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SUBVERSION
IN
INDUSTRY

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FOREWORD

It is a remarkable fact that although the various ranks of management in industry are faced almost every week with evidence of subversive activity, most of them have but little knowledge of how the Communist machine works. The purpose of this booklet is to remedy that situation. It is not a potted history of Communism in Britain but a manual of how Communism seeks to subvert good relations and smooth working in the industrial field.

It might well be described as a manual for Staff Officers, for it should never be forgotten that the Communist attack is planned as a military operation and with military precision. The managers in industry at all levels are the Staff Officers who have to plan the counter-attack, and this booklet is designed to help them in that plan.

February, 1958

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THE COMMUNIST AIM

“ Communists are still at work in the factories of Britain, and in the most alarmingly subtle ways.”

The man who said that is no Red-under-the-bed alarmist. He is Mr. William Carron, President of the powerful 900,000 strong Amalgamated Engineering Union, a man with a vast experience of Communist manoeuvres inside the group of industries on which nearly half Britain's exports are based.

Here is what the T.U.C. had to say on the same subject:—

“ There are Communist factions inside trade union branches, and inside the workshops. They operate under the direction of the Industrial Committee of the Communist Party, and its Industrial Organiser.”

Even more pointed is the following statement taken from another T.U.C. pamphlet “ Defend Democracy ”:—

“ Its (the Communist Party's) most active and craftily planned arrangements operate inside the trade union movement. The successful working of these arrangements is secured only by the co-operation of individual trade unionists, *not a few of whom hold official positions in the unions*. Without this co-operation, the aims of the Communist organisation cannot be effectively furthered, since the Party Centre, *which directs the whole of these subversive activities, exists outside the trade union movement*.”

One could go further, and point out that the real directing force is not only outside the trade union movement, but outside this country. Communists throughout the world owe unswerving allegiance to the Kremlin. Industrial directives are interpreted at King Street (the Communist headquarters in London), but they emanate from the World Federation of Trade Unions, which is a Soviet-controlled body operating from Prague.

This was emphasised by Mr. Carron when he said that Communist trade union officials now holding key positions in British industry were—

“ *acting under the dictates of a foreign power with the declared purpose of wrecking Britain's economy.*”

It is in this light that the role of Communists everywhere must be assessed. They are part of a Soviet plan to achieve Communism on a world basis—a plan which has been constantly avowed by all Russian leaders from Lenin to Khrushchev.

More than a century ago (1848), the overall objective was summarised in the Communist Manifesto as follows:—

“ The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions.”

Then about forty years ago Lenin, whose words form the “ authoritative text ” for all Communist theory and practice, said:—

“ The victorious proletariat of one country, having expropriated the capitalists and organised their own socialist production, would rise . . . against the rest of the capitalist world, attract to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, raise revolts among them against the capitalists, and in the event of necessity come out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states.”

(Selected Works, Vol. V, P.141)

Communist leaders in all parts of the world have shown their approval of this plan for conquest by carrying out their task under the four main headings:—

1. Consolidation of the U.S.S.R. and her satellites.
2. Subversion and insurrection amongst colonial peoples.
3. All mischief short of a major military conflict, for example Korea, Berlin, Malaya and so on.
4. Disruptive activities inside the vital industries of the Western Democracies.

The international policy of Communism is, therefore, easy to understand. The Soviet Bloc must be made stronger than its potential victims—it is just as simple as that.

There are two ways of achieving this end. First the Communist countries can themselves be made stronger. This means speeding up productivity in the U.S.S.R. and satellite states by hard work, the rapid introduction of new processes, and the use of trade unions, not as negotiating bodies, but as “ transmission belts ” to ensure that Government orders are both understood and carried out by the workers.

In practice this has manifested itself in the most ruthless drive for industrial efficiency that the world has ever seen. It would be folly to underestimate its success or its future part in the political, economic and military affairs of the world.

Secondly, the Communist powers can be made *relatively* stronger. This is the role of the Communist Parties operating in non-Communist countries. It is the reason behind all their activities, whether it is a strike in an important industry or a propaganda campaign designed to undermine faith in our own political and trade union leaders.

There is, for instance, a real and important connection between such events as the 1953 petrol strike—which nearly brought London and the Home Counties to a standstill—and the Communist-inspired agitation against the United Nations forces in Korea, or against British possession of nuclear weapons.

When the French forces in Indo-China (Vietnam) were attacked by the Red partisans, equipped with arms from Red China, the French Communist Party organised strikes of railwaymen and dockers to stop the flow of military equipment from France.

The ceaseless attack upon our industries is intended to weaken our defence programme, to handicap exports to a point at which we would lose markets to the growing competition from the Communist bloc, to create industrial unrest, and to exploit the unemployment and lower living standards which would inevitably result.

Again all this is perfectly intelligible. It is based upon the simple truth that Britain—still regarded as the main bulwark against the spread of Communism in Western Europe—is either a great trading nation or it is not a great nation. Deprived of our trade, we become a comparatively unimportant island in the North Sea. We would be incapable of maintaining our present population or playing our full part in the affairs of the world.

There is more to it than that. We are also the heart of a great Commonwealth, and the mainspring behind the Sterling Area. Break us, and the dream of world Communism becomes a near reality.

The Communist propaganda machine dovetails into this great strategy. It subjects the minds of free people to an endless bombardment of lies, half-truths and innuendoes designed to destroy morale. Nowhere is this more so than inside our factories, workshops, mines and railways, where the "class war" is conducted sometimes openly, but more often in such an insidious way that it is difficult for rank and file trade unionists to distinguish between subversive agitation and official trade union activity.

Yet management and workers alike have a part to play if Communism is to be defeated. Today it is not poverty that is the main ally of the agitator. Most strikes take place inside the industries which provide the highest wages and best conditions for their workers. Apathy, ignorance of Communist aims and methods, plus a great deal of moral cowardice, are the biggest factors favouring extremist penetration of the unions, and the disruption of our industrial life.

It is imperative that the truth about Communist activity becomes as widespread as possible.

We must know something about the Communist mind, we must be familiar with the Party machine in industry, and how it works, we must learn to recognise subversive activity, no matter in what guise it appears, and above all we must be ready to work against the evil force, which if successful would destroy not only our livelihood, but the freedom which people living in this country have built up through centuries of struggle.

THE COMMUNIST MIND

On September 10th, 1957, millions of viewers tuned in to the B.B.C. Television programme "Give and Take," and heard John Gollan, Britain's number one Communist, flatly deny that his Party opposed this country's war effort during the conflict against Nazi Germany. Without batting an eyelid he also stated that Russia did not invade Poland.

It is, of course, a matter of history that the Communist Party *did* oppose Britain's war effort from September 1939 to June 1941 (the period of the Stalin-Hitler alliance). It is a fact that on September 17th, 1939, Soviet troops attacked Poland in accordance with a plan pre-arranged with the Nazi Government.

This was admitted by Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, in what must be one of the most cynical statements made in modern times. He boasted:—

"One swift blow to Poland, first by the German Army, and then by the Red Army, and nothing was left of this ugly offspring of the Versailles Treaty".

No one reading this statement would gather that when the Red Army marched in, a Non-Aggression Pact between Russia and Poland still had fifteen years to run. This Pact bound the Soviet Government not to afford aid or assistance to any third State (in this case Nazi Germany) guilty of aggression against Poland. Both Molotov's statement and Gollan's on television provide typical examples of the Communist mind at work. Without an appreciation of this mentality it is impossible to understand Communism in practice.

