COWARD and during the strike RAMELSON was seen on several occasions late at night to visit this flat when KENNY and SLATER were staying there. It is clear to me that these two have dominated the Executive Council throughout the negotiations.

X & this was particularly noticeable on 17th June

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I turn now to the Party's behaviour at the time a State of Emergency was declared. On the following day the Morning Star said "No self-respecting trade unionist will work in co-operation with the Army and Navy" and "every trade unionist must rally in solidarity to the support of the seamen". To those experienced in reading Communist pronouncements this was a clear invitation to extend the dispute and the most likely area of extension was the docks. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that in the next few days RAMELSON and GOODWIN gathered around them a number of influential Communists. The most prominent of these was Harry WATSON, the President of the Lightermen's Union, and the others included Jack DASH and Danny LYONS who are both members of the unofficial liaison committee in the London docks, and Gordon NORRIS and Jack COWARD representing the seamen. DASH ~~was~~, as his numerous speeches in the docks indicate, was torn between his loyalty to the Party and to his union. The climax of the Party's offensive in the docks came soon after the hasty decision of the N.U.S. to reject the findings of the Court of Enquiry as a basis for negotiation. On 13th June a meeting of about 1,500 dockers chaired by Jack COWARD was held in London and was addressed by four speakers, Harry WATSON, Jack DASH, Gordon NORRIS and Harry MUNDY. The last is an official of the Transport and General Workers Union and is the only one of the five who is not a member of the Communist Party. At this meeting a resolution calling for the "blacking" of all British ships was passed. After

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an initial period of confusion the dockers returned to normal working. Since the failure of its offensive in the docks the Communist Party has become noticeably more cautious and its principal effort has been directed at the T.G.W.U. in the hope that the latter would depart from its policy of the selective "blacking" of ships. In this objective the Party has fortunately been consistently out-maneuvred by the leadership of the T.G.W.U.

24th June 1966

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REGISTRY ACTION SLIP.

Attached to.....

*Amend Name/Address/Personal Particulars/
Occupation/Security Information (specify unless
obvious/

re..... at.....

*Tick as necessary.

(Use one action slip for each new file to be made)

SF 452-51 Line A

MAKE FILE FOR British Communist Party

How to Promote Industrial strikes -

Reason for recording Information passed to
Government Dept regarding the

EXTRACT, TRANSFER and/or OTHER INSTRUCTIONS

Seaman Strike, 1966

PA attached papers.

Initiation D.P.F. F. 27.6.66

a FIA/TSE
Reason Delicacy of information

(Continue overleaf if necessary)

- Return File to D.P.F. Open New Vol.
- PA File after Action R 4 Repairs

Signature of Officer Barbara Sklar

Section 75 Date 22-6-66

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 12 noon on 24 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

There is still intense speculation about the form the Prime Minister's statement is likely to take on Tuesday and, while the Party has prepared its line of defence, it is still worried about any attempt to expose KENNY and SLATER. The latest information from the Party regards KENNY and

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on 24.6.66. A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office.

A copy was also sent to Mr. Z.T. Clafo, Ministry of Labour.

Security Service

24 June 1966

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2. SLATER is now no longer using the flat of Nan GREEN. The latter was in touch with C.P.H.Q. this morning and it seems likely that she will, for the future be used as the link between the Party and KENNY.

3. RAMELSON is to appear on two television programmes on Monday, of which the I.T.V. programme is likely to be live. Appearing with him will be Sir William CARRON and Les CANNON and he expects that he will be cross-examined on these programmes about Communist Party involvement in previous industrial disputes.

Security Service

24 June 1966

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NOTE

James Elliott and I saw the Prime Minister again this morning with Sir Burke Trend. I told him that intelligence was coming in fairly fast and indicated that the Party was planning to rebut allegations which they expected the Prime Minister to make about the Communist connivance with KENNY and SLATER and the Communist unofficial liaison committee. At the same time they were pressing on KENNY, who appeared to accept them, the same face-saving proposals as were mentioned in yesterday's oral briefing. I said that it was important from the security point of view that the Prime Minister should emphasise the face-saving proposals being put through the T.U.C. and keep off the Communist tack until as late as possible before his statement on Tuesday. He said that he would not require a draft until Monday morning and even then it might have to be changed on Tuesday morning. Sir Burke Trend emphasised that the draft should be cleared with the Home Secretary and the Minister of Labour.

2. I asked the Prime Minister what was behind the reports in today's press about the interference of other unions in the dispute. He said that this was because he had mentioned the part played by Harry WATSON of the Lightermen's Union which was a heinous crime in trade union eyes.

3. Afterwards the Prime Minister's secretary said that he thought it would be wise to have an outline draft ready before the weekend so that we would not be faced with too many last minute questions on Monday and Tuesday.

4. In the afternoon James Elliott and I went down to see Sir Burke Trend with the situation report. He said that he would like us to talk to the Paymaster General, who in turn asked us to accompany him on a visit to the Prime Minister. The latter read the situation report and then told us of the resumed negotiations. We then repaired to the Paymaster General's room to discuss the draft on what the Prime Minister could say next Tuesday. The Paymaster General laid down two rules:-

- (a) we should protect our sources,
- (b) we should divulge enough but not too much to obviate the need for an enquiry.

Trend said that he thought that what the public really wanted was to have facts which had already appeared in the newspapers brought together in a coherent pattern in order to explain what for everybody was a totally bewildering strike.

L. THISTLETHWAITE

R. Thistlethwaite.

F. 23 June 1966

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 11 a.m. on 23 June)

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C.P.H.Q. has now had time to consider its position in view of the intended statement by the Prime Minister on Tuesday. GOLLAN, RAMELSON and J. R. CAMPBELL, the ex-Editor of the "Daily Worker", have discussed the problems which may face the Party and agree

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inevitably the seamen's strike was discussed but that this was incidental to the main purpose of the meetings.

2. The Party found the meetings with KENNY and SLATER more awkward. RAMELSON's proposed solution was that, as all the meetings took place at the house of Nan GREEN, a veteran Communist and an ex-Secretary of the International Brigade Association, he should argue that he visited Nan GREEN as an ex-member of the International Brigade himself and that the presence of KENNY and SLATER was a coincidence. GOLLAN considered this to be a hollow explanation which few would accept. The alternative proposed was that RAMELSON should say that he had been invited to meet KENNY and SLATER on the initiative of this pair, who were anxious to discuss the strike with him in view of the known public support for the strike by the Communist Party and its organ the "Morning Star". GOLLAN accepted this as the better alternative, but it was accepted that it would be necessary not only to prime KENNY and SLATER but also to secure their agreement to the initiative being attributed to them. The motivation

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- (a) the meetings of the ad hoc committee (to which previous references have been made); and
- (b) RAMELSON's contact with SLATER and KENNY.

On the former there is confirmation that those participating included Harry WATSON, the Lightermen's President, seamen and dockers and all were Communists. The Party's agreed solution is that they will argue that these were meetings of Communists called to prepare evidence on behalf of the Party to be submitted in connection with the enquiry subsequent to the Devlin Report on the Docks. It is recognised that the presence of seamen in addition to dockers could invalidate this argument and the Party's reply will be that the seamen were there in order to enable the situation on the waterfront to be reviewed in the round. Under pressure the Party will concede that inevitably the seamen's strike was discussed but that this was incidental to the main purpose of the meetings.

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behind this is clearly to counter the Prime Minister's argument that it was RAMELSON putting the pressure on KENNY and SLATER.

3. It is known that RAMELSON intended to visit KENNY and SLATER last night and he was certainly at Nan GREEN's at about 11.30 p.m. It has not yet been established that KENNY and SLATER were there.

4. In the course of the same over-all discussion the line to be taken by the N.U.S. Executive was also raised. The Party recognise that it is important that the N.U.S. should be seen to have adopted a negotiating posture, made more important by the Dover resolution to be discussed this morning, and RAMELSON argues that the N.U.S. should declare its willingness to meet the employers and that it has proposals to put to them. The proposals, which are highly involved, can be summarised as an attempt to persuade the employers to make a compromise offer over a shorter working week in return for an agreement to work less overtime. The Party view also seems to be that the N.U.S. will have to compromise over hours and that provided some additional and clearly visible improvement on the leave terms can be negotiated (compared with the Pearson offer) it might be possible to bring about a settlement. RAMELSON considers that KENNY would go along with a proposal of this sort.

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23 June 1966

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NOTE

I visited Downing Street twice yesterday, the first time with James Elliott. Together with Trend we gave the Prime Minister an oral brief of the latest developments. The Paymaster General was not present. In the afternoon I took this down in written form and the Prime Minister said that he would like more information if it was available by the evening (I had described the difficulties of transcription of this particular material). Later in the day Trend and I saw the Prime Minister in his room in the House of Commons and gave him the second situation report in which he was much interested. During this meeting he told me that he wished me to be present the following day when he saw Mr. Heath and Mr. Maudling and he also intimated that Mr. Heath was pressing for an official tribunal. The Prime Minister himself would prefer "a tame judge". When I left with Trend the latter said that he was much disquieted by this development and we should discuss it further.

2. This morning James Elliott and I again went to Downing Street and briefed the Prime Minister and the Paymaster General orally. The Minister of Labour and Barnes then joined us and tactics for dealing with the next meeting of the Executive Council of the National Union of Seamen were discussed. The Prime Minister made it clear that he would, whatever happened, have to give information on Tuesday amplifying what he said in his last statement. We should therefore prepare something which would not imperil our sources. I then saw the Director General and we both reported to the Home Secretary and Cunningham. This was followed by a further meeting in Trend's office when the forthcoming meeting with the Opposition leaders was discussed with special reference to the possibility of an enquiry. All present were very much against it and it was suggested that the Home Secretary's support should be enlisted.

3. In the afternoon the Director General, James Elliott and I went to the House of Commons and after the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour had had a few moments privately with Mr. Heath and Mr. Maudling we joined them. The Prime Minister told us that the meeting was being conducted on a Privy Councillor to Privy Councillor basis so that we were quite free to give a full account of the strike. This Mr. Elliott then did, speaking from the attached brief. The Prime Minister filled in with a few of his own observations on the strike and was followed by Mr. Gunter. Mr. Heath, who referred to Mr. Elliott's statement as "lucid", then asked a question about the timing of the meetings between the Communist Party and KENNY and SLATER. He did not commit himself about future action but the meeting was friendly and passed off smoothly.

R. THISTLETHWAITE

R. Thistlethwaite.

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27.6.66

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22 June 1966

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The following Note has been prepared for the discussion between the Prime Minister and Mr. Edward Heath on the assumption that the information will be protected as between Privy Councillors.

The Communist Party and the Seamen's Strike

The General Attitude of the Communist Party

The Communist Party regarded the strike from its inception as an opportunity to support an attack on the Incomes Policy and, while it supported the National Union of Seamen (N.U.S.) on the issues involved, these in the Party view were a secondary consideration. As such the seamen's strike is to be regarded as in line with the Party's behaviour during the threat of a strike by the National Union of Railwaymen (N.U.R.) a few months ago.

The Strength of the Party

2. At the outset the Communist Party was numerically weak in the N.U.S. and no member of the N.U.S. Executive Council was a card carrying member. The General Secretary, HOGARTH, who obtained his appointment with some left-wing support, was poorly regarded by the Party and its criticisms of him seem to have been based rather on his lack of ability than on his political affiliations. In spite of its numerical weakness the Party was able to make considerable penetration of the N.U.S. strike organisation from the outset. The Chairmen of two of the most important Strike Committees, those in London and on Merseyside, were both Communists, Jack COWARD and Roger WOODS respectively, and the Chairman of the ad hoc Negotiation Committee elected from the floor of the Annual General Conference a few weeks earlier was Gord NORRIS, also a Communist. On the Executive Council itself two members, James SLATER and Joe KENNY, who are not members of the Communist Party, soon showed their willingness to accept approaches and advice from the Communist Party.

Party Tactics in the Initial Stages

3. From the outset the Communist Party decided that it should deploy such influence and support as was within its capacity through official trade union machinery and set its face against the encouragement of supporting action by unofficial leaders, such as the Communist Jack DASH in the London Docks. This decision proved an uncomfortable one for the Party since it meant in practice that, in the early stages at least, the initiative was left with first the Executive Council of the N.U.S. and, when this was not in session, the National Disputes Committee which consisted of N.U.S. officials and on which the Communist Party was not represented.

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The Communist Party's Industrial Apparatus

4. Decisions on the Party's activities in connection with the strike were taken at Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.) and in the first instance were the responsibility of the Chief Industrial Organiser, Baruch RACHMILIEVITCH now known as Bert RAMELSON, who discussed the line he should take with the Party's General Secretary, GOLLAN, and members of the Party's Political Committee. This is a committee consisting of twelve members, almost all senior Party functionaries, which meets once and sometimes twice weekly. Outside C.P.H.Q. the Party's principal contactmen with Communists in the strike organisation was in London, Denis GOODWIN, the District Industrial Organiser, and in Glasgow and Merseyside the Party District Secretaries.

The Communist Party's reaction to the declaration of a State of Emergency.

5. The Communist Party's immediate reaction was to draft a statement under the authority of the Political Committee, the significant portion of which is that the Declaration will widen the conflict and that no trade unionist can be expected to deal with goods which have been handled by the military. It also calls for maximum solidarity with the seamen and with any other section of workers which may become involved.

