

LOOKING

AHEAD

**HARRY
POLLITT**

TWO SHILLINGS

◆

The proposals put forward in this book, we believe, correspond with the aims of millions in our country, who want a free, happy and Socialist Britain.

The Communist Party is devoting itself to the spread of these ideas and is in urgent need of financial help to cover the cost of its campaigning. May we appeal to you to contribute to the Communist Party's Fighting Fund?

Please send contributions to Harry Pollitt, 16 King Street, London, W.C.2.

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LOOKING AHEAD

by

HARRY POLLITT

POLLITT
HORNER & McGREE
STADIUM
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1947

In 1944 we published *How To Win The Peace*, by Harry Pollitt. In this, there was advanced an analysis of the position at the end of the Second World War and a policy which, had it been subsequently adopted and put into operation in good time, would have avoided many of the problems now before the British people.

For its successful application, that policy required the unity of the Big Three and the consistent pressure and struggle of the people against the Tory reactionary and pro-fascist forces which Harry Pollitt warned at that time would fight bitterly for the retention of their power and privilege.

Today it is Wall Street and American Big Business which is leading the reactionary drive. But that has only been possible because of the policy of the Labour Government.

This new book by Harry Pollitt explains why Britain's situation has become worse, and what must be done to save the position while there is yet time.

It has been written in full confidence that the British working class can and will save the nation and in consequence has been given the title, *Looking Ahead*.

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INTRODUCTION

Surprise is sometimes expressed that the people of Britain have been called upon to go through experiences that they never dreamed would be their fate. There was a complacent belief that the course of Britain's economic evolution would always be up and up. Great play was made with contrasting the special conditions formerly enjoyed by a privileged aristocracy of the working class in Britain with those obtaining in other countries. Endless were the boasts about our British way of life, our British way of muddling through at the last minute.

Yet long, long ago, some Communists saw exactly what had been the fundamental cause of Britain's former prosperity; and, perhaps more important, they saw also exactly what the position of Britain's workers would be and the serious problems they would have to face as other imperialist rivals developed their productive resources and as the colonial peoples rose in revolt for their national independence.

Look at what Friedrich Engels, the great Communist leader and co-worker of Marx, wrote in 1881:

"The fact can no longer be shirked that England's industrial monopoly is fast on the wane. If the 'enlightened' middle class think it their interest to hush it up, let the working class boldly look it in the face, for it interests them more than even their 'betters.' These may for a long time yet remain the bankers and the money-lenders of the world, as the Venetians and the Dutch in their decay had done before them. But what is to become of the 'hands' when England's immense export trade begins to shrink down every year instead of expanding? If the removal of the iron shipbuilding trade from the Thames to the Clyde was sufficient to reduce the whole East-End of London to chronic pauperism, what will the virtual removal of all the staple trades of England across the Atlantic do for England?

"It will do one great thing; it will break the last link which still binds the English working class to the English middle class.* This link was their common working of a national monopoly. That monopoly once destroyed, the British working class will be compelled to take in hand its own interests, its own salvation, and to make an end to the wages system. Let us hope it will not wait until then." (*The Labour Standard*, London, June 18, 1881).

The development of imperialism delayed the crisis for the capitalist class, but it has made it even more serious and profound. Today the British working class is indeed "compelled to take in hand its own salvation," if Britain is to survive as a great, independent nation.

Engels' foresight nearly seventy years ago should give us all the more confidence in the Marxist method of analysis in tackling our problems. And let this quotation remind us, too, that it is just when the capitalist class is unable to go on ruling in the old way and is trying to preserve its power by selling out the national interests of the country that the working class has the opportunity and responsibility to take the leadership of the whole nation, to bring the country out of the crisis in the way that strengthens democracy and speeds the fight for Socialism.

It is time the Labour movement woke up to the fact that Britain is no longer the greatest imperialist power, that we can no longer wipe our boots on other nations, and that no one is going to present the British people with a standard of life above the rest of the world without any particular effort on our part.

The basic causes of Britain's weakened position in the world, and of some of its immediate difficulties, can soon be explained. We have not only to face the losses and sacrifices entailed by two world wars in such a short space of time. We inherit an economic and industrial system which has been shaped by close on 70 years of imperialist tribute from other countries. Now, the basis of Britain's imperialist power has been fatally weakened by the growing strength of American imperialism, by

* Engels here uses "middle class" as equivalent to "capitalists" (middle between the landed aristocracy and the workers).

the rising revolt of the colonial peoples, and by the advance of the movement towards Socialism.

Ours was the first country in the world to become industrialised. British engineers, textile manufacturers, railway builders blazed the trail for the whole world. A hundred years ago Britain was "the forge of the world, the world's banker, and the world's workshop." The trade of the world during this period pivoted on Great Britain.

But Britain could not keep a monopoly of industrial technique and commercial power. By 1870 both Germany and America were dangerous competitors, and British industry suffered a great depression after which it never recovered its old supremacy.