What is the mind of the real Communist like? Gollan is a man who has been steeped in Marxism for most of his life. He knew that his Party had done everything it could to undermine Britain's war effort. Indeed, he was a prominent member at the time. He was also aware that Russia did invade Poland. He lied to millions of viewers, and both he and his questioner knew that he was lying. Yet the only thing likely to have troubled him was not his conscience, but whether he had got away with it.

Exactly the same principle, or lack of it, applies everywhere that Communists work, from the factories and trade union branches in Britain, to the United Nations Organisation at Lake Success.

This is a matter of deliberate policy. In 1920 Lenin gave the following advice to British Communists working inside our industrial concerns:—

“ It is necessary . . . to resort to all sorts of stratagems, manoeuvres, illegal methods, to evasions and subterfuge, only so as to get into the trade unions, to remain in them, and to carry on Communist work within them at all costs.”

Thirty years later, on August 20th, 1950, a speaker on Radio Moscow declared categorically:—

“ From the point of view of Communist morality, only those acts are moral which contribute to the building up of a new Communist society.”

This is a variation of the “ end justifies the means ” attitude which is part of the make-up of every Communist. In assessing their activities they do not ask whether they are right, or true, or in the interests of their country, or even their trade union. They have only one criterion—does it help the Communist cause?

When the late George Dimitrov was General Secretary of the Communist International, he defined the correct Communist attitude as follows:—

“ We are sometimes accused of departing from our Communist principles. What stupidity, what blindness! We should not be Marxist and Leninist revolutionaries, nor disciples of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, if we were not capable of completely altering our tactics and our mode of action as circumstances may dictate. But all the deviations, and all the ins and outs of our tactics are directed to a single end—the world revolution.”

This is not the theoretical statement of a propagandist, it is a practical guide to action for Communists all over the world. From the moment a new recruit is drawn into the Party, he is taught how to apply this “ principle.” He soon learns that anything which helps the Party is good, and anything which

hinders it is bad. Further, that what the Soviet leaders say is true, and must be supported, and everything they oppose must be denounced as a tissue of lies.

The Communist war record provides one example out of many of the unscrupulous twists and turns a Communist can perform without dislocating his conscience.

Before the war began, the Party conducted a vigorous campaign demanding a “ firm stand ” against Hitler. When Britain guaranteed the integrity of Poland, it was the Communists who claimed that they had helped to force a reluctant Government into this action.

Then at the end of August 1939, the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact was signed. It freed Hitler from the fear of war on two fronts. He knew that he could proceed against Poland safe from Soviet intervention against his invading armies. From that moment a major conflict was inevitable.

Almost as though they could not believe that the Soviet volte-face had taken place, the Communists in this country maintained their position for nearly a month. On the day following Britain's entry into the war, the *Daily Worker* declared:—

“ The war is here. It is a war which *can* and *must* be won.”

Harry Pollitt, the then General Secretary of the Party, launched himself into print with a stirring pamphlet, approved by his Executive, called “ How to Win the War.” In it he stated:—

“ The Communist Party supports the war, believing it to be a just war, which should be supported by the whole working class, and all friends of democracy in Britain.”

Lines of communication with Moscow, however, were soon restored. Douglas Hyde, ex-News Editor of the *Daily Worker*, has provided the following description of what happened when the new line reached this country:—

“ The Party's Central Committee had met one day at the King Street Headquarters to draw up a stirring manifesto to the British people, calling upon them to sacrifice all in the great anti-Fascist struggle. After hours of discussion, the text was finalised. Then, unexpectedly, in walked the British

representative to the Communist International, whom everybody had thought was still in Moscow.”

“ He took one look at the manifesto, and told the leaders they would have to scrap it. It was, he said, an imperialistic war. The Comintern had said so, and that meant opposing it in the classical Marxist way.”

After describing the confusion which followed this bombshell, Hyde revealed that after Pollitt and J. R. Campbell, now Editor of the *Daily Worker*, had refused to accept the new line, the remainder of the Central Committee sat down again, and with the assistance of the Comintern delegate redrafted their manifesto, this time declaring the war to be imperialist and unworthy of support.

Pollitt was removed from his position as General Secretary, but a few weeks later both he and Campbell apologised for their unseemly behaviour in thinking for themselves. Pollitt's recantation deserves to be quoted.

He said:—

“ I recognise that my action in resisting the carrying out of the line of the Communist Party, and the *Communist International*, represented an impermissible infraction of our Party's discipline.”

Now see how Communist propaganda changed. A manifesto issued by the Party on October 7th, 1939, stated:—

“ The responsibility for the present imperialist war lies equally on all warring powers.”

Even this did not last for any length of time. Soon Hitler was being described as the injured party. By November Stalin was informing the world that:—

“ It is not Germany who has attacked England and France, but England and France who have attacked Germany.”

This rapidly became the official Party line in Great Britain. The *Daily Worker* of February 1st, 1940, stated:—

“ Hitler repeated once again his claim that the war was thrust upon him by Britain. Against this historical fact there is no reply. Britain declared war, not Germany. Attempts to end the war were made, but the Soviet-German peace overtures were rejected by Britain.”

It will be within the recollection of many people that the walls of many of our great cities and industrial establishments became plastered with slogans such as “ Stop the War *NOW*.” Some people might also remember that after June 1941, when Hitler rounded on his erstwhile ally and marched against the Soviet Union, the same people who had splashed these slogans on the walls once again took up their buckets and shouldered their brushes and marched into action, this time to demand a “ Second Front Now.” From complaining that there was a war, they turned to denouncing the Government for not waging the war on a big enough scale. What caused this change? The Soviet Union was in danger!

This important truth emerges. That a Communist, wherever he is working, and whatever he is doing, owes his loyalty to his Party, and through that Party to the Russian Government. That is the factor which governs the mind and actions of them all.

That is why Communists are the most dangerous of all espionage agents. Their consciences allow them to betray any secret, to break any oath, if they “ are ordered to do so ” in the Party interest.

THE COMMUNIST MACHINE IN INDUSTRY

More than thirty Communist-controlled organisations are on the proscribed list issued by the Labour Party. Yet although this list is valuable as a warning to the gullible, it provides little information about the nature of the Communist machine operating inside our main industrial concerns.

The World Federation of Trade Unions is mentioned. So is the Labour Research Department—an organisation to which many Shop Stewards Committees are affiliated in the mistaken belief that it is the research department of the Labour Party itself.

The National Assembly of Women, which conducts a great deal of agitation among female workers, is also on the list. Another proscribed body is the World Federation of Scientific Workers, to which our own Association of Scientific Workers remains affiliated in spite of strong protests from its non-Communist members.

In the main, however, the organisation controlled from Communist Party headquarters, and concentrated on the factories, docks, pits, oil refineries, power stations, building and transport, cannot figure on the Labour Party's list, or on any other. This is understandable, for integral parts of the Communist machine are inseparable from the official trade union set-up. Others, though powerful, are difficult to identify.