Party tactics after the Declaration of a State of Emergency

6. With the approval of the Political Committee, it was decided to set up on 26 May a secret ad hoc committee to co-ordinate Party activities in support of the strike. The composition of the committee has varied in subsequent meetings but initially it consisted of RAMELSON, Jack COWARD, Jack DASH, Harry WATSON (President of the Lightermen's Union) and Gordon NORRIS. All are Communists. At the first known meeting of this committee it was decided to campaign for the recall of the N.U.S. Executive Council which should be asked to transfer control of the strike, so far as movements of ships within port are concerned, from the National Disputes Committee, on which the Party is not represented, to the local strike committee where there is Communist representation. It was announced a few days later that the Executive would be recalled.

7. Meanwhile the Party endeavoured to mobilise support in other unions and on 1 June C.P.H.Q. was informed that a leading Communist on the Executive Council of the N.U.R. had raised the question of support for the N.U.S. in his own Council.

8. On 3 June the Political Committee decided that the strike needed to be expanded if it were to be successful and that the recall of the Executive Council of the N.U.S. provided an appropriate opportunity. On the

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same day RAMELSON reported to C.P.H.Q. that he had arranged to meet NORRIS at 4.30 p.m. that day and intended to put the following proposals to him:-

- (a) that whatever the outcome of the Court of Enquiry NORRIS and the militants on the Executive Council should oppose any return to work without a satisfactory agreement;
- (b) that the Executive Council should be persuaded as a matter of urgency to "black" "all tankers arriving in the U.K. and that the Executive Council should, through the International Transport Workers Federation (I.T.F.) as the dockers to black all British ships arriving in foreign ports."

In the event the Executive Council did find the Court of Enquiry's proposals insufficient to justify a return to work and it did "black" foreign oil tankers making voyages to the U.K. contrary to their normal deployment and it also appealed to the I.T.F. to black all British ships in foreign ports.

Communist Attempts to secure support in the T.G.W.U.

9. After the breakdown of negotiations following the Court of Enquiry's report, RAMELSON was in contact with William JONES, a member of the Executive Council of the T.G.W.U., and asked the latter to raise the question of support for the N.U.S. in the T.G.W.U. Executive Council. JONES is a long-standing Communist who left the Party in 1957 and still maintains regular contact with C.P.H.Q. JONES ultimately moved a resolution, which received unanimous support, asking the T.G.W.U. to continue its support of the N.U.S. He appears to have attached more practical significance to this than events were to prove and was in fact out-manceuvred by the T.G.W.U. acting General Secretary, Harry NICHOLAS.

The Communist Party and the Docks

10. By 10 June the Communist Party had reached the conclusion that its efforts to extend the strike on behalf of the N.U.S. through the other unions, notably the T.G.W.U. had failed. It then decided that a major effort must be made to bring about a stoppage in all the docks with or without official union support. Party District Secretaries in the port areas involved were instructed to go ahead to this end. This offensive failed to receive support on Merseyside but there was a temporary stoppage in Hull which may have owed more to Trotskyist rather than Communist inspiration. In London on the morning of 13 June there was a meeting of about 1,500 dockers which was addressed by NORRIS, WATSON, DASH and William MUNBY, an official of the T.G.W.U. The first three are Communists as was the Chairman, Jack COWARD. At this meeting a resolution was passed to the effect that

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all work on British ships should be declared "black". In practice this was not implemented by the dockers who continued to follow the T.G.W.U. line that they should refuse to work on only those ships which had been declared "black" through the established negotiation machinery between the N.U.S. and the T.G.W.U.

Contact with Executive Council Members

11. There are believed to have been several meetings between RAMELSON and the two Executive Council members, KENNY and SLATER who, when in London live at the house of a Communist, Nan GREEN. On 17 June RAMELSON reported to C.P.H.Q. that he had seen KENNY and SLATER on the previous night and that they had assured him that the seamen were solid in their determination to get the 40 hour week. At the same meeting KENNY and SLATER reported that they had contacted 16 members of the Executive Council of the N.U.S. to try and stiffen their attitude against retreating. They had pointed out that if the Executive Council called off the strike it would be up to the Executive Council members to justify their attitude to the rank and file.

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NOTE

I visited Downing Street twice yesterday, the first time with James Elliott. Together with Trend we gave the Prime Minister an oral brief of the latest developments. The Paymaster General was not present. In the afternoon I took this down in written form and the Prime Minister said that he would like more information if it was available by the evening (I had described the difficulties of transcription of this particular material). Later in the day Trend and I saw the Prime Minister in his room in the House of Commons and gave him the second situation report in which he was much interested. During this meeting he told me that he wished me to be present the following day when he saw Mr. Heath and Mr. Maudling and he also intimated that Mr. Heath was pressing for an official tribunal. The Prime Minister himself would prefer "a tame judge". When I left with Trend the latter said that he was much disquieted by this development and we should discuss it further.

2. This morning James Elliott and I again went to Downing Street and briefed the Prime Minister and the Paymaster General orally. The Minister of Labour and Barnes then joined us and tactics for dealing with the next meeting of the Executive Council of the National Union of Seamen were discussed. The Prime Minister made it clear that he would, whatever happened, have to give information on Tuesday amplifying what he said in his last statement. We should therefore prepare something which would not imperil our sources. I then saw the Director General and we both reported to the Home Secretary and Cunningham. This was followed by a further meeting in Trend's office when the forthcoming meeting with the Opposition leaders was discussed with special reference to the possibility of an enquiry. All present were very much against it and it was suggested that the Home Secretary's support should be enlisted.

3. In the afternoon the Director General, James Elliott and I went to the House of Commons and after the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour had had a few moments privately with Mr. Heath and Mr. Maudling we joined them. The Prime Minister told us that the meeting was being conducted on a Privy Councillor to Privy Councillor basis so that we were quite free to give a full account of the strike. This Mr. Elliott then did, speaking from the attached brief. The Prime Minister filled in with a few of his own observations on the strike and was followed by Mr. Gunter. Mr. Heath, who referred to Mr. Elliott's statement as "lucid", then asked a question about the timing of the meetings between the Communist Party and KENNY and SLATER. He did not commit himself about future action but the meeting was friendly and passed off smoothly.

L. THISTLETHWAITE

R. Thistlethwaite.

F.

22 June 1966

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Director-General

With the compliments of

Mr. Thistlethwaite

22 June 1966

Box 500,

Parliament Street B.O.,

S.W.1

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Reference.....

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NOTE

The attached note was handed to Director F. by the Cabinet Office and he was asked to destroy it when he had read it. No mention therefore should be made of the fact that it is still in existence to the Cabinet Office.

Lorna V Barnett

F. Secretary.

29 June 1966.

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Copy No 2 of 2

Note of a meeting between the Prime Minister and Mr. Heath,
the Leader of the Opposition, on Tuesday, June 21, 1966

1. The Prime Minister welcomed the opportunity for a meeting to give him ^{Mr H} (~~the Prime Minister~~) ^{the P.M.} the ~~full~~ background to the Statement which ~~he~~ had made the previous day in the House of Commons about Communist influence in the Seamen's Strike. He said that he would leave it to Mr. Heath to decide the best way in which he could pass on the information to him. He recalled that when Mr. Macmillan had informed him of the facts relating to the Philby case both Mr. Heath and C had been present. He was prepared to extend similar facilities to Mr. Heath in the present case; and if Mr. Heath wished he would be ready to arrange a further meeting with a representative of the Security Services present. At this meeting Mr. Heath could be accompanied by Mr. Maudling if he so wished. It must, however, clearly be understood that both the discussion today and any subsequent discussion must be an exchange between Privy Counsellors.

2. Mr. Heath thanked the Prime Minister and accepted the Prime Minister's proposal for a further meeting attended by a representative of the Security Services. He said that thereafter he would wish to consider what further action he should take. The Prime Minister reminded Mr. Heath that in the Philby case he arranged a P.M.Q. partly with the object of silencing his backbenchers.

- 2 -

3. The Prime Minister said that the Statement which he had made on Monday was based on daily reports prepared by the Security Services; before making this Statement he had naturally had to consider whether it would endanger the sources of his information. The Statement had been made with the full knowledge and agreement of the Security Services. The Prime Minister said that Ramelson (the industrial organiser of the Communist Party) had been meeting Norris daily to plan the next move in the strike and the outcome of discussions at the Executive of the N.U.S. There was in fact a close correlation between the decisions taken at the meeting of Ramelson and Norris, the commentary in the Morning Star the next day and the decisions subsequently reached by the Executive of the N.U.S. For example, the key decision to reject the Pearson Report was taken the day before the Pearson Report was published and against the background of the speculation in the press (which, incidentally, forecasted a higher award) of the outcome; again last Thursday (June 16) the Communist Party had decided that the Executive Committee of the N.U.S. should be persuaded at its meeting on the following day to continue the strike.

As Mr. Heath would recall he had himself held meetings at No. 10 with the seamen - the Committee of Nine and the full Executive, with the ship-owners, and he had also arranged meetings between the two sides. Nevertheless, the Executive Committee reached the decision which the Communists had decided the previous day.

Mr. Heath interjected that it seemed to him that one or two agitators had extraordinary power to be able to do all this from the outside. The Prime Minister said that a lot of the trouble in the Executive stemmed from the fact that the Union was for years the creature of the ship-owners. Mr. Hogarth, who was not only the General Secretary but the President also, was a weak character and all the meetings of the Executive Committee were dominated by Messrs. Slater and Kenny. Mr. Marshall, the Assistant Secretary, who had much more backbone, had tried to bring some sense to the Executive but he had been immediately abused to such an extent that he had offered his resignation; Hogarth had persuaded him to stay on.

Questioned by Mr. Heath about the meeting with Mr. Hogarth alone, the Prime Minister said that Hogarth had clearly indicated that a majority of the Executive were in favour of going back to work but were far too frightened to voice their opinions.

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NOTE

I saw the Prime Minister and Sir Burke Trend this morning to give them the immediate reaction of the Communist Party to the Prime Minister's statement to the House yesterday. The Paymaster General was not present.

2. I said that the official Party statement had referred to the Government's "McCarthyism" and appealed for continued full support for the seamen. It had also added - which was not unuseful to the Prime Minister's case - that the Incomes Policy was a fraud. GOLLAN had said that he would be surprised if the strike lasted a week. There came a time in a strike when unless one could extend it "you have had it", especially when the men were being offered more than when they came out on strike. I emphasised that this was only GOLLAN's opinion and it had to be off-set against the view of NORRIS which was that opinion in the N.U.S. Executive may harden, particularly if they had a good look at what was going on in the North East, Merseyside and Scotland.

3. I told the Prime Minister that for various reasons it would suit us best if we gave him the daily situation report at 2.30 p.m. today and he agreed. Sir Burke Trend asked him whether there would be any advantage in my being present at the meeting between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Wilson said that the etiquette of all this was not a meeting of the Prime Minister with the Leader of the Opposition but a meeting of two Privy Councillors. He did not know what line Mr. Heath would take but he assumed that he "wanted to get in on the act". He himself thought there would be advantage in my being present to show that what he said yesterday was not a political stunt. He would however have to see Mr. Heath first and if the latter wanted more official briefing then he would suggest a second meeting.

4. My own line on this with both the Prime Minister and Trend was my anxiety to protect our sources. I mentioned to the Prime Minister that the Party was nervous about its telephones, although I did not tell him, as I had previously told Sir Burke Trend, that the Party thought they were safe because we could not use telephonic information anyway (Trend thought this might be the beginning of a resumed campaign against telephone tapping). The Prime Minister said that he was now going to keep off the subject of Communism and concentrate on the economic aspects of the strike which should be given full publicity in tomorrow's Daily Mirror. He had been pestered by members of his own Party about how he obtained his information and he intended to give the impression that he got it from disgruntled members of the Executive of the N.U.S. He was fortified in this approach by the conversation he had had yesterday with HOGARTH, at which HOGARTH had told him that there was virtually a 50% split within the Executive about the continuance of the strike. Last Friday MARSHALL had moved a motion to resume work but he had been howled

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down by his opponents to the extent that he had been virtually reduced to tears. However there is strong feeling growing against the militants and ARNOLD of Glasgow for instance is very annoyed that when NORRIS visited Scotland he saw all the members of the strike committee except ARNOLD himself. The Prime Minister intends to have HOGARTH round again on Wednesday night before the meeting of the Executive and to speak to him in the terms of today's Daily Mail leader i.e. that he must lead his Executive into sanity.

5. The Prime Minister asked me where the Party met KENNY and SLATER which is the question put to him by most members of his Party. I had already told Trend that we now knew that this was at the house of Nan GREEN but Trend agreed with me that in view of its delicacy I should simply say to the Prime Minister that they met at a secret rendezvous; this I duly did.

R. Thistlethwaite

R. Thistlethwaite.

F.

21 June 1966.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 3.30 p.m. on 21 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

It has proved exceptionally difficult to obtain details of the discussion in the sub-Political Committee this morning. It is known however that RAMELSON emphasised that Thursday's meeting of the N.U.S. Executive Council was likely to be crucial and he explained

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on 21.6.66. A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office. 25a

A copy was also sent to Mr. Claro, Ministry of Labour.

line was that events were moving so fast that they should be prepared for any such move. In the course of further probing by RAMELSON, KENNY commented that once it was clear that they could go no further they (presumably the militants on the Executive Council) would recommend a united return to work.

