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RADICAL TRADE UNIONISM IN BRITAIN,  
1921-1991

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Learn about British communism and...

... trade union militancy in the 20th century.

British Online Archives updated collection, *Radical Trade Unionism in Britain, 1921-1991* is drawn from the Communist Party of Great Britain's (CPGB) Industrial Department and offers a look at 70 tumultuous years of trade union history in Britain.



This collection is one of many CPGB resources hosted on the British Online Archives website.

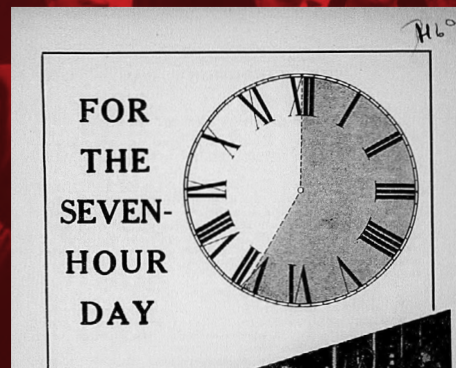
The Industrial Department was established to co-ordinate the CPGB's strategy towards trade unions and industry.

As worker-led organisations, trade unions were of particular interest to the CPGB. Marxist theory dictated that proletarian workers were central to the overthrow of capitalism and thus trade unions became key battlegrounds in building workers' political consciousness and power.

## THE COMMUNIST PARTY STATEMENT ON THE E.T.U.

*Adopted by the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, December 2, 1961*

Although past the apex of its power, the CPGB held considerable influence in the trade union movement during the 1960s and 1970s. Underhand tactics like entryism and ballot-rigging showed the CPGB would not go quietly into obscurity.

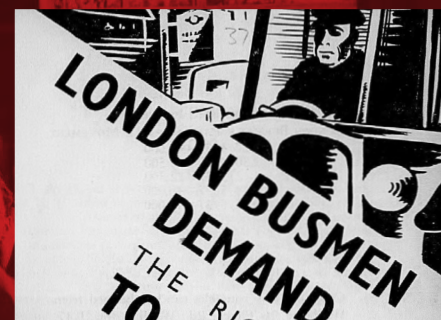


The collection contains over 18,000 unique images.

The material, including correspondence, reports, and pamphlets, follows the CPGB's attempts to support, radicalise, and infiltrate British trade unions. This includes files from the revolutionary National Minority Movement (NMM) of the 1920s, which played a key role in the failed General Strike of 1926, to the bitter disputes between Thatcher's government and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) during the upheaval of the 1980s



Material from the Red International of Labour Unions shows how the Soviet Union sought to control the international trade union movement.



Much of the material documents specific industrial disputes over working condition in Britain, from bus workers to clerical staff.

"This is war - not a game of lawn croquet. Our whole future is at stake. We fight against a great monopoly employer who is backed by a Tory Government whose anti-working-class record stinks to the very high heavens."

- The Platform, 1958

Sources include: Archive Trust of the Communist Party of Great Britain

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