The Electrical Trades Union, for example, is under Communist leadership. President Frank Foulkes, General Secretary Frank Haxell, and Assistant General Secretary Bob McLennan are all avowed members of the Party, but this union can no more be proscribed than, say, the North London District Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, which is under the control of such well-known Communists as Reg Birch, Claude Berridge, Wal Hannington, Bill McLoughlin and Jack Reid.

The same can be said of the many union committees and local branches which, largely because of lack of interest on the

part of rank and file members, have fallen into Communist hands.

These are official union organisations which have virtually become branches of the Communist Party. There are others which sound genuine, but are not. The most powerful of these is the Engineering and Allied Trades Shop Stewards' National Council, better known as the National Council of Shop Stewards.

The only known full-time functionary of this body is Dave Michaelson, who according to a former President of the A.E.U. is a man with longer experience in the Communist Party than in the engineering industry. No one knows who the members of this so-called Council are. Even so, its title has misled people from B.B.C. commentators to a former Minister of Labour into referring to the Council as though it were part of the official trade union movement. Mr. Carron, who as President of the A.E.U. has to contend with the subversive activities of this body, has no such illusions. He recently pointed out that the "National Council" of Shop Stewards—

" carries out in the engineering and shipbuilding industries, the directives of the Communist Party. At its conferences it lays down the policy line to be followed by the Communist Stewards in the factories, workshops and shipyards. It also lays down the policy for Communists and fellow-travellers in the unions."

In practice the "National Council," like many similar organisations at work in British industry, does not *decide* the policy line—it merely transmits orders from higher authority, and discusses with key Party members the tactics to be employed in each factory or group of factories.

These unofficial bodies are part of an efficient and comprehensive machine operating under the control of Peter Kerrigan, the Party's National Industrial Organiser. Within this machine are men and women ranging from top union officials to bench workers carefully planted in important concerns. All of them are subject to the same rigid discipline. They are all taught that whatever their position in industry or the Labour movement, it is their work for the Party that has first priority.

In building this machine industrial members of the Party were given the following tasks:—

1. The capturing of important positions *inside* the trade union movement, from local branches to National Executives, and securing the election of as many trusted comrades as possible to the position of full time officials.
2. The setting up of unofficial bodies superimposed on the trade union movement. These include Shop Stewards Committees, port workers committees, action committees, local campaign groups, and so on.
3. The establishment of Communist Party groups in every industry or profession. For example, engineering, oil, docks, road transport, railways, doctors, lawyers, and even taxi drivers. Wherever possible these groups were told to issue their own journals and news sheets.
4. The forming of Communist Party branches *inside* industrial concerns, these branches to work under the close supervision of the local full-time Party official.
5. The direction of open and secret members of the Party into selected industries and individual factories.

The whole comprises the machine which operates in industry as one centrally directed unit. It starts on the factory floor where production is carried out, and reaches into almost every phase of our industrial life.

Rigidly disciplined Party members are told where they should work, and which unions to join. They are also instructed to stand, or sometimes not to stand, for specific official union positions. Party leaders know that a great deal depends on the strategic employment of their forces in industry.

In March 1950 a directive was circulated among Communists in Southern England. It stated that Lenin and Stalin, the successful revolutionaries, had always emphasised that success depended upon correct selection of people, and the "*proper control of their work.*" It pointed out that in 1903 Stalin himself was "*sent*" to the Baku oil works to carry out the Party's directives. He did not, it will be noted, just happen to be employed there—he was *sent*.

The directive then ordered a "conscious effort" to ensure that every member of the Party was working inside an important

industry. Once there, it was made quite clear that serving Communism was their real task, and that this must not be sacrificed "for any other form of work."

From entry into the factory to the attainment of such posts as Shop Steward is comparatively simple for every determined Communist backed up by active Party membership. Opposition is almost invariably weak, and sometimes non-existent.

The same holds good in the local union branch. It is not at all uncommon for a branch with a normal membership of several hundreds to have a regular attendance of between a dozen and twenty.

The Communists, however, *always* attend. Further, they carry out their duties as an organised group. It does not take long for a resolute minority to secure control.

The same organisation, aided by general apathy, is active during important union elections. Recently a fellow-traveller was elected to a top position in the A.E.U. Ninety-four out of every hundred engineers eligible to vote did not do so.

Once a candidate has Party support, he goes into the election knowing that every other Communist will be instructed to withdraw and leave him a clear field. Two Communists never oppose each other for the same union position. The comrades also ensure that several non-Communists are nominated so that at least in the first ballot the opposition vote is split.

The Communist-supported candidate is then given the full treatment. His name constantly appears in Party newspapers and journals. Seldom do they mention his political affiliations. Usually he is described as a well-known and popular trade unionist.

Party members everywhere then see that his name is constantly brought before their workmates and branch members. Stories of how he "fought" for this and that are spread until even non-Communists are unwittingly publicising the candidate.

He also gets top billing at demonstrations attended by members of his union, even though technically he should not be there at all. For instance, the Communist contender for the A.E.U. Presidency was chairman at an unofficial meeting of motor workers, although he is not employed in that industry.

The same man also appeared before thousands of striking engineering workers, and handed over money collected for their strike fund, although he was not involved in the dispute either as a worker or a union official.

This technique, coupled with vicious smear campaigns against the more prominent anti-Communist candidates, has enabled the Party to capture top union positions, National Executive Committees, district committees, and hosts of local organisations.

The machine controlled by Kerrigan, Communist Party Industrial Organiser, works two ways. There is the flow downwards, which gives instructions to Party members. There is the flow upwards through which passes valuable information about company and union affairs, information upon which Communist battle tactics are based.

It is important to realise that this machine is in action all the time, even when its products are not immediately visible.

THE ROLE OF THE SHOP STEWARD

“The power of one shop steward to wreak damage in his section of industry can be immense, especially if the local body to which he is responsible is Communist controlled or dominated.”

The above statement was made on September 8th, 1957, by the President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union. It will be echoed by many employers in industries where huge financial losses have been suffered through unofficial strikes, go-slows and overtime bans. The damage to the country has also been considerable. Exports have been held up, and projects of great importance to security and the national economy seriously delayed.

To the Communist leaders the Party-controlled shop steward is the king pin in their industrial organisation. He plays an important part in campaigns to capture unions and to disrupt a selected industry. Orders originating with the international high command usually end up on the shop floor, where the steward is often the key man.

It should be appreciated at once, however, that the vast majority of men and women holding this position are not Communists. Thousands of them are doing first-class work in industry. They carry out their proper functions of ensuring that union contributions are up to date, that agreements binding on both sides are carried out and that grievances which arise in the shop are discussed with the appropriate representative of management.

Important as this work is, neither union officials nor employers should forget that shop stewards, except in the Communist-controlled Electrical Trades Union, have no authority to act on their own in calling strikes and no union, not even the E.T.U., allows them to authorise the payment of strike pay. In cases of real trouble they are, or should be, fact finders and reporters. Their job is to call in the officials of their union, and provide them with the basic information about the dispute.