3. It must be emphasised that the foregoing was obtained in unusually difficult circumstances and the accuracy cannot be wholly guaranteed.

Security Service

21 June 1966

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 3.30 p.m. on 21 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

It has proved exceptionally difficult to obtain details of the discussion in the sub-Political Committee this morning. It is known however that RAMELSON emphasised that Thursday's meeting of the N.U.S. Executive Council was likely to be crucial and he explained that he had already arranged to meet two Executive Council members, SLATER and KENNY, on Wednesday evening. GOLLAN expressed some doubts about the wisdom of such a meeting and it seems unlikely that it will now take place. RAMELSON had intended to advise SLATER and KENNY that they should oppose any attempt by the General Secretary, William HOGARTH, to meet the Prime Minister alone.

2. Later in the discussion RAMELSON reported that on Sunday last the N.U.S. Executive member, SLATER, had been anxious to meet him (RAMELSON) and that it was SLATER's intention to discuss possible ways of retreat. In the event SLATER had to go back to the North East coast and RAMELSON saw his fellow Executive Council member, KENNY, instead. In the course of this meeting the possibility of a further meeting between N.U.S. representatives and Government was raised and KENNY seemed doubtful whether an early meeting with Government was in prospect. RAMELSON's line was that events were moving so fast that KENNY should be prepared for any such move. In the course of further probing by RAMELSON, KENNY commented that once it was clear that they could go no further they (presumably the militants on the Executive Council) would recommend a united return to work.

3. It must be emphasised that the foregoing was obtained in unusually difficult circumstances and the accuracy cannot be wholly guaranteed.

Security Service

21 June 1966

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MR's
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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 1 p.m. on 21 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

The Communist Party's reaction to the Prime Minister's statement yesterday is predictably to regard it as a smear. It is nevertheless of interest that although the Morning Star devotes several columns, including the leader to the incident, it nowhere mentions the undue influence attributed to

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on 21.6.66. A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office. 242

A copy was also sent to Mr. Claro, Ministry of Labour.

in several different places.

3. While there is reason to believe that the strike and the Prime Minister's statement were discussed at the meeting of the sub-Political Committee this morning, it has not been possible to obtain details in time for this report.

The Attitude of Unofficial Leaders

4. NORRIS's reaction to the Prime Minister's statement is that on balance it may have the effect of stiffening the Executive at their meeting on Thursday. However there is an impression of uncertainty about his assessment which is strengthened by his further comment on the line that should be taken if there is a move to call off the strike in the Executive Council meeting. He proposes that the militants should argue that those on the Executive who favour a return to work should take note of the situation in districts such as Hull, Glasgow and Merseyside. He has in mind the votes favouring a continuance of the strike obtained yesterday.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 1 p.m. on 21 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

The Communist Party's reaction to the Prime Minister's statement yesterday is predictably to regard it as a smear. It is nevertheless of interest that although the Morning Star devotes several columns, including the leader to the incident, it nowhere specifically denies the undue influence attributed to the Party by the Prime Minister. In its own statement the Party says that "It supports the seamen's struggle and their just demands. It declares that all trade unionists should stand four-square in solidarity with the seamen andopposes the incomes policy as a bare-faced fraud and a menace to the rights of trade union bargaining".

2. Discussing the situation immediately after yesterday's statement, GOLLAN observed that he would be surprised if the strike lasted another week. His opinion was that there comes a time in a strike when, unless it can be extended, it will fail. This was true of the seamen's strike, especially when the seamen had been offered something more than what they had when they came out on strike. GOLLAN agreed that it was important that the seamen should go back as an organised body rather than allow the strike to peter out in a series of revolts in several different places.

3. While there is reason to believe that the strike and the Prime Minister's statement were discussed at the meeting of the sub-Political Committee this morning, it has not been possible to obtain details in time for this report.

The Attitude of Unofficial Leaders

4. NORRIS's reaction to the Prime Minister's statement is that on balance it may have the effect of stiffening the Executive at their meeting on Thursday. However there is an impression of uncertainty about his assessment which is strengthened by his further comment on the line that should be taken if there is a move to call off the strike in the Executive Council meeting. He proposes that the militants should argue that those on the Executive who favour a return to work should take note of the situation in districts such as Hull, Glasgow and Merseyside. He has in mind the votes favouring a continuance of the strike obtained yesterday.

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5. There appears to be no change in the attitude of DASH who continues to favour pressure on the Executive of his own union rather than unofficial action, though at the time of this information he may not have had an opportunity to study the full implications of yesterday's statement. However his intentions to hold a meeting in the docks this morning at 7.15 were thwarted by his Trotskyist rivals who succeeded in getting to his pitch.

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21 June 1966

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NOTE

The seamen's strike was discussed with the Prime Minister at 11 a.m. and again at 2.30 p.m. today. At the morning meeting, in addition to information in the daily brief, the Prime Minister was informed that there had been a discussion this morning between RAMELSON and GOLIAN. The outcome was that the Party proposed to advise its N.U.S. Executive Council contact, KENNY, that

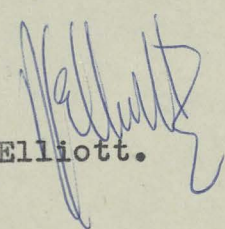
- (a) he should try to counter the move for a ballot by urging the recall of the N.U.S. Annual Delegate Conference.
- (b) If this were unsuccessful he should insist on a ballot of all N.U.S. members, including those still at sea.

The Prime Minister said that this accorded closely with his own appreciation of the situation.

2. The Prime Minister was then given Director F's draft for proposed inclusion in the Prime Minister's statement this afternoon and it was decided that the Security Service would be given an opportunity of seeing the final draft. The Prime Minister asked whether the name "George GOODMAN" meant anything and he was informed that this was the alias of Gordon NORRIS. The Paymaster General enquired whether a public reference could be made to NORRIS's use of an alias without embarrassment to the Security Service and it was subsequently confirmed that there was no objection to reference to the alias.

3. The draft of the Prime Minister's statement was shown to us by Sir Burke Trend at the meeting at 2.30 p.m. and a number of amendments were suggested. These were later accepted by the Prime Minister.

4. Later in the afternoon Sir Burke Trend asked if Director F. and I could come to the Cabinet Office to clear a draft, which later he explained was a brief which the Prime Minister might use in discussion with newspaper editors later that day. We suggested several amendments and omissions which were accepted. Sir Burke Trend also explained that the operation envisaged by the Paymaster General in which I.T.V. hoped to interview NORRIS, SLATER and KENNY most probably would not take place as at least two of them were unwilling.


J. S. Elliott.

F.1.A.

20 June 1966.

NOTE: In fact SLATER was interviewed on I.T.V. the same night and asked if he knew RAMELSON to which he gave an evasive reply.

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NOTE

(Copy to A.)

Together with Sir Burke Trend I saw the Prime Minister and the Paymaster General on 17 June. Because King Street had opened up late I had to do the briefing orally but this was sent down in writing later. The Prime Minister commented that it was clear the Communist Party was gain in the centre of the picture and that we should therefore be in a position to obtain more information. This was clearly a reference to the D.G's warning the previous day that if the Party pulled out our sources would dry up.

2. Before this meeting took place the Cabinet Office had enquired whether we could record certain telephone calls which would be made from Downing Street during the conference. The question of "bugging" the conference room in the Cabinet Office had already been raised by Trend but such action was not proposed for this occasion. After consultation with A.2. it was arranged that [redacted] should go down to see Mr. Reid which he duly did. The operation would have involved tapping some 50 telephone lines, and because the Post Office would have had to have been brought in, the Prime Minister decided against it. He asked us, however, to pay particular attention to our coverage of the lines of NORRIS and DASH which we had. Mr. Watson was able to look at the conference room in the Cabinet Office and commented favourably on the possibilities. Sir Burke Trend expressed his appreciation to me for [redacted] visit.

3. As arranged with Sir Burke Trend I came into the Office on Saturday, 18 June, to read the material which had been transcribed during the previous evening which I gave to Trend when he telephoned me at 10 a.m. He asked me to wait until he had had a chance to speak on the telephone to the Prime Minister who was resting after his journey from Liverpool. He came back to me at 12 noon to say he had given the Prime Minister my views and that the latter was content to wait for a written report at 10.30 a.m. on Monday 20 June, but he wished to be informed of any startling developments which occurred. While he appreciated very much my desire to rest the staff if the weekend was uneventful, he nevertheless hoped we would be able to go on providing the same service. Trend also added that he had persuaded the Paymaster General from making various ploys with the press but the Prime Minister would make a statement to the House today. The first draft of it would be based on that which we produced last week. This is somewhat out of date and I therefore drew up an amended draft.

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R. Thistlethwaite
R. Thistlethwaite.

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Suggested paragraph for inclusion in the Prime Minister's
Statement

I now want to come to some more general considerations. It has been apparent for some time - and I am well informed on these matters - that since the Court of Enquiry's Report a few individuals have brought pressure to bear on the few militants on the Executive Council of the N.U.S., who in turn have been able to dominate the majority of that otherwise sturdy union. This vital industry, and indeed this Country, refuses to be held to ransom by a handful of self-acknowledged revolutionaries who, despite their attempts at the last election, failed to get any representation in this House.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 9 a.m. on 20 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

This report covers the period following the breakdown of negotiations on 17 June. The Communist Party now appears to have recovered from its disappointment following the failure of its offensive in the docks last week and, with the breakdown of negotiations, it has become closely involved in the direction of the strike. The Party's present assessment is that a war of nerves is going on between the Union and Government and that it is

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on 20.6.66. A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office. 210

A copy was also sent to Mr. Claro, Ministry of Labour.

3. The Party has also had to take into consideration the attitude of the T.G.W.U. RAMELSON recognises that its principal contact on the Executive Council, William JONES, has had no success in his attempt to swing the T.G.W.U. behind the N.U.S. RAMELSON was also informed that Jack JONES, in his discussions with DASH and others at T.G.W.U. Headquarters, had argued that if the dockers stopped it would spread to road haulage and could develop into a general strike which the T.G.W.U. was not prepared to countenance. It can be expected that the Party will step up its pressure on the T.G.W.U. but it cannot be assumed at this stage that it is prepared to call for an unofficial stoppage in the docks or, prior to the use of emergency powers, would receive significant support if it did so.

4. Throughout the negotiations on 17 June the Party appears to have been in close contact with militants on the Executive Council and it regards KENNY as its principal and most reliable contact. It believes that KENNY is not publicly known as a Communist sympathiser

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 9 a.m. on 20 June)

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This report covers the period following the breakdown of negotiations on 17 June. The Communist Party now appears to have recovered from its disappointment following the failure of its offensive in the docks last week and, with the breakdown of negotiations, it has become closely involved in the direction of the strike. The Party's present assessment is that a war of nerves is going on between the Union and Government and that it is essential that the Union should hold out until Government is forced to use its emergency powers, particularly those relating to the docks. Once this is done the Party feels that it will have much greater freedom of manoeuvre and a substantially greater prospect of support from other unions.

2. In anticipation of this situation RAMELSON has had a discussion with Harry WATSON, the Communist President of the Lightermen's Union. WATSON assured RAMELSON that if troops or the Navy were put into the docks the dockers reaction would be almost immediate, and though he did not spell it out, it seems clear that he meant that they would walk out. Nevertheless WATSON was most insistent that the N.U.S. should have a fall-back position, should demonstrate their willingness to negotiate and implied that there would have to be some intervening period before the 40 hour week was fully implemented.

3. The Party has also had to take into consideration the attitude of the T.G.W.U. RAMELSON recognises that its principal contact on the Executive Council, William JONES, has had no success in his attempt to swing the T.G.W.U. behind the N.U.S. RAMELSON was also informed that Jack JONES, in his discussions with DASH and others at T.G.W.U. Headquarters, had argued that if the dockers stopped it would spread to road haulage and could develop into a general strike which the T.G.W.U. was not prepared to countenance. It can be expected that the Party will step up its pressure on the T.G.W.U. but it cannot be assumed at this stage that it is prepared to call for an unofficial stoppage in the docks or, prior to the use of emergency powers, would receive significant support if it did so.

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and as such he is of greater value to the Party than NORRIS. KENNY is in regular contact with the Communist Party's ad hoc liaison committee through which he receives advice and encouragement.

5. One consequence of RAMELSON's visit to Scotland last week is that he has succeeded in ensuring the support of Alec KITSON, the Secretary of the Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union. KITSON is one of the British members of the Council of the International Transport Workers' Federation (I.T.F.) and the Party feels that he can be used to counter the objections which other British members are likely to raise against action by the I.T.F. affiliates in foreign ports.

Security Service

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NOTE FOR FILE

The D.G., F.l.A. and I took the Situation Report to the Prime Minister yesterday just before he was due to meet the seamen's delegation. We had nothing to add to what was in the statement but the D.G. made the point to the Prime Minister that, as the Party looked as if it was going to withdraw from the strike, our source^s of information would dry up. It would in fact become a straight industrial dispute. The Prime Minister commented that this was precisely what he wanted.