In the years between 1880 and 1914, British capitalists turned more and more towards investment of their stored-up profits overseas, in the colonies and "new" countries, instead of modernising the industries on which their former strength had been built. British investments abroad rose from £600 millions in 1870, to £4,000 millions by 1914. Exports were increased by means of foreign lending. As one of our best-known historians, Professor Clapham, put it:

"Resources were turned towards foreign investment, rather than to the rebuilding of the dirty towns of Britain, because foreign investment seemed more remunerative."

The exploitation of the Empire and the enlargement of it by war and annexation so as to save these foreign investments became the main concern of our rulers. Between 1870 and 1900 another five million square miles were added to the British Empire.

During the First World War, the U.S.A. made tremendous productive advances compared with Britain, and emerged as the strongest capitalist power. Britain, after a brief post-war boom, sank into the heaviest unemployment and depression in the memory of the British working class. The Tory slogan was: "The wages of all workers must come down." The Geddes axe fell, with all those enforced economies in social services that only hit the working class; the miners and engineers were locked

out, wages did come down with a bang, yet Britain's trade did not revive.

Between the two wars Britain never reached a real boom. The years 1929 and 1937 were years of moderate prosperity which did little to lift the shadow over the coalfields, the cotton towns and the shipbuilding districts. From 1921 to 1938, on the average 14 workers in every 100 were unemployed. In the years from 1931 to 1939 the basic industrial areas of Britain became the distressed, depressed, derelict areas. Jarrow achieved an unenviable notoriety as evidence of the destruction of a once dense and prosperous industrial area. Instead of restoring production and employment on the North-East Coast, Lancashire, South Wales, and Clydeside, the monopoly capitalists kept up their profits by restricting production and keeping up prices. Only the light and luxury trades prospered, while the basic industries decayed.

The proportion of British workers employed in manufacturing industries fell from 51 per cent in 1923 to 47 per cent in 1938. The numbers in distribution, on the other hand, rose from 1½ million in 1923 to over 2 million in 1938—from one in every eleven insured workers to one in every seven. As the authors of *The Social Structure of England* so pertinently noted:

"The trend was away from the land, the mine, and the quay, to the shop, the office and place of entertainment."

In the 1930s, Britain had a higher proportion of the people employed in administration, domestic service, and such like unproductive work, and a smaller proportion in productive industry and agriculture than any other country in the world.*

Between 1913 and 1937 the volume of British industrial output grew only 21.9 per cent as compared with 56.9 per cent in the United States of America.

Compared with the industries of other countries, our basic industries lagged behind. The facts which prove this are not given to join in the defeatist chorus: "Britain is finished," but so that there shall be no illusions about the state of British

* League of Nations, 1946, *Industrialisation and World Trade*.

economy. Let it be made quite clear that the present economic supremacy of the United States of America is not a proof of the superior efficiency of "free" capitalism, because it is as temporary as British nineteenth-century economic supremacy was, and is subject to the same problems of impending crisis and bankruptcy, as is already clearly to be seen.

Before the Second World War output per hour worked in the industry of America was nearly three times that of British. During the Second World War, British production increased by 25 per cent, but American production in the same period more than doubled. During the Second World War Britain suffered damage and dislocation of her industry in the bombing, but America emerged unscathed. Although some branches of British engineering, steel and shipbuilding were re-equipped, many important basic industries, such as cotton, wool, power stations, gasworks, railways, mines, were starved of equipment and badly run down. The mines, which exported thirty to forty million tons of coal before the Second World War, had lost so much manpower and machinery that they could not produce even the minimum requirements of British industry. Meanwhile the capacity of American industry increased by 40 per cent—its steel industry alone added more to its productive capacity than the whole of the British steel industry possesses.

By 1946, when British industry was painfully struggling to achieve a normal peacetime level of output in the basic industries, production in the U.S.A. was 70 to 80 per cent above pre-war. Latest figures show output in the U.S.A. per worker in steel two to three times the British, in woollen textiles double, in cotton three times, in motor cars five times ours; horse power installed per individual worker is over twice as great as in Britain.

Before the war, Britain could barely pay her way in the world. International trade, unplanned and chaotic, never recovered from the effects of the world slump of 1929-31, and Britain's share of that trade was further reduced. By 1936-38, exports were only paying for just over half our imports. The rest was partly covered by shipping services, income from banking and insurance

services, and interest and dividend on overseas investments. Despite this, however, there was a deficit in the total balance amounting to £36,000,000 a year. British capitalism was exposed as living on its past fat, and not able to add to it. Dyson's "fat man" was in fact undergoing a compulsory course of slimming.