Mr. Jack Cooper, President of the mammoth National Union of General and Municipal Workers, pinpointed the weaknesses inherent in the present position of shop stewards, and made some forthright comments on Communist exploitation of these weaknesses, when he addressed his union's Biennial Conference at Bournemouth in June 1957. He said:—

"In these industries where local negotiations are carried out by shop stewards, it is frequently the case that the authority of the full-time trade union officer and of the executive organs of the unions is weakened and often ignored. This is the result of deliberate and calculated action. We are all too familiar with the propaganda which fosters the unctuous philosophy that all the virtues lie with the rank and file . . . This position has been fully exploited by the Communist Party, whose members are to be found taking an active part as shop stewards. The ability to do this, of course, is made easier due to the reluctance of workers to take on the job of shop steward. It is an onerous job and it is so easy to dub as a boss's man the steward who attempts to solve problems on a reasonable basis . . . You may well ask how can there be unity of action between those who spend their time advising workers to steadily learn to hate the employer and all he stands for, and those who by patient negotiation seek to minimise industrial strife—the difference between conspiracy and common sense?"

In January 1955 the Communist Party issued instructions for shop stewards, emphasising the following points:—

1. That their power should be increased.
2. That the principle *must* be secured that shop stewards are immune from dismissal from their ordinary employment.
3. That negotiations between employers and union officials should be short-circuited and employers forced "*under threat of strike*" to settle questions on the spot.
4. Every shop steward must demand ample time off to conduct trade union business and that convenors and deputy convenors must insist on freedom to go anywhere in the factory at any time.
5. Funds should be established to "*enable shop stewards committees in the factories owned by one firm to meet on a national basis, whenever it is deemed necessary, and to associate with other committees on the National Council of Shop Stewards.*"

6. Shop stewards must be used to communicate and explain important decisions to meetings of factory workers.
7. A strong Communist Party must be built in the work-shops, as this is "*an absolute necessity if the shop stewards are to use their power to maximum effect.*"

It follows that through Communist eyes the shop steward is not only seen as an immensely important person in his own right, but as a member of powerful, well financed committees and councils operating both inside and outside the official trade union movement.

Members of these councils, which were once described by a leading trade union official as "alien bodies," attend frequent conferences in our major industrial towns. Special delegates are also sent to gatherings organised by the World Federation of Trade Unions in such places as Paris and Vienna, as well as in cities such as Prague behind the Iron Curtain.

The trade unions do not support these conferences, and do not allow official funds to be used by these so-called delegates.

Where does the money come from? The accounts of the Briggs Shop Stewards Committee for the three months ending March 31st, 1956, throw some light on this question. The balance sheet showed an income, plus cash in hand, of nearly £10,300. Of this £8,766 was received from the sale of over 175,000 tickets in a competition. Prize money amounted to just over £5,000.

A considerable portion of the balance was spent on what one can only describe as capital development. Offices were acquired and lavishly furnished, £187 was spent on repairs and decorations, and £777 on office equipment, all in one period of three months. Here is an itemised list of purchases:—

	£	s.	d.
Oil heater	10	10	0
Revolving chair	13	10	0
8 Windsor chairs	39	0	0
20 stacking chairs	40	0	0
5 office tables	36	4	3
12 Filing cabinets	97	10	0
5 office desks	33	10	0

	£	s.	d.
Clothes locker	3	0	0
Linoleum and mats	38	15	0
Electric kettle, teapot, cups, etc.	8	11	5
Tape recorder	55	6	0
Gestetner Duplicator and cabinet	172	0	0
Hermes typewriter	82	10	0
Adler typewriter	48	10	0
Stationery	81	7	11
Despatch case	2	16	6

It is safe to assume that these offices are more lavishly equipped than most official trade union establishments. Since then loudspeaker apparatus at the cost of over £200 has been added to the possessions of this Shop Stewards Committee.

A balance sheet for the ensuing five months showed an income of over £16,000. More than £2,000 paid the incidental expenses of shop stewards on "union business," and more than £1,900 was spent on strike activity and the printing of leaflets.

Referring to this money, Claude Berridge, an A.E.U. official who is also a founder member of the Communist Party, described it as the "sinews of war." How right he was. In one period of fifteen months 289 unofficial stoppages of work took place at the two main plants of this company.

Briggs employ just over twenty thousand people. Similar funds are raised in almost every large industry where extremists have gained sufficient control. The amount of money in the hands of these people runs into tens of thousands a year.

When a shop stewards' organisation becomes strong enough to rival properly constituted trade union leadership the situation is fraught with great danger for the industry concerned.

Because of his close contact with the workers, a shop steward can acquire influence out of all proportion to the real nature of his position. It would be true to say that the Communist leaders would rather have another shop steward in an important plant than gain ten thousand votes at a local or national election.

Frequently representatives of management boast that they have "a Communist convenor who is a good chap, and never gives the slightest trouble." They can be sure of this: if the time comes when the Party decides to concentrate on their industry or factory, this "good chap," if he is an enthusiastic comrade, will stop the whole concern without the slightest regard for his workmates or his employers. Either that or he will cease to be a Party member. There is no room for divided loyalties inside the Communist movement.

THE FACTORY BRANCH

In April 1955, more than one thousand "representatives" of factory groups operating in twenty-five European countries attended a conference in Leipzig. Officials of the World Federation of Trade Unions attended as "guests."

These "guests" were in fact the organisers of the conference. Its purpose was outlined by Herbert Warnke, a Vice-President of the W.F.T.U., who in a pre-conference article stated that in Italy, France, West Germany, Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries, the determination of the workers was expressing itself in "strikes, demonstrations, rallies and protest meetings of all kinds."

He went on to lay down the propaganda line which should form the basis of the conference. It was that in "capitalist countries" there was "increased exploitation, speed up, growth in the number of industrial accidents, decline in real wages, and attacks on trade union rights."

One of the delegates from this country was Communist Dave Michaelson, who, apart from being Secretary of the Shop Stewards' National Council, is Editor of the *Metal Worker*—an unofficial journal circulating in the engineering and allied industries.

Speaking to these delegates, Louis Saillant, General Secretary of the World Federation of Trade Unions, said:—

"We must get down to the roots, and the roots lie in the factories, the building sites, offices and the mines. *There at the place of work we must organise united action by the workers.*"

This directive was already in the hands of the West European Communist Parties when the Leipzig conference was held. In Britain just a month previously, John Gollan issued a report stating that:—

"The factory branch is the most important unit of organisation. No matter how effective the Communist work outside the factory gate is, however, it is the work *inside*, by our factory comrades and organisations, which is decisive."

After calling upon Communist shop stewards to do more to build the Party organisation, Gollan ordered members to select a hundred factories where there were three or four Communists, and with the aid of experienced leaders of successful industrial groups, to establish new branches in them within six months.

After the Leipzig conference a handbook was issued for the guidance of Party members in which factory branches (including groups in depots, pits and offices) were described as of "special, indeed key, importance." Here are the relevant passages from this handbook, which incidentally was re-issued in 1957:—

"Communist Party factory branches organise the vanguard of the working class *at the point of production*. It is here that the workers can best be mobilised for the struggle against capitalism; it is here that the struggle is the most effective; it is here that is the best centre for achieving working-class unity—the unity of the workers of different trades and unions, skilled and unskilled, young and old, male and female. Often the large factories can become a centre for rallying the people in a whole area. It is for this reason that the organisation of factory branches is a question of principle, of first priority for the Party.

"The factory branch is responsible for carrying to the workers of the factory the Party's policy both on all current issues and its long-term policy. It must know all the problems that concern the workers. It conducts public meetings, above all at the factory gates. It carries out campaigns in the factory in defence of the workers' conditions, on social issues, on peace. It sells the *Daily Worker* and the Party literature. It organises classes and meetings to explain the theory of Socialism.