R. THISTLETHWAITE

R. Thistlethwaite

F.

17 June 1966

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and
the Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 11 a.m. on 17 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

At midnight last night RAMELSON saw KENNY and SLATER and received from them a full report on yesterday's negotiations between the T.U.C. and the N.U.S. Negotiating Committee.

2. Earlier RAMELSON had attended a meeting of the Party Liaison Committee (this Committee

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on 17.6.66. A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office. 19a

A copy was also sent to Mr. Z.T. Clafo, Ministry of Labour.

- (a) In view of the fact that their willingness to negotiate has been rejected; they (i.e., the Executive Council of the N.U.S.) have no alternative but to reaffirm their position, i.e., that they were at all times prepared to negotiate and find ways of ending the dispute;
- (b) an appeal to the International Transport Workers' Federation to reconvene its whole body. (It is known that RAMELSON met while in Scotland on 15 June Alec KITSON, a Communist sympathiser, who is a member of the Executive Council of the I.T.W.F.).

Unofficial Activity

5. DASH decided not to hold a dock gate meeting this morning and he now proposes to await the outcome

TOP SECRET

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22.6.66

TOP SECRET



The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and
the Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 11 a.m. on 17 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

At midnight last night RAMELSON saw KENNY and SLATER and received from them a full report on yesterday's negotiations between the T.U.C. and the N.U.S. Negotiating Committee.

2. Earlier RAMELSON had attended a meeting of the ad hoc Communist Party Liaison Committee (this Committee was last mentioned in our Brief of 15 June). This Liaison Committee was anxious that KENNY and SLATER should implement the ideas put forward by the Committee on the tactics to be pursued in connection with the strike.

3. RAMELSON was told by KENNY and SLATER that the N.U.S. was prepared to negotiate on the basis of the Pearson Report but would not be bound by its terms. Further, the negotiations, in the view of the N.U.S., had to be fruitful. KENNY and SLATER yesterday met 16 members of the Executive Council of the N.U.S. to try to stiffen their attitude against "retreating". These two men pointed out that, if the E.C. called off the strike, it would be up to the E.C. members to give the reasons for calling off the strike, however unpalatable, to the rank and file.

4. It was proposed by the E.C. that two resolutions should be moved this morning:-

- (a) In view of the fact that their willingness to negotiate has been rejected; they (i.e., the Executive Council of the N.U.S.) have no alternative but to reaffirm their position, i.e., that they were at all times prepared to negotiate and find ways of ending the dispute;
- (b) an appeal to the International Transport Workers' Federation to reconvene its whole body. (It is known that RAMELSON met while in Scotland on 15 June Alec KITSON, a Communist sympathiser, who is a member of the Executive Council of the I.T.W.F.).

Unofficial Activity

5. DASH decided not to hold a dock gate meeting this morning and he now proposes to await the outcome

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of the current negotiations. His next meeting in the docks will probably be held on Monday. NORRIS plans to go to Northern Ireland today, returning by Sunday afternoon. Both DASH and NORRIS have agreed that rank and file support for the strike must be stepped up by means of propaganda and leaflet campaigns. A meeting will be held at the St. Pancras Town Hall on Sunday night at which DASH and NORRIS will both speak.

The Situation in the Docks

6. London, Liverpool, Hull and Southampton were all working normally this morning.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and
the Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 10 a.m. on 16 June)

The Communist Party's Chief Industrial
Organiser, RAMELSON, returned from Scotland last night
and succeeded in having a meeting with two members of
the N.U.S. Negotiating Committee, SLATER and KENNY,
after their meeting with the Prime Minister. The
impressions of the two E.C. members as given to
RAMELSON were that there might be a way out on the
basis of suggestions for cutting down over-time.

The attached note was sent by the D.G. (under a compliment
slip) to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office and Sir Charles
Cunningham, Home Office on 16.6.66

A copy was also sent to Z.T. Claro, Esq., M.V.O., O.B.E.,
Ministry of Labour under a compliment slip by F1A/JSE

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are being hindered from doing so by the
the Incomes Policy.

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5.7.66

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and
the Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 10 a.m. on 16 June)

The Communist Party's Chief Industrial Organiser, RAMELSON, returned from Scotland last night and succeeded in having a meeting with two members of the N.U.S. Negotiating Committee, SLATER and KENNY, after their meeting with the Prime Minister. The impressions of the two E.C. members as given to RAMELSON were that there might be a way out on the basis of suggestions for cutting down over-time. They felt that the Prime Minister had not altogether excluded this possibility. This feeling was partially dissolved as a result of a later discussion between the Negotiating Committee and the General Secretary of the T.U.C. from which they gained the impression that the Prime Minister would not go beyond the terms of the Court of Enquiry.

2. SLATER and KENNY assured RAMELSON that the seamen were solid in their determination to get an early forty-hour week but they recognised the necessity to improve their public image. To this end a resolution is likely to be moved in the full N.U.S. Executive Council today reaffirming their stand on the forty-hour week but emphasising their willingness to negotiate. The latter is presumably a reference to the N.U.S. belief that substantial cuts in over-time could be made which would of themselves finance the cost of the forty-hour week. They believe that they could negotiate on this basis with the shipowners and suspect that they are being hindered from doing so in order to protect the Incomes Policy.

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NOTE FOR FILE

The Director General and I visited 10 Downing Street this afternoon at the Prime Minister's request and saw both him and the Paymaster General. With reference to this morning's Situation Report on the Seamen's strike, we told him that according to our information a third negotiating point would be the 14 days difference in leave between the 39 offered by the Court of Enquiry and the 53 demanded by the seamen. We also said that we had just had a report which we were unable to substantiate because it had not come from one of our sources that there would be a full meeting of the N.U.S. Executive Committee tomorrow. (This was confirmed by the Paymaster General). An Executive Committee member had also been reported as saying that the N.U.S. Executive is probably prepared to accept the terms of the Court of Enquiry as they stand in the expectation that they will "have another go later".

2. The Prime Minister said that he had just come from a meeting with three M.P.s who had been in touch with the Negotiating Committee, namely Heffer, Horner and Orme. Heffer had seen KENNY who said that the N.U.S. was very disappointed by the Prime Minister's statement yesterday and felt that he was trying to split the Union. The Prime Minister retorted that the N.U.S. had made no move to negotiate and, if the strike continued, the Union would split itself into the blue water seamen and the coastal seamen. On the question of hours he stood by what had been agreed with the Minister of Labour, namely that the number of days could be re-examined by the Court of Enquiry in relation to productivity.

3. The Prime Minister said that he was prepared, if necessary, to continue the meeting throughout the night if there seemed any prospect of success.

R. THISTLETHWAITE

R. Thistlethwaite

F.

15 June 1966

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and
the Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 11 a.m. on 15 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

C.P.H.Q. has now had an opportunity to review its plans for support of the N.U.S., notably its hopes for bringing about a stoppage in the docks. There was a full discussion in the Sub Political Committee yesterday morning at which it was apparent that GOLLAN at least regarded the docks operation as a failure. The discussion was to some extent confused by misleading reports of a major stoppage in the Royal Group of London Docks, a report which subsequently turned out to be grossly exaggerated. In an attempt to look at the

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on 15.6.66. A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office.

A copy was also sent to Mr. Claro, Ministry of Labour.

...the failure of the offensive in the docks was recognised. The blame for this is placed upon the equivocal terms of the T.G.W.U. resolution expressing "continued support for the N.U.S." It is no consolation to the Party that this resolution was moved by William JONES, an ex-Communist and fellow-traveller on the Executive Council of the T.G.W.U., since the Acting General Secretary, NICHOLAS, has interpreted it to mean that any extension of "blacking" of British ships must be itemised in each individual case on the request of the N.U.S. and there can be no general "blacking". JONES, on the other hand, complains that the latter was really his intention in moving the motion. He has complained to NICHOLAS, who remains adamant but has conceded that JONES can raise the matter at the next available opportunity which will not be until 11 July. In any case JONES has told RAMELSON that there is not the slightest hope of getting the resolution amended.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and
the Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 11 a.m. on 15 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

C.P.H.Q. has now had an opportunity to review its plans for support of the N.U.S., notably its hopes for bringing about a stoppage in the docks. There was a full discussion in the Sub Political Committee yesterday morning at which it was apparent that GOLLAN at least regarded the docks operation as a failure. The discussion was to some extent confused by misleading reports of a major stoppage in the Royal Group of London Docks, a report which subsequently turned out to be grossly exaggerated. In an attempt to look at the situation in the round, GOLLAN felt that the Party must calculate what the strength of the N.U.S. position is likely to be if it receives no support, or negligible support, in the docks. He feels that the Party has taken a considerable risk in the last few days and from now onwards will have to watch its step. His professional advisers in the Industrial Department, notably RAMELSON, take a rather more optimistic view, but it is to be expected that GOLLAN, who so far has gone along with RAMELSON in his plans to extend the strike, will reassert his authority and become considerably more cautious.

2. Late last night there was a meeting of the ad hoc Liaison Committee set up by the Party and comprising seamen, leading dockers and the President of the W.L.B.T.U. It seems to have been an angry and confused meeting in which the failure of the offensive in the docks was recognised. The blame for this is placed upon the equivocal terms of the T.G.W.U. resolution expressing "continued support for the N.U.S." It is no consolation to the Party that this resolution was moved by William JONES, an ex-Communist and fellow-traveller on the Executive Council of the T.G.W.U., since the Acting General Secretary, NICHOLAS, has interpreted it to mean that any extension of "blacking" of British ships must be itemised in each individual case on the request of the N.U.S. and there can be no general "blacking". JONES, on the other hand, complains that the latter was really his intention in moving the motion. He has complained to NICHOLAS, who remains adamant but has conceded that JONES can raise the matter at the next available opportunity which will not be until 11 July. In any case JONES has told RAMELSON that there is not the slightest hope of getting the resolution amended.

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3. In these circumstances the unofficial leaders, notably DASH, have decided to take the line that the only hope now lies in bringing pressure to bear on T.G.W.U. Headquarters and a series of marches, demonstrations and petitions are planned. DASH feels that it may be possible to mobilise some support for those among the now considerable body of dockers on "fall-back" pay though there is probably a substantial element of misplaced optimism in this.

4. Later in this meeting there was some discussion on possible terms of settlement as a preliminary to the meeting between the N.U.S. Negotiating Committee and the Prime Minister later today. The two points which emerged with clarity were:-

- (a) Whatever agreement is reached, it should be short-term and not for two years as envisaged by the Court of Enquiry.
- (b) It might be possible to reach a compromise on the hours question if the first instalment were reduced to around 46 hours rather than 48 or, alternatively, if the second instalment planned for June 1967 were to be brought forward to January 1967.

The intention was that these ideas should be conveyed to one or both of the two militants on the Negotiating Committee and GOLLAN was insistent that KENNY should be contacted by the Party's London Industrial Organiser, Dennis GOODWIN, immediately after the conclusion of this afternoon's meeting with the Prime Minister.

The Situation in the Docks

5. There is virtually no change in London, Southampton and Liverpool and it is expected that the dockers on strike in Hull will return to work after lunch today.

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15a

Director General

When I took the situation report on the seamen's strike down to Sir Burke Trend at the Cabinet Office on Saturday, 11 June, he said he would like me to wait until the Queen's Birthday Parade had finished so that I could discuss it with the Prime Minister and the Paymaster General. Having had a very good view of the Parade and waited another half-hour in the anti-room to the Cabinet Room, Trend and Wigg arrived and we had quite a long conversation about the strike. The Paymaster General said that he had arranged for the meeting at the docks this morning to be specially televised by I.T.V. and he also had a tentative arrangement whereby NORRIS and possibly also RAMELSON would be invited to be interviewed on T.V. this evening on condition that the Paymaster General provided the questions for the interview. I said I thought this was not a very happy project and compared it with the E.T.U. case. There were two main diffi-

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on 14.6.66. A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office.

16a

A copy was also sent to Mr. Claro, Ministry of Labour.

Minister then read the situation report and the arguments which I had already put forward to the Paymaster General together with the further point I made that it would be foolish to queer Woodcock's pitch, he decreed there should be no further action until we knew what the situation was on Monday.

R. THISTLETHWAITE

R. Thistlethwaite

F.

13 June 1966

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15a

Director General

When I took the situation report on the seamen's strike down to Sir Burke Trend at the Cabinet Office on Saturday, 11 June, he said he would like me to wait until the Queen's Birthday Parade had finished so that I could discuss it with the Prime Minister and the Paymaster General. Having had a very good view of the Parade and waited another half-hour in the anti-room to the Cabinet Room, Trend and Wigg arrived and we had quite a long conversation about the strike. The Paymaster General said that he had arranged for the meeting at the docks this morning to be specially televised by I.T.V. and he also had a tentative arrangement whereby NORRIS and possibly also RAMELSON would be invited to be interviewed on T.V. this evening on condition that the Paymaster General provided the questions for the interview. I said I thought this was not a very happy project and compared it with the E.T.U. case. There were two main difficulties. In the E.T.U. case they had a first-rate interviewer in the form of John Freeman and although FOULKES had, in fact, stood up well in the beginning he finally cracked because he was trying to hide corruption in his union. In the present case, NORRIS and, for that matter, DASH, who are quite open Communists, had nothing to hide because they behaved with reasonable correctitude throughout the strike. NORRIS, moreover, was something of a personality and, if he was put on T.V., the result might be in his favour instead of the other way round. The Paymaster General accepted this but said that he had already made certain overtures to the Press, which he could not withdraw (these were obvious in yesterday's "Sunday Times").