"An important task of a factory branch when it reaches the necessary stage of ability and experience is to work out a policy for the factory based on the Party's policy for the particular industry with which it is concerned. Such a policy is the best way of relating the immediate demands of the workers and the general national policy of the Party.

"The factory branch is an all-round political body; it has an important responsibility for the Party's electoral work in the area."

The handbook also made it clear that the *Daily Worker*, apart from being the "organised link between the Party branch and non-Party workers" plays an essential role as "agitator, educator and organiser."

An example of this occurred during the London market strikes which originated in Covent Garden in August 1957, and came perilously close to causing a major stoppage throughout London's docklands. Bernie Holland, the strike leader, sent the following appreciative message to the *Daily Worker* Editor:—

"May I, on behalf of many of London's market workers express our thanks for the splendid support you gave us during our five weeks struggle.

"With all the might of Fleet Street ranged against us and yet faced with the task of explaining our case to the movement and to the public, the role of the *Daily Worker* was invaluable.

"Through your efforts, plans to assist us had already been put into effect in many vital areas, even before our stewards had made their contacts.

"Our experience should serve as an example of the need for the continuation and expansion of the only 'daily' serving the interests of the workers.

"May I pay a personal tribute to Alan Brown for the clear presentation of the facts of our case."

The directive on factory branches was emphasised and re-emphasised at the 24th National Congress of the Communist Party held in London during Easter 1956. Of the 486 full delegates, 122 came from engineering. There were also 34 miners, 29 transport workers, 50 builders, 11 power workers and 23 clerks. Other industries represented included textiles, vehicles, agriculture and the distributive trades. As a matter of interest, there were also 34 schoolteachers.

The directive on work in industry was given by Harry Pollitt, then General Secretary of the Party. He stated:—

"The factories are decisive for every advance. The factories are the heart, not only of the immediate struggle, but of the advance to Socialism. Therefore, our work should be of the character which gives leadership in the daily battles against the employers."

Several shop stewards then gave glowing accounts of Communist organisation in their factories. These "success stories" were obviously intended as an example to the more backward industrial branches.

Bill Batchelor of Rolls-Royce, Glasgow, for instance, told Congress that the Party branch in his factory had 116 members, around which were rallied 300 non-Party readers of the *Daily Worker*. The branch is organised in five groups, and has a committee of twenty-one, which meets regularly in recently purchased premises near the factory.

Bill Warman, the group leader at Standard Motors, disclosed that Party branches were strongly based in all the large vehicle-producing firms. Standards at that time were blessed with a seventy-strong group, aided by 350 regular readers of the *Daily Worker*.

The delegate from a West of England factory gave instructions to the comrades on how new branches should be set up. He and the small group of Party members in his factory had achieved results by not talking politics for the first four months. They organised discussions on almost everything else, including football, and noted the people with militant outlooks. On this basis a flourishing branch was established inside an important aircraft factory.

John Gollan summed up the situation by exclaiming that "if we had two or three hundred branches like Rolls-Royce we would be well on our way to victory." The Party leaders do in fact control nearly six hundred branches inside our main industrial concerns. Fortunately most of them are not as yet up to the standard of Rolls-Royce.

The struggle, however, goes on incessantly. Under pressure from abroad Party officials pour out orders to their agents in the workshops.

Following the special Party Congress held in April 1957, the factory comrades were told to conduct an intensive campaign among apprentices and young workers. On May 18th, the following directive was issued:—

"The Party itself should undertake propaganda and activity directed towards young people, especially in the factories, pits, road depots, etc., etc. It is especially important that

Party factory and pit branches should take up the problems of young workers in the industries. All Party branches should familiarise themselves with the position and problems of the young people in their locality or factory."

About the same time, the decision was announced to draft five hundred experienced Communists into the Party's youth organisation as part of the attempt to capture young workers.

Later in the year extensive re-organisation of the factory branches began under the guidance of John Williamson. This man was at one time a member of the American Communist Party's National Committee. He was deported from the U.S.A. in 1955, and on arrival in this country immediately resumed his activities on behalf of world Communism.

The object of the re-organisation is to strengthen co-ordination between Party Committees and workers inside the factories. This is just another way of saying that the full-time officials are setting up improved machinery to ensure that their decisions are put into immediate effect inside any factory singled out for trouble.

Similar industrial groups exist behind the Iron Curtain, with this difference—in Russia and the satellites the object of these groups is to implement schemes for boosting productivity.

In November 1955, Khrushchev boasted that the British system would collapse through economic competition with the Communist bloc. Just how factory branches fit into this trade war is clear from the following statements. Both the men concerned are leaders of Communist factory groups; both work inside large tractor-producing plants.

In March 1956, Bill Warman, Communist leader in Standard Motors of Coventry, announced his plan for dealing with redundancy problems in the vehicle industry. He said:—

"We say there should be a shorter working-week for the same pay, and that production should be cut by lowering efficiency."

A few months previously, Luctan Kwiatkowsky, leader of

the Communist group in the Ursus Works, Poland's largest tractor plant said:—

"Our factory branch is confronted with the responsible task of mobilising all who work in the factory, in order to raise productivity, improve techniques, and lower production costs."

THE MACHINE IN ACTION

“ As a result of the dock strike earlier this year over 400,000 working days were lost in the Port Transport Industry, delays occurred in the turn-around of ships, which meant that valuable exports were lost that can never be made up, and the set-back to our economic recovery programme was severe. *Yet there was no difference between British dockers and their employers as to the terms and conditions of their employment.*”

The above statement, taken from an official Government Report, was made by Mr. George Isaacs, the Minister of Labour in the last Socialist Government. He went on to say that “ the evidence shows that there was throughout a cold and deliberate plan, and that the unofficial leaders were completely indifferent to the loss and sufferings that might result.”

Here is another passage from Mr. Isaacs' foreword to the Report, which was published in December 1949:—

“ In the course of the strikes they (the unofficial leaders) engaged in misrepresentation and violence, and it was inevitable that when the Trade Union leaders in this country, mindful of the interests of their members, opposed the strikes and tried to bring out the true facts, they were in turn assailed and abused by the Communists in this country, who were supporting the strikes.”

“ Supporting the strikes ” is a masterpiece of understatement. In fact the stoppages, which paralysed Britain's seaports, were a carefully planned attack upon the economic structure of Great Britain. They were a typical example of the Communist machine in action.

The full story of the manoeuvres which preceded the strike has been told by Mr. T. G. McManus, who, when the events took place, was Secretary Treasurer of the Canadian Seaman's Union, and a prominent member of the Communist Party.

Mr. McManus revealed that a meeting of his union was in progress when Harry Davis, its President, arrived. He had attended two major conferences in Europe, one a meeting of the World Federation of Trade Unions, and the other a

special conference of the dock workers' faction of the British Communist Party.

Davis told the meeting that the Communists in this country not merely supported a strike, but demanded one. It was their view that a dispute on the waterfront might arouse the whole trade union movement.