2. The Prime Minister then appeared and we adjourned to the Cabinet Room. His secretary, who had heard me lecture on a Treasury course told me that he had only been able to persuade Mr. Wilson to leave his guests by mentioning that the "comic cuts" had arrived. The Prime Minister then read the situation report and having heard the arguments which I had already put forward to the Paymaster General together with the further point I made that it would be foolish to queer Woodcock's pitch, he decreed there should be no further action until we knew what the situation was on Monday.

R. THISTLETHWAITE

R. Thistlethwaite

F.

13 June 1966

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and
the Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 8 a.m. on 14 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

There are indications that C.P.H.Q., having regarded the appeal to the dockers in London as satisfactory yesterday, is now having second thoughts. The Party recognises that there was in fact little effective response to the London resolution after the initial confusion though it derives some consolation from the fact that dockers probably continued to work under the "continuity rule" which requires them to finish a job once started. Indicative of this changing mood is the instruction passed to the "Morning Star" to play down the seamen's strike today and to concentrate on the international support for sterling. It is expected that there will be a meeting of the Sub Political Committee this morning when the Party's attitude is likely to be clarified.

Unofficial Activity

2. It would seem that the effect of RAMELSON's pressure on DASH is beginning to wear off. At the meeting in London Docks this morning addressed by DASH he again emphasised the need to "black" British ships but there seems to have been a noticeable lack of conviction. Later in private conversations he displayed his reluctance to appeal for unofficial action and appeared to be moving back to the official T.G.W.U. line of refusing to work only those ships which have been declared "black" through the appropriate machinery. He also commented to a contact in Hull that the strike could not go on much longer and that some kind of compromise was inevitable.

The Situation in the Docks

London

The port is working normally though it is expected that DASH will lead a delegation later this morning to the offices of both the T.G.W.U. and the W.L.B.T.U. calling for the "blacking" of more British ships.

Liverpool

The port was working normally this morning though there was a minor stoppage yesterday. This involved about 150 men

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and was brought about by the activities of two well known Liverpool Trotskyists, Peter KERRIGAN and Joe CUBBINS. Efforts to spread this stoppage were unsuccessful: all those involved were members of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (N.A.S.D.) and there has now been a return to work. Other Trotskyist efforts this morning have been equally unsuccessful.

Hull

The major stoppage yesterday arose when dockers were asked to work on a ship which had already been declared "black". There has now been a return to work on the assurance that work on "black" ships will not be offered again.

Southampton

NORRIS's attempt to appeal to the dockers in Southampton with the assistance of the Communist Party misfired. He had a meeting of 500 seamen and received a better reception than had been anticipated but he allowed the meeting to over-run. As a result a number of dockers who had been assembled by the District Secretary of the Communist Party, HOWEY, drifted away in disgust. Shortly afterwards HOWEY followed suit.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and
the Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 10 a.m. on 13 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

RAMELSON, the Chief Industrial Organiser reported on the situation in London after the meeting at 7.15 a.m. in the docks this morning. His view was that this meeting had gone as planned and the outcome was better than might have been expected. Nevertheless until the last moment DASH had remained hesitant and RAMELSON had had to put considerable pressure on him. RAMELSON commented the

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on 13.6.66. A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office. 142

A copy was also sent to Mr. Z.T. Clafo, Ministry of Labour

7.15 to 8 a.m. and between 2,000 and 3,000 dockers were present. The Chairman was Jack COWARD, the Communist Chairman of the Victoria and Albert Strike Committee of the N.U.S. The speakers were, in order of appearance, Gordon NORRIS (Communist), Harry WATSON (Communist President of the Watermen, Lightermen and Tugboatmen's Union (W.L.B.T.U.)), William MUNDY, an official of the T.G.W.U., and Jack DASH (Communist). The National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (N.A.S.D.) were not represented owing to their resentment of the presence of DASH. A resolution that all work on British ships should be declared "black" was passed with less than 30 objections or abstentions. WATSON informed the meeting that his own union, the W.L.B.T.U., had already declared all British ships "black".

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and
the Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 10 a.m. on 13 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

RAMELSON, the Chief Industrial Organiser reported on the situation in London after the meeting at 7.15 a.m. in the docks this morning. His view was that this meeting had gone as planned and the outcome was better than might have been expected. Nevertheless until the last moment DASH had remained hesitant and RAMELSON had had to put considerable pressure on him on Sunday afternoon. In the end DASH supported the resolution moved by NORRIS that all British ships should be "black" and RAMELSON's view now is that DASH, having finally committed himself publicly to a militant line, will pursue it with vigour and enthusiasm.

2. After a period of hesitation over the weekend occasioned by Press comment and the short-lived revolt at Dover, the Communist Party came to the conclusion that their plan to bring the docks to a stop would probably succeed and no attempt was made to amend the instructions issued on the Friday.

The Situation in the Docks

London

The meeting this morning lasted from 7.15 to 8 a.m. and between 1,000 and 1,500 dockers were present. The Chairman was Jack COWARD, the Communist Chairman of the Victoria and Albert Strike Committee of the N.U.S. The speakers were, in order of appearance, Gordon NORRIS (Communist), Harry WATSON (Communist President of the Watermen, Lightermen and Tugboatmen's Union (W.L.B.T.U.)), William MUNDY, an official of the T.G.W.U., and Jack DASH (Communist). The National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (N.A.S.D.) were not represented owing to their resentment of the presence of DASH. A resolution that all work on British ships should be declared "black" was passed with less than 30 objections or abstentions. WATSON informed the meeting that his own union, the W.L.B.T.U., had already declared all British ships "black".

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Commenting on this decision subsequently, DASH said that dockers should proceed to work normally and, if asked to work on a British ship, they should refuse to do so on the grounds that it was "blackened". He anticipates that if the employers then refused to offer work on foreign ships, the dispute will be treated as a lock-out.

Liverpool

The port is working normally but leaflets were distributed this morning in the name of the Liverpool Strike Committee calling upon all affiliated unions of the International Transport Workers' Federation to place an embargo on all British ships. A meeting has been arranged for 11 a.m. and it is expected that a resolution in the same terms as that at London will then be presented.

Southampton

The port is working normally but there will be a meeting of N.U.S. members to be addressed by NORRIS soon after 11 a.m. The Communist District Secretary, Les HOWEY, is known to have taken an active part in the arrangements for this meeting and NORRIS will try and contact him before the meeting opens. HOWEY has also advised NORRIS that he should be available at 12.45 p.m. when HOWEY, with the assistance of some Communist dockers, hopes to arrange a dock gate meeting. He has also informed NORRIS that he should anticipate a somewhat hostile reception at the N:U.S. meeting at 11 a.m.

Hull

All the dockers are on strike though first reports suggest that this may be a token stoppage brought about by one STAVIN who is believed to be a Trotskyist. He is the Chairman of the unofficial Port Workers' Committee at Hull. There will be a meeting in the City Hall at 1 p.m. when the London resolution is likely to be presented.

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The Seamen's Strike

The Seamen's Strike was discussed at a meeting with the Prime Minister on Friday 10th June at 3.45pm. Present were the Prime Minister, the Paymaster General, Sir Burke Trend, the Director General Security Service and F.I.A./Mr.Elliott. At a preliminary meeting Sir Burke Trend explained that the Prime Minister and the Paymaster General had in mind an attempt to expose the activities of Communists, notably NORRIS, in connection with the dispute and that the Security Service might expect to be asked to express a view.

2. The Prime Minister opened the discussion by expressing his satisfaction with the series of intelligence reports submitted and arising out of the latest he commented on the apparent continuing hesitancy of DASH. The Security Service view was that this stemmed from a doubt in DASH's mind as to the extent of support he might hope to receive from an appeal for unofficial action, particularly if that meant the dockers would not receive their "fall-back" pay. The Security Service view was also that Communist involvement in the strike had increased rapidly following the N.U.S. decision to reject the findings of the Court of Enquiry as a basis of negotiation and the subsequent failure of the talks with the T.U.C. To counter the current isolation of the N.U.S. the Party felt that it was essential to demonstrate new support for the Union and that the most effective way was to bring the ports to a stop even if this had to be done by an appeal to the dockers at unofficial level. It was therefore likely that Monday 13th June would be crucial and this was also the Party's own assessment. The Prime Minister explained that he and the Paymaster General had in mind an operation whereby the press might be encouraged to follow NORRIS to obtain overt information on his current affiliations and that subsequently NORRIS should be invited to appear on television. It was hoped that by shrewd and skilful questioning NORRIS could be disconcerted and exposed before a mass audience. The Director General explained that advice on this operation scarcely fell within the normal responsibilities of the Security Service but nevertheless the operation was one which could be considered though timing was of importance. At this point a news flash was received to the effect that the N.U.S. claimed to have found a possible solution to the dispute and was proposing a conference with the Government, the T.U.C. and the employers. A Ministry of Labour gloss on this report shortly afterwards indicated that it was probably a reversion to a N.U.S. proposal for a Government subsidy to enable the forty hour week to be introduced forthwith. The Prime Minister, while accepting that the subsidy proposal was a non starter, observed that an indication of a resumption of negotiations might make it more difficult for the Communist Party to carry out its plan to stop the docks on Monday. He intended therefore to defer the projected operation against NORRIS and stressed that nothing should be done which was likely to prejudice the resumption of negotiations currently entrusted to the General Secretary of the T.U.C., Mr.Woodcock.

3. The Director General showed to the Prime Minister a draft (copy attached) which it was suggested might be used if there were any formal Ministerial Statement on the situation. The Prime Minister said that this draft would be very welcome and expressed a little surprise that the Security Service was prepared to go so far as to mention the Party's instructions to stop the docks. Sir Burke Trend commented that a statement of this kind would be a major political act on which the

/Prime Minister

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Prime Minister would no doubt wish to consult some of his colleagues including the Minister of Labour. The Prime Minister said that the use of this statement would be deferred until more was known of the situation on Monday morning.

F.I.A.

13th June, 1966


J.S. Elliott

TOP SECRET

The recommendations of the Court of Enquiry concede the major part of the seamen's claim and mean that they are assured of a forty hour week by June 1967. It is to be regretted that the Executive Council of the National Union of Seamen refused to accept these terms as a basis for negotiation and the consequences of that decision are grave. It means that for the moment the National Union of Seamen has cut itself off from responsible trade union opinion in this country and will become increasingly dependent upon the support of irresponsible elements. The Communist Party is typical of these. That Party numbers within its ranks scarcely a handful of seamen, yet there are clear indications that its resources are now devoted to one objective - a complete stoppage of the country's ports. The World Federation of Trade Unions, a Communist run organisation from which British trade unions walked out in 1949, has instructed its members to refuse to handle the cargoes of British ships in foreign ports. While these measures may seem to afford support for the National Union of Seamen, that union might be well advised to examine the motivation behind it.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.)
and the Seamen's Strike

In its efforts to mobilise support for the seamen's strike the Communist Party places great reliance upon the services of the following individuals:-

- (a) Bert RAMELSON, a full-time official at Communist Party Headquarters and its Chief Industrial Organiser;
- (b) Gordon NORRIS, a working seaman and Communist Party member who is chairman of the N.U.S. Negotiating Committee;
- (c) William JONES, a London busman who is a member of the Executive Council of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU).

Bert RAMELSON

2. Bert RAMELSON was born Baruch RACHMILIEVITCH in 1910 in the Ukraine. His parents emigrated with him to Canada in 1923, leaving behind three sisters who were still living in Russia in 1956. RAMELSON graduated in law from the University of Alberta in 1924 and subsequently practiced at the Canadian Bar. In 1937 he joined the International Brigade in Spain until its withdrawal in 1939, when he came to the United Kingdom. He joined the British Communist Party in that year and, after active service as a gunner during the war when he was commissioned as a Lieutenant, he became a full-time Party worker. He was elected to the National Executive of the Communist Party in 1953 and was appointed Chief Industrial Organiser in January 1966.

Gordon NORRIS

3. Gordon NORRIS, aged 38, is a British subject though he claims to be an Australian citizen. NORRIS is, by his own admission (see the "Daily Express" of 16 May 1966), a Communist of 15 years' standing. He has had a militant record in the National Union of Seamen and was a leading light in the seamen's Rank and File Committee, a ginger group in the seamen's union, in 1962. In 1964 he formed another militant group in his union known as the Seafarers' United Committee. In March 1965 he led an unofficial seamen's strike and, as a result, was very nearly expelled from the seamen's union. With the advent of the new militant Executive Council of the seamen's union in

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1966, NORRIS became persona grata in the union, and at the Annual General Meeting this year he was elected to the seamen's Negotiating Committee. He is married to an Australian but does not live with his wife. NORRIS served with the Royal Australian Navy between 1948 and 1954. His only serious breach of discipline while in the Australian Navy was going absent without leave for a period of two months.