Because of what Mr. McManus described as “ the secret request of the British Communist Party to create an artificial strike issue for dock workers ” a stoppage of Canadian seamen was called. Davis, who was working under the direction of J. B. Salsberg, a well-known Ontario Communist, and trade union director of the Party, immediately wired his brother, known in this country as Jack Pope, who had already been appointed representative of the Canadian Seamen's Union in London. Preparations for a major strike were at once put into operation. As McManus put it:—

“ What happened from then on is a matter of public record. When the C.P.R. ships *Beaverbrae* and *Agramont* arrived in London, Pope called the crews out. True to its promise to Davis, the dockers' faction of the British C.P. induced thousands of British dock workers—both Communists and non-Communists—to go on strike as a demonstration against the ‘ black ’ ships from Canada. Strikes and disorders flared briefly but violently across half the world.”

How such strikes as these fit into an international pattern was revealed in the *Transport and General Workers Record*, official organ of the T.G.W.U., in February 1951. It pointed out that while dock strikes were raging in European ports, the Czechoslovakian Minister of Trade issued a statement to the effect that only by using Polish ports could merchants be assured of uninterrupted passage and freedom from strikes, with a quick turn-round of shipping. The statement continued:—

“ It is our duty to convince foreign business men that transport via Poland will, for them, be more advantageous, because they can avoid disturbances which exist, *and will continue to exist*, in the West European ports. We must convince foreign contractors that routes through Western European ports are of no advantage to them as they have no

guarantee that transports will be loaded in time. Only transport via Polish ports is transport without risk. To give the work to Polish dockers is the only guarantee of honest work."

As the T.G.W.U. commented: "We had some experience of this sort during the Canadian Seamen's strike, when Canadian ships were loaded in Polish ports by members of Communist unions, and unloaded in Italian ports by members of Communist unions affiliated to the Italian C.G.I.L. It was not then a question of whether a ship was 'black.' The issue was—did its sailing fit in with the Communist pattern?"

Another example of the Communist machine in action was the London petrol strike of October 1953. In an editorial dealing with the stoppage, the *Daily Herald* asked: "Who misled the 2,500 petrol men who were within two days of reducing London to a state of siege?"

The answer was given by the late Mr. Arthur Deakin, then Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, to which most of the strikers belonged:—

"I am convinced this strike is Communist-inspired. I know that 60 of the 160 delegates running the strike are Communist. In this strike we have the Communists adopting a new technique. Instead of a small strike committee which would reveal the Communist organisers, they have a committee of 160, so that the Communists will not—they hope—be noticed."

The day to day direction of the stoppage was in the hands of Bert Slack, a member of a committee set up in 1950 to intensify Communist agitation in road haulage, passenger transport and the docks. Other leading figures on this committee were Bill Jones, a busman, and Ted Dickens, a London docker.

While Bert Slack was controlling the petrol strikes, Bill Jones was busy leading the demand for sympathetic action by busmen. His garage, Dalston, was the first to advocate a walk-out against 'black' petrol delivered by troops.

Meantime Ted Dickens, the senior Communist in the London docks, was mobilising his forces ready to spread the stoppage if the opportunity occurred.

Following a mass meeting in East London, one of the men who had been duped into striking said:—

"The strike has happened so suddenly, yet it has been organised so well we are suspecting that it must have been arranged months ago. There seems to be a plan we did not know of."

How right he was!

The technique referred to by Mr. Deakin has been used in almost every major unofficial stoppage since that time. The Communists, highly organised and experienced, have attempted to camouflage themselves behind committees composed mainly of well-meaning people possessed of neither the ability nor the will to play an active part in the running of disputes.

Union officials who attempted to expose the Communist intrigues were answered by such assertions as "only a small proportion of the strike leaders are Communists." In practice the real leadership was in the hands of officials, some of whom had never worked in the industry, and were not members of the unions involved. Their comrades on the strike committees had no difficulty in imposing decisions on the inexperienced majority.

The big strike at the Austin Motor Works in 1953 provides another interesting example of the machine in action. Ostensibly it arose over the dismissal of John McHugh—a man with long association with the Communist Party and the British-Soviet Friendship Society.

A Court of Inquiry into the dispute found that McHugh's dismissal was part of a genuine redundancy problem, and that there was no evidence of victimisation by the company.

A further interesting fact which emerged was that when the strike was called, McHugh had taken up an insurance book which he purchased for £150, and had been working on this for a period of five weeks. The Court expressed the view that "left to his own devices he would have continued in this occupation."

He was not, however, left to his own devices. According to a local official of the National Union of Vehicle Builders, it was the members of this union who "insisted that Mr. McHugh should give up this insurance book, because they felt he ought to be reinstated at Austin's, or re-engaged by Austin's."

Similar demands were *not* made on behalf of the 32 other men served with redundancy notices at the same time as McHugh, although these included two shop stewards.

With or without his knowledge McHugh was used to create a strike situation at Austin's as the forerunner of an attack upon the engineering industry as a whole. This was in conformity with the policy laid down at a World Federation of Trade Unions meeting held in Paris in May 1951, and reaffirmed in greater detail at a conference of the metal and engineering section of the same body held in Vienna nine months later.

Although the Austin strike directly involved only 2,300 members of the Vehicle Builders Union, at least twenty thousand others were prevented from working. Five assembly lines were disorganised, and production halted on the A40, the A70, the new Austin 7, the "Champ" military vehicle, and a new military truck.

The timing of the strike is also significant. McHugh was dismissed on September 5th, 1952. The men were called out on Monday, February 17th, 1953. During the week-end prior to that date, Dick Etheridge, A.E.U. convenor of shop stewards at Austin's, was in London attending meetings organised by the Communist Party. On the Saturday three hundred Party members from all parts of the country were addressed by Harry Pollitt, then General Secretary, who expressed the need for more agitation in the factories.

Next day Etheridge presided over a meeting organised by the National Council of Shop Stewards. It will be seen that just before the commencement of the strike Etheridge was in a position to discuss developments both with Communist leaders and extremist shop stewards from engineering works throughout Great Britain.

On February 22nd a secret meeting of Communist factory workers from the Midlands took place at the Typographical Hall, Birmingham, to discuss how "the Austin strike could be extended for the good of the Party."

Union officials denied all knowledge of this meeting. There is, however, no shadow of doubt that it took place, and that Peter Kerrigan was the main speaker.

In a summary of its findings the Court of Inquiry into the dispute stated:—

1. The dismissal of Mr. J. P. McHugh among other redundant workers on September 5th, 1952, was neither selective nor irregular in form, and cannot be attributed to victimisation on account of his trade union activities.
2. Mr. G. Evans, a District Organiser of the N.U.V.B., did, at the meeting of September 5th, seek preferential treatment for McHugh, although such preferential treatment was not in accordance with the national policy of the N.U.V.B.
3. The strike of February 17th, 1953, was unconstitutional, because it was not in accordance with the current rules of the N.U.V.B.

Yet this strike cost the union about £100,000, the Austin workers lost £100,000 a week in wages, production of some 25,000 vehicles was lost, of which 80 per cent were scheduled for the export market. This is apart from the huge financial losses sustained by the firm.

The Briggs dispute of January 1957 revealed a marked similarity in technique. This time the pretext was the dismissal of John McLoughlin. Here is what the Report of the official Court of Inquiry, issued by Lord Cameron, had to say:—

"In my view Mr. McLoughlin caused a stoppage of work in the shop without justification or necessity. He acted not on the mere spur of the moment, but quite deliberately, and in defiance of a specific instruction from his foreman."

During the strike McLoughlin, who was unfortunately almost immortalised by the press as "Bellringer Mac," refused to admit his membership of the Communist Party. In fact he had played a leading part in building Communist organisation inside Briggs.