Joseph William JONES

4. JONES was a member of the Communist Party from 1937 until about the end of 1956. He resigned from the Party to further his own career in the T.G.W.U., which operates a ban against Communist Party members from holding office. In 1937 JONES was expelled from the T.G.W.U. for his association with an unofficial busman's movement, but was reinstated the next year. In 1949 JONES ceased to be a member of the T.G.W.U.'s Executive Council on account of his membership of the Communist Party (the T.G.W.U. ban on Communists took effect at this time). JONES has a long record of industrial militancy and in 1958 he led the London bus strike. JONES became once again a member of the Executive Council of the T.G.W.U. in 1958 and has remained a member of the Council ever since. Despite the fact that JONES is not a Party member, he retains very close contact with the C.P.H.Q.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 10 a.m. on 11 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

C.P.H.Q. has taken note of the news item to the effect that the National Union of Seamen (N.U.S.) has a possible solution to the strike and from enquiries that it has made it appears that this is a reversion to the suggestion mooted in N.U.S. circles yesterday that Government should subsidise the industry

The attached note was handed by Director F. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office on 11.6.66. A copy was sent by hand to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office. on 13.6.66.

A copy was also sent to Mr. Claro, Ministry of Labour, on 13.6.66.

Communist colleagues of Sir Burke Trend's views have met with considerable evasion. In part his problem has been resolved by the terms of the T.G.W.U. resolution yesterday. In a commentary on this to Monty METH, until recently on the editorial staff of the Morning Star and now an industrial correspondent of the Daily Mail, DASH explained that there was in existence liaison machinery between the T.G.W.U. and the N.U.S. at both national and local level and that the N.U.S. could ask for the "blacking" of ships arriving in the U.K. ports through this machinery. In fact nineteen ships had already been "blacked" and DASH expected that this process would continue and implied that it might accelerate. To the extent that the "blacking" is accelerated, it becomes increasingly unnecessary for DASH to indulge in any unofficial action with his own docker colleagues and it seems on balance likely that this will be the line that he will follow from Monday onwards. Pressed to clarify his attitude towards the future "blacking" of ships, DASH said that every request by the N.U.S. would have to be considered by the T.G.W.U. on its own merits.

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C.P.H.Q. has taken note of the news item to the effect that the National Union of Seamen (N.U.S.) has a possible solution to the strike and from enquiries that it has made it appears that this is a reversion to the suggestion mooted in N.U.S. circles yesterday that Government should subsidise the industry to the extent of four million pounds to enable the forty hour week to be brought in immediately. Questioned as to whether this move made any difference to the Party's plan to bring about a stoppage in the docks on Monday, both GOLLAN and RAMELSON were insistent that it made no difference at all.

2. The Party has also derived considerable satisfaction from the resolution of the Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.) that it will continue support for the N.U.S. It is apparent however that the Party has not looked too closely at the terms of this resolution and regards it as a useful propaganda exercise.

The Attitude of the Unofficial Leaders

3. DASH's attitude still remains uncertain and efforts made both by the press and by some of his Communist colleagues to elicit his views have met with considerable evasion. In part his problem has been resolved by the terms of the T.G.W.U. resolution yesterday. In a commentary on this to Monty METH, until recently on the editorial staff of the Morning Star and now an industrial correspondent of the Daily Mail, DASH explained that there was in existence liaison machinery between the T.G.W.U. and the N.U.S. at both national and local level and that the N.U.S. could ask for the "blacking" of ships arriving in the U.K. ports through this machinery. In fact nineteen ships had already been "blacked" and DASH expected that this process would continue and implied that it might accelerate. To the extent that the "blacking" is accelerated, it becomes increasingly unnecessary for DASH to indulge in any unofficial action with his own docker colleagues and it seems on balance likely that this will be the line that he will follow from Monday onwards. Pressed to clarify his attitude towards the future "blacking" of ships, DASH said that every request by the N.U.S. would have to be considered by the T.G.W.U. on its own merits.

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4. NORRIS has complained that television reports of his speech at the Barbican site last night had misrepresented him when they attributed to him a statement that there was a split on the Executive. He was also trying to convince some of his more militant supporters that the report of a possible solution to the dispute was a calculated move by a section of the Executive Council to counter the union's isolation since the failure of the T.U.C. move on 9 June. The general impression given by NORRIS's behaviour in the last 24 hours is that he is finding it increasingly difficult to cope with the situation.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 12 noon on 10 June)

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The following intelligence is confined to the situation arising from the T.U.C.'s failure to persuade the National Union of Seamen's (N.U.S.) Executive to resume negotiations. The Communist Party's assessment is that the crunch has come, that the N.U.S. is on its own without official trade union backing it.

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is that the W.L.T.B.U. will refuse to handle any ships which have been "blackened" and in case of doubt will consult the N.U.S. at local level or the existing disputes machinery. RAMELSON was advised of this decision by the W.L.B.T.U. Communist President, WATSON, this morning and regards it as satisfactory.

2. The Executive Council of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (N.A.S.D.) has also met, but its decision, which the Party describes as "poor", is obscure. The administration of this union is normally chaotic and the uncertainty of its position is not therefore surprising. In the light of the foregoing official union attitudes RAMELSON, with the backing of his General Secretary, GOLLAN, decided this morning to issue a series of instructions to those Communist District offices covering port areas to the effect that dockers should be requested not to handle cargoes of any British ship. These instructions are known to have been telephoned to Leeds (covering Hull), Southampton and Merseyside. The position in the Port of London, where the attitude of Jack DASH is of major importance, will be the subject of discussion at a specially convened liaison committee of dockers, seamen, lightermen and Communist Party officials to be held tonight. DASH's attitude is still a little uncertain and there are indications that the Party recognises the need to put pressure on him.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
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(Position as at 12 noon on 10 June)

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The following intelligence is confined to the situation arising from the T.U.C.'s failure to persuade the National Union of Seamen's (N.U.S.) Executive to resume negotiations. The Communist Party's assessment is that the crunch has come, that the N.U.S. is on its own and that with or without official trade union backing it is now for the Communist Party to give full support to the N.U.S. in prosecution of the strike. The Party's immediate objective is to bring about a complete stoppage in all major docks and not, as indicated yesterday, only the Port of London. It does not expect that the Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.) will, at the meeting of its Executive Council this morning, give any official backing to the N.U.S. and RAMELSON, the Party's Chief Industrial Organiser, has been advised by his Executive Council contact, William JONES, that the latter will be surprised if he can muster 6 out of the 39 votes involved. In contrast the Party has been sustained by the decision of the Executive Council of the Watermen, Lightermen and Tugboatmen's Union (W.L.T.B.U.) taken last night. Although couched in somewhat cautious phraseology, this decision is that the W.L.T.B.U. will refuse to handle the cargoes of any ships which have been "blackened" and in case of doubt will consult the N.U.S. at local level or the existing disputes machinery. RAMELSON was advised of this decision by the W.L.T.B.U. Communist President, WATSON, this morning and regards it as satisfactory.

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He has agreed to chair a meeting at 7.15 a.m. on Monday in the London docks at which the principal speaker will be Gordon NORRIS. Until the time of this report he was still giving the impression that he was waiting for instructions from the T.G.W.U. which seemed unlikely to be forthcoming. In their absence he will be in a difficult position and it is still not certain that he will make an appeal for unofficial action by the dockers. The attitude of the W.L.B.T.U. in "blacking" cargoes will provide him with an official line, albeit not from his own union the T.G.W.U., and on balance this may be just sufficient to persuade him to urge his own docker colleagues in the T.G.W.U. to cease work. A clearer appreciation of his attitude is likely to be available tomorrow.

Unofficial Activity

3. NORRIS was heavily engaged in the lobbying of N.U.S. Executive Council members at their session with the T.U.C. last night and after the decision of the meeting was announced said that, the N.U.S. having been rejected by the British unions, would now make a formal appeal for financial assistance from the Communist World Federation of Trade Unions (W.F.T.U.). He was also informed that the press reports of the dissatisfaction in Southampton with the rejection of the Court of Enquiry's report were inaccurate, however it seems likely that there will be more substance in these reports than NORRIS is prepared to admit as he has decided to go to Southampton on Monday, where he admits that there is a "problem", immediately after his meeting in the London docks.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

1. The Southampton Branch of the N.U.S. voted this morning that the (Pearson) Report formed a basis for the opening of negotiations.
2. The Harwich Branch of the N.U.S. is sending a small delegation to the T.U.C. U.S.

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The attached note was sent by the D.G. (under a compliment slip) to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office and Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office on

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134

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2. The Harwich Branch of the N.U.S. is sending a small delegation to the T.U.C./N.U.S. meeting this evening. The indications are that the Harwich Branch takes the same view as the Southampton Branch.
3. NORRIS is worried by these developments.
4. NORRIS plans to call a meeting of the Victoria and Albert Branch of the N.U.S. tomorrow to pass resolutions reaffirming the N.U.S. Executive Council's stand.
5. Dover and Heysham Branches support Southampton and Harwich Branches.
6. At Harwich only seven out of 200 supported a move to stay out over 40 hour week.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 12 noon on 9 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

The full Political Committee of the C.P.G.B. met to consider the latest developments in the seamen's strike this morning. The Chief Industrial Organiser, RAMELSON, reported that at the meeting of the National Union of Seamen's (N.U.S.) Executive Council yesterday the General Secretary, HOGARTH, had tried to defer discussion until the Finances and General Purposes

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A copy was also sent to Z.T. Claro, Esq., M.V.O., O.B.E., Ministry of Labour ~~under a compliment slip~~ by F1A/~~see~~ AH

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President, WATSON, is still confident that the W.L.T.B.U. will endorse a stoppage of work in the Port of London. He is far less confident about the position in the T.G.W.U. His information, which is derived from the Executive Council member William JONES, is that JONES' attempt to raise the question of support for the N.U.S. in the Executive Council of the T.G.W.U. yesterday was unsuccessful and it was decided to defer the matter until the session on Friday (10 June) when a report would be available of the T.U.C. meeting today.

3. Taking these various developments into consideration, the Political Committee came to the conclusion that a determined move would be made in the next 48 hours to undermine the solidarity of the N.U.S. and that the spearhead of this attack would be the T.G.W.U. acting in collaboration with the T.U.C. The Party is somewhat apprehensive that its own efforts and those of the militants in the N.U.S. will be countered by the T.G.W.U. and even the Communist, WATSON, has warned the Party that

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Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 12 noon on 9 June)

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2. RAMELSON also reported that later in the day the Acting General Secretary of the T.U.C. had been in touch with all interested British unions requesting them not to take any action on the N.U.S. proposal to extend the strike until after today's meeting of the Finances and General Purposes Committee at the T.U.C. It is also known from sources other than RAMELSON that the acting General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.) contacted the Watermen, Lightermen and Tugboatmen's Union (W.L.T.B.U.) yesterday and asked them to keep in step with the T.G.W.U. Possibly as a result of this its Executive Council meeting was postponed until late this afternoon but RAMELSON, whose information is no doubt derived from the W.L.T.B.U. President, WATSON, is still confident that the W.L.T.B.U. will endorse a stoppage of work in the Port of London. He is far less confident about the position in the T.G.W.U. His information, which is derived from the Executive Council member William JONES, is that JONES' attempt to raise the question of support for the N.U.S. in the Executive Council of the T.G.W.U. yesterday was unsuccessful and it was decided to defer the matter until the session on Friday (10 June) when a report would be available of the T.U.C. meeting today.

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it should not under-rate the effect of the offer of a 40 hour week on those unions whose support the N.U.S. is now seeking. Nevertheless, the Party is determined to press on with its efforts to secure the 40 hour week immediately and RAMELSON has advised the Political Committee that, whether or no the T.G.W.U. issues official instructions to the dockers to stop working, every effort must be made, if necessary unofficially, to bring the Port of London at least to a stop on Monday morning.

Unofficial Activity

4. DASH, who is certain to be the key figure in any attempt to bring about an unofficial stoppage in the London docks, has as yet shown no indication that he is prepared to go beyond the instructions of the T.G.W.U. He held no meeting in the docks this morning but was moving around telling dockers not to take any unofficial action and to work through their union and to follow its directives. Leaflets were also distributed in the docks by both the T.G.W.U. and the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (N.A.S.D.) requesting their members to stay at work and act only on the instructions of the official union leadership. The mass meeting to which reference was made in yesterday's report did not take place. DASH's continuing moderation must therefore cast some doubt on the Communist Party's ability to bring about a stoppage in London on Monday, though it has to be recognised that if no official directive has come from the T.G.W.U. by the time its Executive Council finishes its present session tomorrow night DASH may find it difficult to resist pressures for unofficial action.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 12 noon on 8 June)

In the last 24 hours there have been two important developments, namely the National Union of Seamen's (N.U.S.) decision to extend the strike and widespread rumours of a substantial offer to be made as a result of the findings of the Court of Enquiry. The reactions both of the Communist Party and of the unofficial leaders to these two developments are so close as to be indistinguishable.

The decision to extend the strike.

At the meeting yesterday the N.U.S.

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3. These decisions, which have been brought about in no small measure by pressures stimulated by the Communist Party, have greatly eased the Party's problems. It now feels free to use its entire resources to mobilise support for the N.U.S. in other British and foreign trade unions and has already taken steps to this end. Early this morning the Party's Chief Industrial Organiser, RAMELSON, was in touch with William JONES, a member of the Executive Council of the Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.). JONES was a long-standing member of the Communist Party prior to 1957 and his departure from it was largely a device to enable him to stand for office in the T.G.W.U. and since then he has been a close and trusted contact of the Party. RAMELSON told JONES that he should raise the question of support for the N.U.S. in the T.G.W.U. Executive Council as soon as possible and promised that he, RAMELSON, would organise demonstrations of London dockers to call for an early declaration of support by the T.G.W.U. in the course of the next two days. JONES had already tried to persuade the T.G.W.U. Executive Council to express support for the N.U.S. and had been given the answer that the T.G.W.U. would be prepared to do anything requested by the N.U.S. At the time this answer

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The decision to extend the strike.

2. At its meeting yesterday the N.U.S. Executive Council decided:-

- (a) to appeal to the International Transport Workers' Federation to "black" all British ships in foreign ports;
- (b) to "black" all foreign oil tankers making voyages to the U.K. contrary to their normal deployment;
- (c) to appeal to other unions affiliated to the T.U.C. to "black" all foreign ships newly engaged in the U.K. coastal trade.

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was clearly intended to be a delaying device, but in view of the N.U.S. decisions yesterday it can be exploited. RAMELSON also informed JONES that he had good reason to believe that the Watermen, Lightermen and Tugboatmen's Union (W.L.T.B.U.) would decide to refuse to handle cargoes of foreign ships in the London Docks today and that WATSON, the Communist President of the W.L.T.B.U. expected to get this decision endorsed by his own Executive at its meeting today.

4. Now that the N.U.S. has decided to appeal to the International Transport Workers' Federation, the Party has decided that it is safe to use its own contacts for a similar purpose in the Communist World Federation of Trade Unions. Shortly after the conversation with JONES above, a representative from the London office of the World Federation of Trade Unions was summoned to Party Headquarters this morning and instructed to ask W.F.T.U.H.Q. in Prague to issue instructions to "black" British ships in foreign ports in terms parallel with those expected to go out from the I.T.F. The representative concerned, RICHTER, assured RAMELSON that he had already taken action on these lines.

5. So far as the dockers are concerned, C.P.H.Q. has decided that they should wait until Monday (13 June) for an official instruction from their union not to handle foreign cargoes and in the absence of this they should be encouraged to take unofficial action. Early reports from the London docks this morning indicate that the dockers were somewhat perplexed as to how the latest N.U.S. decisions should be interpreted and there is likely to be a mass meeting organised by the T.G.W.U. and by the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (N.A.S.D.) tomorrow at which they will be given the official line.

The Recommendations of the Court of Enquiry

6. The first inkling that NORRIS and his colleagues had of the recommendations was a report early yesterday afternoon to the effect that the Court was recommending an increase of 20 per cent. This subsequently appeared in the evening press. Later in the evening he learned of the proposal that the seamen should be given a 48 hour week immediately and a 40 hour week in one year's time. His own reaction to this latter proposal is that it should be rejected but he anticipates that opinion in the N.U.S. Executive Council will be deeply divided and that the General Secretary, HOGARTH, will fight hard for its acceptance. The Party has not had time to evolve a line on this issue but the limited indications so far received suggest that it will be a little cautious. It would favour the immediate rejection of the offer but it recognises that the N.U.S. ability to pursue the strike

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to a successful conclusion after rejection will largely depend on the support it received from the T.G.W.U. Should the T.G.W.U. decide to withhold, or more probably to limit support, the Party might then urge NORRIS to accept the proposals as a satisfactory fall-back line.

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 12 noon on 7 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

The seamen's strike was not discussed in this morning's meeting of the sub-Political Committee, doubtless due to the absence of the Chief Industrial Organiser, RAMELSON, who is due to return to London

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organised from District Strike Committees in Merseyside, Scotland and the North East coast. In addition NORRIS was informed last night that about six members of the Executive Council who were expected to oppose the new proposals have now been won over; included among them is the N.U.S. Treasurer, LIPMAN. In view of the previously anticipated support of at least seven members the debate today is likely to be close run. NORRIS' overall assessment is that the above resolutions will be passed but in view of his natural ebullience this probably needs to be treated with some reserve.

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The seamen's strike was not discussed in this morning's meeting of the sub-Political Committee, doubtless due to the absence of the Chief Industrial Organiser, RAMELSON, who is due to return to London tomorrow.

Unofficial Activity

2. There are indications that NORRIS and his supporters in London have made good use of the extra time available as a result of the postponement of the meeting of the National Union of Seamen's (N.U.S.) Executive Council until today. Resolutions in support of the two main proposals - namely the "blacking" of all tankers entering British ports and a request through the International Transport Workers' Federation to "black" British ships in foreign ports - have been organised from District Strike Committees in London, Merseyside, Scotland and the North East coast. In addition NORRIS was informed last night that about six members of the Executive Council who were expected to oppose the new proposals have now been won over; included among them is the N.U.S. Treasurer, LIPMAN. In view of the previously anticipated support of at least seven members the debate today is likely to be close run. NORRIS' overall assessment is that the above resolutions will be passed but in view of his natural ebullience this probably needs to be treated with some reserve.

Security Service

7 June 1966

SF.452-51 Supp B.

MF 5
27.6.66

TOP SECRET

The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 07.30 hours on 6 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

Details are not yet available of the discussion between RAMELSON, the Party's Chief Industrial Organiser, and NORRIS on 3 June and it is known that RAMELSON will be away in the Midlands until 8 June. It is unlikely that there will be any significant developments so far as C.P.H.Q. is concerned until the normal meeting of the sub-Political Committee on 8 June.

10a
The attached note was sent by the D.G. (under a compliment slip) to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office and Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office on 6.6.66.

N.U.S. The meeting at ... confined to dockers and in the course of a long discussion considerable dissatisfaction was expressed at the relatively non-militant line hitherto followed by the N.U.S. and the general feeling seemed to be that the N.U.S. was waiting for the dockers to fight its battles. DASH, who according to a close contact, is now beginning to show signs of strain, argued that so far as he and his colleagues in the unofficial liaison committees were concerned there could be no action until there was an official request from the N.U.S. through the Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.). He emphasised that if the N.U.S. "blacked" oil tankers arriving in the U.K. T.G.W.U. employees in the oil terminals and at the refineries could not be expected to refuse to handle the products until they received instructions from their union. Again therefore the matter rested with the N.U.S.

Security Service

6 June 1966

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27.6.66

TOP SECRET

The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 07.30 hours on 6 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

Details are not yet available of the discussion between RAMELSON, the Party's Chief Industrial Organiser, and NORRIS on 3 June and it is known that RAMELSON will be away in the Midlands until 8 June. It is unlikely that there will be any significant developments so far as C.P.H.Q. is concerned until the normal meeting of the sub-Political Committee on 8 June.

Unofficial Activity

2. After the demonstration on Sunday NORRIS did not attend the Communist arranged meeting at PAPWORTH's on Sunday night. This was probably due to his anxiety to lobby some of the non-Communist members of the National Union of Seamen's (N.U.S.) Executive Council who had come to the demonstration. However he did inform a leading member of the Communist Party that he was satisfied that resolutions would be moved in the N.U.S. Executive Council on 7 June calling for the "blacking" of all foreign tankers which had been re-routed to the United Kingdom and for action through the International Transport Workers' Federation to "black" British ships in foreign ports. He had also been assured by Harry WATSON, President of the Watermen, Lightermen and Tug-boatmen's Union (W.L.T.B.U.) that this union would give full support to the strike in U.K. ports if the support were officially requested by the N.U.S. The meeting at PAPWORTH's was therefore largely confined to dockers and in the course of a long discussion considerable dissatisfaction was expressed at the relatively non-militant line hitherto followed by the N.U.S. and the general feeling seemed to be that the N.U.S. was waiting for the dockers to fight its battles. DASH, who according to a close contact, is now beginning to show signs of strain, argued that so far as he and his colleagues in the unofficial liaison committees were concerned there could be no action until there was an official request from the N.U.S. through the Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.). He emphasised that if the N.U.S. "blackened" oil tankers arriving in the U.K. T.G.W.U. employees in the oil terminals and at the refineries could not be expected to refuse to handle the products until they received instructions from their union. Again therefore the matter rested with the N.U.S.

Security Service

6 June 1966

SF. 452-51 Supp B.

TOP SECRET

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27.6.66

9a

The attached was sent by the D.G (under a compliment slip to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office and Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office, on 3 June 1966.

A copy was also sent (under a compliment slip) by F.1.A/J.S.E. to Z.T. CLaro, Esq., M.V.O., O.B.E., Ministry of Labour.

TOP SECRET

The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 12 noon on 3 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

Details of the discussion at the meeting of the Political Committee of the C.P.G.B. on 2 June have now become available. It was recognised that the seamen's response to the strike call had been virtually unanimous but nevertheless the visible results had so far been much less than had been anticipated. Opinions differ on the tactics now required to increase the impact of the strike and although there was some support expressed for selective unofficial action, this was rejected largely as a result of the intervention of RAMELSON, the Chief Industrial Organiser. He argued that the Party's policy of keeping in step with the official line of the National Union of Seamen (N.U.S.) was achieving results and drew attention to the impending recall of the N.U.S. Executive Council, which he attributed to rank and file pressure stimulated by the Party.

2. After a somewhat confused discussion it was finally agreed that the strike now needed to be expanded and that the recall of the Executive Council provided a suitable opportunity. RAMELSON was instructed to draw up plans accordingly. This morning RAMELSON reported to GOLLAN that he had arranged to meet NORRIS at 4.30 p.m. today and intended to put the following proposals to him:-

- he/
- (a) that, whatever the outcome of the Court of Enquiry, NORRIS and the militants on the Executive Council should oppose any return to work without a satisfactory agreement. RAMELSON appears to have in mind the suggestion from the Chairman of the Court of Enquiry that the enquiry could proceed in a calmer atmosphere if the strike were called off.
 - (b) That the Executive Council should be persuaded as a matter of urgency to "black" all oil tankers arriving in the United Kingdom and that the Executive Council should, through the International Transport Workers' Federation, ask dockers to "black" all British ships arriving in foreign ports.

GOLLAN agreed with these proposals and his only comment was that the latter proposal would mean that foreign dockers were being invited to take action which the N.U.S. had so far refused to ask of British dockers. RAMELSON argued that the unloading of British ships in foreign ports was a comparatively small proportion of the work available to

TOP SECRET

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foreign dockers, whereas a similar measure in British ports would eliminate most of the work of British dockers. He probably also had in mind the frequently expressed reluctance of DASH to go along with a proposal of this kind.

Unofficial Activity

3. NORRIS has been busy lobbying Executive Council members in anticipation of Monday's recall and is now satisfied that one member, James SLATER, will move a resolution calling for the "blacking" of oil tankers and British ships in foreign ports at the Executive Council meeting. It is anticipated that SLATER will have the support of at least seven of the Executive Council members and there have also been a considerable number of resolutions from local strike committees submitted on much the same lines.

4. After the demonstration in Trafalgar Square on Sunday to which NORRIS has emphasised that all, including Peace Movements, Anarchists and Trotskyists, are welcome, DASH and some of the more militant members of the N.U.S. Executive Council will be going to a meeting at the house of Bert PAPWORTH. PAPWORTH is a Communist of long standing and one of the oldest and most experienced members of the Communist Party's apparatus in the Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.). There will also be a meeting of the Communist Party's secret Advisory Committee in the T.G.W.U. shortly before the demonstration.

Security Service.

3 June 1966

SF. 452-51 Supp B.

The attached was sent by the D.G. (under a compliment slip) to Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office and Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office, on 2 June 1966.

A copy was also sent under a compliment slip by F.1.A/J.S.E. to Z.T. Claro, Esq., M.V.O., O.B.E., Ministry of Labour.

TOP SECRET

The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 12 noon on 2 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

The seamen's strike was the principal item on the agenda of the C.P.G.B.'s Political Committee meeting late this morning. The Chief Industrial Organiser, RAMELSON, reported that there were now semi-official indications that the National Union of Seamen's (N.U.S.) Executive Council would be recalled on or about 6 June and the Committee noted with approval that rank and file pressure on the Executive Council appeared to be having some results. However it was recognised that this fact carried its own dangers from the Party's long term policy point of view. It could, for example, lead to a situation in which rank and file pressure forced the N.U.S. Executive Council into measures, such as an appeal for dockers support, which might lead to a breach in the trade union unity hitherto observed. The Party's fear in this context probably stems from its doubt whether DASH would answer such an appeal favourably. RAMELSON also expressed some fears that the demonstration planned for Trafalgar Square on 5 June might turn into a rank and file protest against the N.U.S. Executive.

2. RAMELSON also criticised the N.U.S. Executive Council for its failure so far to appeal for support from the Executives of other trade unions and it seems likely that pressures will build up on this issue between now and the recall of the Executive Council on 8 June. The meeting is still going on and it is expected that more information will be available tomorrow.