As long ago as July 1952, Dave Kelly, a Party official in Essex, reported that:—

"In South Essex we have some Party branches in factories and localities that have given just the kind of lead required. *In the Briggs factory at Dagenham, united action has been under way continuously since last autumn.*"

Two years later McLoughlin gave the following advice, based on his experience at Briggs, to Party members in other

factories. Writing in the Communist weekly *World News*, he said:—

“ The Party has begun to put forward a serious struggle for Communist M.P.s and Councillors. Very good. But now a number of comrades see bigger and better ward work as the answer.

“ *I feel the only road is more concentration on building factory branches. Not getting six or seven comrades who happen to work together at a meeting once a month, but winning the conviction of comrades that the factory is their main job.* It must be agreed if you cannot win a *Daily Worker* reader in nine hours on the job you won't stand much chance in 10 minutes on the knocker.

“ Once comrades can see that, not only *Daily Worker* sales can be organised better; but when one talks of influencing the Labour movement, *one factory* branch can have a powerful influence on a whole number of trade union and ward Labour Party branches; plus the fact that these branches contain some of the best in the left wing of the Labour Party.

“ Our work in building factory branches also expresses our belief that the mass of industrial workers will fight slump and war and that they are the basic force for building socialism.

“ *A good factory branch trains and educates Communists in a way that no other Party organisation can.*”

The impact of the Briggs Communist Party branch on local trade union organisations was decisive. Its meetings were so arranged as to precede those of union branches. This enabled the “ line ” to be thoroughly thrashed out.

The South Essex District Committee of the A.E.U. was under strong Communist influence, and the Divisional Organiser of the same union an experienced Party member. For this reason the Amalgamated Engineering Union was regarded as the key to the capturing of Briggs.

It was necessary, therefore, to bring the Joint Shop Stewards Committee under the dominance of A.E.U. members. Using the technique of “ packed ” meetings, this objective was soon achieved.

Of the 160 shop stewards on the Dagenham Main and Riverside Plants, 54 belonged to the A.E.U., yet only one-fifth of the Briggs employees were members of that union.

On the Main and Riverside Plants' Joint Works Committee there were thirteen stewards. Nine of them—a clear majority—were A.E.U. members. Further, in both factories the positions of Shop Stewards Convenor and Secretary of the trade union side of the Joint Works Committee were held by A.E.U. members—one a fellow-traveller, and the other an avowed Communist.

Further analysis shows that the largest of the twenty-one unions represented at Briggs is the Transport and General Workers Union, in which Communists are ineligible to hold office. This union has more members than eighteen of the others put together, yet it has no representative on the Main Plant Works Committee, and only one on the Riverside Plant Works Committee.

Now consider the South Essex District Committee. Of the seventeen members, six at the time of the strike were from Briggs, and three from the Ford “ Parent ” Works. Five of the six members were shop stewards. The President, A. S. Moore, is a well-known Communist who was also convenor of the Briggs Joint Shop Stewards Committee. It was to this District Committee, which they were in a position to control, that Briggs A.E.U. shop stewards were responsible.

The Divisional Organiser at the time was Claude Berridge. He was assisted by Mr. V. E. Wymans. Both are members of the Communist Party.

The official report on the strike had this to say about the activities of Mr. Berridge:—

“ If Mr. Berridge's statements at the Inquiry really represent the views he holds and expresses, then it is not surprising that the atmosphere at Briggs was unhappy and that unofficial stoppages were rife because, with the prestige of his long service and important official position in one of the major unions, it is obvious that Mr. Berridge was a man who could exercise a great influence at Briggs. If it were felt that the Agreement of 1955 was valueless because the Company had no real intention of working it, surely the proper course was to seek by constitutional means the modification or improvement of the Agreement, to the acceptance of which Mr. Berridge was bound by the loyalty owed by him to the Union which had helped to negotiate and was a signatory to it, and

not by example and precept from a position of responsibility to undermine its authority (and that of his own Union) and promote conditions of anarchy and suspicion in the shops.

“ Mr. Berridge’s association with the matter has yet another aspect. I suggest later that it may be inferred from the facts that it was the purpose of the A.E.U. shop stewards at Briggs to become the dominant force in what might justly be called a private Union within Briggs, first by gaining control of the Joint Shop Stewards’ Committee, and next by gaining such a measure of control of the A.E.U. District Committee as to insulate themselves as far as possible against the interference and authority of the A.E.U. Executive Council. For this purpose, which I think to a considerable extent has been achieved, the active support or at least the sympathy of Mr. Berridge, who is a very experienced Union official and (if I may say so) obviously a man of high intelligence, would have been a major, if not vital, asset.”

Small wonder that Jim Matthews, National Industrial Officer of the General and Municipal Workers Union, said in reference to Briggs:—

“ We are concerned about the position. When we meet the management at the National Joint Negotiating Committee things usually go smoothly. We have our disagreements, but we can negotiate with them. *But at factory level there is always trouble.*”

The loss of production due to the incessant warfare carried on in this factory is incalculable. It is yet another example of the Communist machine in action.

The events briefly reviewed in this chapter cover several industries, and are spread over a period of eight years. They tell only a small part of the story. Other big strikes have taken place which were Communist-organised from start to finish. Thousands of smaller stoppages, many of them unreported, have also occurred.

The newspaper strike of 1955 was organised by the Electrical Trades Union and the Communist-controlled North London District Committee of the A.E.U. Its aim was to stop production of every London newspaper except the *Daily Worker*.

Communist groups in the building, constructional and engineering industries aided by contracting electricians have also played an immensely important part. They delayed the Tilbury

Power Station project for months by constant unofficial stoppages. Oil refineries at Coryton, Shellhaven and the Isle of Grain were under constant attack. The E.T.U. guerilla strikes of 1954 also did considerable damage. They impeded production at atomic power stations and in export industries.

Day in and day out, the Communists, working through their industrial organisation, are pounding away at our national economy. Strikes, overtime bans, go-slows, all are part of the same objective, to weaken this country and to prepare the way for a knock-out blow which, if successfully delivered, would speed the time when Communism rules over the whole of the globe.

FACING THE PROBLEM

Nine years ago the T.U.C. General Council pointed out that Communists everywhere were framing industrial demands for purposes of political agitation, magnifying industrial grievances and bringing about stoppages in industry in an attempt to sabotage our economic recovery.

After calling the attention of trade unionists to the "malignant character of Communist agitation and organisation," the statement went on to urge the executives of all affiliated unions, their district and branch committees, and responsible officers and loyal members to counteract every manifestation of Communist influence within their unions, and to open the eyes of all work-people to their dangerous subversive activities.

This timely warning met with more response than is generally realised. It awakened many Labour leaders to the danger of infiltration, and these men, to their credit, have played a major part in at least containing the Communist advance.

But for their activities such a vital union as the A.E.U. would now undoubtedly be as firmly in the grip of the Communist Party as the E.T.U.

The escape has been a narrow one. Indeed, had one important A.E.U. election held in 1956 gone the wrong way, Communist control of that union would, for all practical purposes, have been secured. One need only add that if the plan to capture this union had succeeded, the industrial history of 1957 would have been changed very much for the worse.

It will be recalled that the crippling shipbuilding and engineering strikes were called off only by the casting vote of the anti-Communist A.E.U. President. This was because the Executive of that union, reduced by illness from seven to six, had evenly divided on the vital issue. Three non-Communists voted for a return to work, two Communists and one other who consistently follows the Party line were for continuing the strikes. It was as close as that.

During these stoppages Britain came pretty near to a general strike situation. The whole Communist machine in industry was poised ready to take full advantage of the chaos which would have been created.

It is clear, therefore, that while the anti-Communist forces in the unions, now stronger than ever before, have to some extent held off the Communist attack, they have not yet succeeded in defeating it. Much more remains to be done.

This is a task for the trade union movement itself. It must put its own house in order. Having reached a position of immense strength in this country the trade unions must fairly and squarely shoulder the responsibility such power necessarily entails.

It would be tragic, even criminal, if through a failure to face up to this problem, Communism achieved, through industrial sabotage, something which it has never succeeded in obtaining through the democratic ballot box. The danger of this is very real.

Official positions in important unions, carrying tremendous power, are constantly decided by a tiny minority. It is a sad commentary on union enthusiasm that a vote of over 10 per cent for the election of even national officers is regarded as high.

Resolutions beginning at branch level, and finally comprising national policy, have been decided by such ridiculous voting figures as seven against six, although nominally the branch concerned represented several hundred workers.

It would, of course, be crying for the moon to expect large numbers of trade union members to alter their way of life and take an active interest in the affairs of their organisation. Most of them regard their duty as well and truly done if they pay their subscriptions on time.

Fortunately for the future of this country, the destruction of Communism in the unions does not necessitate masses of workers turning up at branch meetings and a huge poll at union elections.

The problem is a marginal one. Communists work as a highly organised minority. That is their strength, but it could

also become their weakness. It clearly indicates the road to success for sound members of the trade union movement.

A relatively small increase in branch attendance, a few less non-voters at union elections, greater readiness to accept nomination for official positions, and more unity of action, could clear the unions of Communist influence and pave the way for better worker-employer relationships in a short space of time. Free from disruptive activities our industrial life would then receive a boost which would have a beneficial effect on almost every home in the land. All these things could be done without any change in union rules. The path would, however, be made much easier if election procedures were tightened up where necessary. In some unions, notably the E.T.U., the faking of ballots is far too easy.

Basically, as has already been pointed out, these are tasks for the unions themselves, but employers cannot contract out of this struggle. It has to be stated with brutal frankness that some managements, through sheer stupidity, have played a major part in building the Communist organisation in industry.

They have provided golden opportunities for propaganda and agitation, sometimes because of their unwise action, but more often because of their failure to do the right thing quickly enough.

Recently an investigation was carried out into several firms which had remained trouble free during periods of considerable unrest in the industries with which they were concerned. There were certain factors common to them all:—

- (a) Good lines of communication through which management kept workers "in the picture" on all aspects of company policy.
- (b) The status of the foremen had been properly established and maintained.
- (c) Adequate machinery existed for discussion on all grievances.
- (d) Necessary action to remedy genuine grievances was put into immediate effect, and the matter was never shelved.

- (e) Workers at all levels were made to feel that their individual contribution was important. This applied even to the men responsible for keeping the shop floor clean, tidy and free from obstruction.

Such points as these are simple, but they can be decisive. Communists can, and often do, manufacture their own grievances to provide a pretext for labour troubles. Usually they have no need to do this. Managements leave plenty of inflammable material lying around, to which the skilled agitator merely has to apply a match.

It is wrong under any circumstances for genuine grievances to remain unsettled. When Communists are present in the works or in local union organisations, it is not merely wrong, but highly dangerous.

On each occasion that a loud-voiced agitator wins by threats concessions which were refused by negotiation, his stock goes up among his workmates. If there is a wrong which in common justice should be righted, it will only be the thoughtful minority who feel uneasy because it was a Communist-led campaign which forced a reluctant management to act.

It is by no means uncommon for a good shop steward, with due regard for procedure, to ask for some necessary adjustment, and get absolutely nowhere. A Communist then demands the same thing with threats of strike action and gets immediate results. Can one really be surprised that from that moment on he is firmly established as the workers' leader? The news soon spreads that while Mr. A was still thumbing the rule book, Comrade B "told the management a thing or two" and secured a generous settlement.

Small wonder that many genuine shop stewards, only too anxious to work through the properly laid down procedures, are themselves driven to extremist action in order to keep face with the men they represent.

The lesson is clear—managements should never concede to force what they are unwilling to grant through negotiations. Weakness of this kind merely purchases an uneasy and temporary peace. It boosts the "loud-mouthed extremists" and depresses the sound trade union negotiators.

Once a decision has been made it should be acted on at once. Experience shows that unofficial agitators are at their best during periods of long drawn out negotiations, and during the time that elapses between the reaching of agreement and its implementation.

Workers should be able to see that their employers mean business. The positive results of a negotiated agreement should be immediately obvious. Only then will they appreciate that genuine grievances can be settled without loss of wages and the dislocation of production.

If, after proper consideration, management decides to disallow a claim, whether it is for more money or for more towels in the wash-room, it should say so at once, and make sure that the reasons for this decision are understood.

A definite "no" is better than a hesitant "may be." That is, of course, providing the decision is based on a fair appraisal of the facts and is not just a "bloody-minded" refusal.

Acquainting workers with the reason for decisions is the responsibility of management. Even a good shop steward cannot be expected to interpret accurately the policy of a company, or to explain fully why a certain action was necessary, or why some demand was not agreed by the management.

A Communist will grasp with both hands every opportunity of "explaining" problems to the workers. There is, for instance, the case of a redundancy problem which cropped up because, following import restrictions imposed by the Australian Government, an order was cancelled. The firm concerned absorbed as many workers as possible in other departments, but could not find work for all those who were displaced.

The convenor of shop stewards, who had attended W.F.T.U. meetings abroad, called a mass meeting in the works canteen to "explain" the problem. Workers, he told them, were being sacked as part of an employers' plot to create a pool of unemployed and so drive down living standards.

He then marched the whole lot out of the factory, and a senseless strike began. Ten days later, having achieved nothing except a hold-up of production, he formed the workers up behind a band and marched them back into the factory.

This is not an isolated example. Managements should ask themselves how it is that a not over-bright agitator can gain employment in a factory and within months establish a position so strong that a word from him is enough for hundreds of good workers to forget their loyalties to the firm, their unions and their families, and down tools, although they know that loss of wages is the inevitable result.

More often than not the answer will be that the Communist machine went smoothly into action fuelled and lubricated by unwise moves on the part of employers.

The problem will be adequately handled only when management, at all levels, understands how Communist subversion works, and is familiar with its set-up in industry. If there is a powerful extremist element inside a works it would have to be managed by the Archangel Gabriel to be kept completely clear of all possibility of industrial warfare. If problems to be exploited do not exist, the machine will speedily create one or two.

Nevertheless, if all genuine grievances are handled fairly and promptly, if Communist manoeuvres are recognised as soon as they begin to operate, and if management masters the difficult art of combining fairness with firmness, the battle against subversion in industry can be won. The aim should be to isolate Communists in their dingy, out-of-date extremism, and to win the majority of workers over to the simple and truthful idea that progress without unnecessary pain is the right way ahead. Good management and good trade unionism are the essentials for this task.