3. Shortly before the meeting of the Political Committee RAMELSON discussed the strike situation on Merseyside with one of the Party's most experienced officials there and complained about the Party's failure to counter the "adventurist" tactics of the Trotskyists. RAMELSON accepted that the Trotskyists rather than the Communists are the dominant militant element on Merseyside and the incident illustrates the dilemma facing the Communist Party when, for its own purposes, it attempts to keep in step with official trade union policy. In practice this usually means that the field is left open to the undisciplined elements, notably the Trotskyists. Merseyside, and to a lesser extent Hull, differ in this respect from the Port of London where the Communist Party has had no difficulty in brushing aside the occasional attempts by the Trotskyists to take over the unofficial committees.

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Unofficial Activity

4. The newly formed Liaison Committee held a meeting last night of which details are not yet available but are expected.

Security Service

2 June 1966

SF. 452-51 Supp B.

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The attached was sent by the D.G. (under
a compliment slip) to Sir Charles Cunningham,
Home Office and Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet
Office on 1 June 1966.

TOP SECRET

The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 12 noon on 1 June)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

C.P.H.Q. has now been informed that the Communist Chairman (Dan KELLY) of the negotiating committee of the National Union of Railwaymen (N.U.R.) raised the question of the seamen's strike at the recent meeting of the N.U.R. Executive Council. The substance of KELLY's speech is not known but in view of the Party's previous efforts in this context it is safe to assume that KELLY wanted N.U.R. support for the blacking of any movement of goods diverted to the railways from coastal shipping. The Executive Council was pre-occupied with its discussions on liner trains and no decision was taken on KELLY's submission. Commenting on this report J.R. CAMPBELL, an official of the Communist Party's Industrial Department, said that pressure on behalf of the seamen in the N.U.R. Executive must be continued and efforts should also be made to raise the matter in N.U.R. District Councils. The latter is a familiar Communist technique in this union and is a device by which the Party has in the past been able to bring pressure on Executive Council members who would not otherwise be inclined to support the Party's case.

2. There was no discussion of the seamen's strike at the usual weekly meeting of officials of the Communist Party's Industrial Department this morning. The Communist Party is now convinced that the Executive Committee of the N.U.S. will shortly be recalled and in anticipation there is to be a meeting tonight of the Party's new Liaison Committee, to which reference was made yesterday.

Unofficial Activity

3. NORRIS has now returned to London and appears to be satisfied with the conduct of the strike in Glasgow and the northern ports.

Security Service

1 June 1966

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 07.30 hours on 31 May)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

The Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.) circular to its "rigger" members instructing them to allow the normal movement of ships in port

The attached note was sent by the D.G. (under a compliment slip) to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office and Sir Charles Cunningham, Home Office on 31.5.66.

docks. It was also clear that they wanted to open an attack on the leadership of the National Union of Seamen (N.U.S.) whom they held indirectly responsible for the T.G.W.U. circular. WATSON, with the support of RAMBLSON, took a calmer line and in the end persuaded the meeting to adopt the following compromise:-

- (a) An immediate campaign should be mounted for the recall of the National Executive Committee of the N.U.S.
- (b) The recalled Executive should be asked to transfer control of the strike, at least so far as movements of ships within port are concerned, from the National Disputes Committee to the Local Strike Committees (there is no Communist representation on the National Committee though the Party is influential at local level).

At the same time it was also decided to set up a small secret liaison committee consisting of leading Communist seamen together with Jack DASH representing the dockers and Harry WATSON representing the tug-boatmen. NORRIS is

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The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 07.30 hours on 31 May)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

The Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.) circular to its "rigger" members instructing them to allow the normal movement of ships in port presented the Communist Party with a difficult problem. At a meeting of the C.P.G.B.'s Political Committee on 26 May there was considerable criticism of the apparently inactive role so far played by the Party and a demand for unofficial action, particularly in the docks. The Party's Chief Industrial Organiser, RAMELSON, with the support of the General Secretary, GOLLAN, was able to keep the criticism within bounds but it was nevertheless accepted that leading Party seamen and dockers should meet to discuss the new situation immediately. This meeting was held in the evening of 26 May and it is known that Harry WATSON, President of the Watermen, Lightermen and Tug-boatmen's Union (W.L.T.B.U.) was also present.

2. The two leading Communist seamen, Jack COWARD and Gordon NORRIS, argued that the strike, if pursued on the present lines, would inevitably fail and that the time had come for extensive unofficial action by the dockers aimed at stopping all activity in the docks. It was also clear that they wanted to open an attack on the leadership of the National Union of Seamen (N.U.S.) whom they held indirectly responsible for the T.G.W.U. circular. WATSON, with the support of RAMELSON, took a calmer line and in the end persuaded the meeting to adopt the following compromise:-

- (a) An immediate campaign should be mounted for the recall of the National Executive Committee of the N.U.S.
- (b) The recalled Executive should be asked to transfer control of the strike, at least so far as movements of ships within port are concerned, from the National Disputes Committee to the Local Strike Committees (there is no Communist representation on the National Committee though the Party is influential at local level).

At the same time it was also decided to set up a small secret liaison committee consisting of leading Communist seamen together with Jack DASH representing the dockers and Harry WATSON representing the tug-boatmen. NORRIS is

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confident that this committee, which is also in touch with the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (N.A.S.D.) should be able to prevent any substantial movements within the ports. DASH, who continues to be opposed to any unofficial action by the dockers and whose support for the new committee seems lukewarm, conceded that he might revise his views if over the weekend there had been any substantial movements within the ports.

Unofficial Activity

3. NORRIS, as part of a morale raising exercise, was busy putting out rumours on the 26th and 27th that Naval tugs would probably move into the Port of London during the Whitsun holiday. He recognised that the tugs would have to pass through locks operated by members of the T.G.W.U. and seemed confident that the lockmen would refuse to give them passage. Even if they did he felt that the issue could be exploited to the embarrassment of the T.G.W.U.

4. NORRIS left for Glasgow and the North Eastern ports on the 28th and was expected to return late on the 30th. DASH appears to have been inactive throughout the holiday.

Security Service

31 May 1966

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RESTRICTED

5A
Loose Minute

D.D.G.

The important development in the last 24 hours is the T.G.W.U. decision to instruct its "rigger" members to work normally. This means that ships having unloaded can be moved to new loading berths within the area of the port and vacated berths used for incoming ships. This gives some further time and according to contact with the Ministry of Labour this morning, congestion is unlikely to reach a point on which naval intervention will be necessary before the end of next week. It does not mean, however, that ships can be moved out of the docks into river anchorage as this work has always been performed in the past by N.U.S. members.

2. The Ministry of Labour assessment of the position is that temperature in the docks is still fairly low and, in the absence of some emotive incident which the employers have so far been careful to avoid, there is unlikely to be any significant change in the situation over the next few days.

J. S. Elliott.

F.1.A.

26 May 1966.

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HOME OFFICE
WHITEHALL · S.W.1

24th May, 1966.

Rec: 26.5.66

~~F.~~ ^{RT} 31/5
~~FTE~~
SF.452/SI/SUPP/B.

Dear ~~Furnival Jones~~ ^{Mr},

Thank you for your note about the Communist Party and the seamen's strike. I am showing it at once to the Home Secretary.

Yours sincerely,
M. P. Birmingham

E. M. Furnival Jones, Esq., C.B.E.

TOP SECRET

MS
27.6.66

3a
The attached was sent by the D.G (under
a compliment slip) to Sir Burke Trend,
Cabinet Office, and Sir Charles Cunningham,
Home Office, on 26 May 1966.

TOP SECRET

The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 10.00 hours on 26 May)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

In the last 48 hours there has been considerable discussion about what line the Party should take if there is military intervention in the docks. The Party itself is not altogether clear what it means by military intervention, as this could take the form of movement of ships within the ports by naval tugs or the unloading and movement of cargoes by the Army. So far C.P.H.Q. tends to take the line that at the first sign of military intervention it will advise its contacts in the docks to bring about a total stoppage by dock workers and possibly by road transport workers serving the docks. There are nevertheless indications that this is by no means a clearly thought out policy and it is one which does not carry the whole-hearted and unanimous support of some Party members in the docks, notably DASH.

The Attitude of Unofficial Leaders

2. As a result of a series of meetings DASH's line is now becoming clear. He is:-

- (a) anxious to keep in step with the Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.) and the National Union of Seamen (N.U.S.) and is opposed to any kind of adventurism;
- (b) ^{not} prepared to call dockers out on strike if naval tugs are used unless the T.G.W.U. (presumably in agreement with the N.U.S.) first endorses such action;
- (c) advising dockers to continue to work normally and not to put themselves in a position where they could lose their fall-back pay as a result of a premature unofficial strike.
- (d) He would like pressure to be brought on the N.U.S. to sit round the table with the employers and with Government to thrash out a compromise settlement.

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3. In spite of a good deal of activity by NORRIS he appears, temporarily at least, to have lost the battle with the T.G.W.U. over the movement of ships in port by "rigger" members of that union. The effect of this T.G.W.U. decision is to delay the development of congestion inside the ports and NORRIS, in particular, appreciates that this is a substantial set-back.

The Attitude of the Trotskyists

4. The intervention by Trotskyists from Merseyside yesterday was largely abortive and there is no indication that DASH has been persuaded to adopt a more militant line. Yesterday's stoppage on Merseyside was to some extent Trotskyist inspired but was directed against amendments to the dock labour scheme rather than in support of the seamen.

Security Service

26 May 1966

SF. 452-51 Supp B.

TOP SECRET

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The attached was sent under a compliment slip by the D.G. to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Office, on 25 May 1966.

TOP SECRET

The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 07.30 hours on 25 May)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.H.Q.)

There is no change in the Party's attitude. In a later reaction to the declaration of a state of emergency the General Secretary of the Party, John GOLLAN, is known to have taken the line that, while the Party continues its whole-hearted support of the strike, it has no intention of trying to run it. Ultimately GOLLAN envisages a situation in which ships would have to be moved from present berths and that the dockers would then refuse to unload. In this situation the Army would be called in and there might also be some response from non-union labour. GOLLAN thought that at this point the strike might collapse.

Unofficial Activity

2. At the meeting in the London docks yesterday NORRIS was overshadowed by DASH who took a firm line infavour of normal working by the dockers until work ceases to be available. There is also an indication that the one day token stoppage in Hull fixed for today has been called off, probably under pressure from DASH. Today there will be a meeting in the London docks organised by a group of Trotskyists from Merseyside and DASH views this development with some apprehension. The Trotskyists are expected to call for an immediate stoppage by the dockers and DASH's apprehension is based upon the threat which this group has presented to his leadership in the past. He will hold a counter-meeting.

3. Roger WOODS, the Communist Chairman of the Strike Committee in Liverpool has reported to NORRIS that British ships are being diverted to European ports and has suggested that NORRIS and the N.U.S. should make an official representation to the International Transport Federation. NORRIS is also known to have been in touch with the Communist Federation of Trade Unions, possibly in the same context.

4. NORRIS anticipates that efforts may be made to move unloaded ships from their present berths from today onwards and is most anxious to prevent this. There is an indication that the Communist Party would also take a more active line if and when these ships are moved by Naval tugs. On the other hand present indications are that NORRIS and the dockers are prepared to unload food-stuffs in ships brought into vacated berths but not general cargo.

Security Service

25 May 1966

SF. 452-51 Supp B.

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NOTE.

The attached was sent under a
compliment slip by the D.G. to Sir Burke
Trend, Cabinet Office, on 24.5.66.

TOP SECRET

The Communist Party of Great Britain (C.P.G.B.) and the
Seamen's Strike

(Position as at 07.30 hours on 24 May 1966)

The Attitude of Communist Party Headquarters (C.P.G.B.)

C.P.H.Q. learned of the impending declaration of a state of emergency at about 13.30 hours on 23 May. Later a statement was drafted with the authority of the Political Committee for publication in today's issue of the Morning Star. The significant portion of this draft is that the declaration will widen the conflict and that no trade unionist can be expected to deal with goods which have been handled by the military. The Party therefore calls for maximum solidarity with the seamen and with any other section of workers who may become involved.

2. The C.P.G.B. nevertheless understands that the declaration is at present only permissive, and further action by the Party is unlikely until the regulations are implemented. This is in line with a decision taken by the C.P.G.B. at the end of last week that there should be no "adventurism" in this dispute, particularly in the docks. By this the Party means that it is prepared to wait for a reaction from the dock workers rather than to stimulate one. There is, moreover, no evidence that it has drawn up any contingency plans to meet the situation resulting from the declaration, though more may emerge on this when the Party's inner caucus, the sub-Political Committee, meets today.

The Attitude of Unofficial Leaders

3. There has so far been little time for reaction by the Chairman of the Negotiating Committee, Gordon NORRIS, and by Jack DASH of the Dockers' Liaison Committee, though both are to speak in the London docks today. It is nevertheless of interest that DASH strongly disapproves of the token stoppage in Hull planned for tomorrow (25 May). This is a protest against the amendments to the dock labour scheme, and the stoppage was arranged before the declaration. DASH regards it as a Trotskyist manoeuvre and does not intend to offer any support in London.

4. NORRIS who is now on bad terms with his principal Communist colleague, Jack COWARD, Chairman of the Strike Committee in the Victoria and Albert docks, intends to make a bid for docker support this morning. He is also dissatisfied with the failure of the Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.) to halt the operations of the "riggers", who handle ships in port, and may today make a direct bid for their support, using the declaration as a pretext.

Security Service

24 May 1966

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SF. 452-51 Supp B.

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