During the war, British export trade shrunk to less than a third of pre-war volume; there was a net loss of a quarter of our shipping tonnage. Roughly a third of the overseas investments of British capitalists (including most of those in American countries) were sold to finance purchases from the U.S.A. before lend-lease began. Up to June 1945, £1,100,000,000 had been sold. Britain ended the war with a gross debt to other countries of some £3,355,000,000, which has now risen to some £5,000,000,000. This includes the American and Canadian Loans, interest and repayments due on which amount to £45,000,000 per year. The net income from British overseas investments, after deducting payments due to foreigners on their investments in Britain, has fallen from £185,000,000 in 1938 to £80,000,000 in 1946. The increase in exports needed to pay for loss of investment income and to meet the charges on overseas debt is in the region of 40 per cent.

In 1938 Britain could still pay for nine-tenths of imports out of her own resources. In 1946, in spite of the great export drive, we paid for only two-thirds of our imports—quite apart from the fact that we had large debts and were not able to pay anything off them. Of the adverse balance of payments of £400,000,000, over £200,000,000 was for overseas military expenditure, the cost of armies in the Middle East, India, Malaya, Greece, as well as the occupation of Germany.

It is time we faced the extremely grave situation that these facts reveal, both in our present and future interests. Because unless the nation understands the nature of the difficulties, and what exactly each citizen has to do to help overcome them, irrespective of whose corns are trodden on, we are going to get nowhere—or rather we are—we shall become the slaves and cannon fodder of the United States of America.

In the past, the right wing leaders of the Labour movement have relied on the strength of "their own" imperialists to keep Britain's economy going, and seen their job as being to secure special conditions for a small privileged section of the British workers while the shameful exploitation of the colonial peoples was intensified.

The left section of the Labour movement supported the struggles of the Irish, Indian and other colonial peoples, but they were not the majority and the right wing successfully supported the imperialists in holding on to their possessions by brute force. Today the Morrisons and Bevins, representing the traditional reactionary right wing of the Labour movement, are no less determined to keep as much as they can of the "Jolly Old Empire", to "socialise the profit motive", and to conciliate the imperialists.

The Labour movement must be brought back to a stern sense of realities—to get back to the old pioneering Socialist spirit when self counted for nothing, when careerism was not thought of, when cutting a figure in Parliament was not the only aim, when sacrifice was honourably undertaken as a duty, when service to the workers was not looked upon as something to be publicised or rewarded. We have to end a position where the rich are still able to say, "All's well, the sound and fury is only stage thunder". The rich must be made aware that their system of robbing and plunder and their power to exploit others is to be ended.

But I am forgetting we have a Labour Government which wishes to be all things to all men, and thinks that anything smacking of a class approach is unseemly. Even if we lose our independence as a sovereign nation, even if we adopt the "Star Spangled Banner" as our new National Anthem, even if we all chew gum instead of the Spanish root to which the tobacco tax has reduced millions, please do not rob Sir Stafford of his favourite austerity peroration; do not stop Ernest Bevin from making his favourite comparison between "free Britain" and the "Tsarist Police State."

And yet, surveying the situation as it is, and not as we should like it to be or as it may appear in seaside sun glasses, can we really afford to go on in the present happy-go-lucky manner? Once such a new approach is made to all our present problems, the nettle will be grasped. Then all the humbug and pretence about the victory of the "British middle path," the "way of life" of Britain and its abhorrence of anything but a beatific liberalism, will give place to an understanding that we face a worse situation from the standpoint of our present and future interests than we did at Dunkirk, and someone will have the courage to come forward and declare to the nation:

"It is necessary that the Government should be given complete control over persons and property. Not just some persons or some particular class of the community, but over all persons—rich or poor, employer or worker—and all property."

And if you exclaim: "This is going too far! What will kind President Truman, who wants to help us as well as the Greeks and the Turks, think?" We can only reply that it was said by Clement Attlee, M.P., at present Prime Minister, when he made his first pronouncement as Deputy Prime Minister in Churchill's Government on May 22, 1940.

And if you say: "I don't like your style; you are too bitter, too drastic," then please remember what you thought Britain and the world would be like when once we had defeated fascism.

I cannot forget what we all said during the Second World War, whether in the factory, the trench, the ship, the plane, or the air-raid shelter: "Never again!" We meant it to apply to poverty, class privileges and the contrast between rich and poor. All this tremendous sacrifice was not undergone to make Britain safe for Max Intrator's clients and President Truman.

We must mean it now and act up to it, whatever the cost to ourselves, whatever the price demanded, the exertion required, the sacrifice needed. For our country is again in danger, and it is now the duty and the honour of the working class, above all other sections of the community, to set the example in proving that Britain, despite its difficulties and problems, is not down and out, that its most glorious pages are about to be written.

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD ADVANCE TO SOCIALISM

Serious as the times are, it is very encouraging, however, to note the splendid progress which the international working-class movement has made during the last ten years. I say this because nowadays there are so many moaners and croakers around, so many who still underestimate all that the defeat of fascism has meant, and do not understand the great change in the balance of forces between the working class and the capitalist class, to the immediate and lasting advantage of the workers.

Who would have thought in 1940 to 1941, when Hitler's armies were marching triumphantly through Europe, when nation after nation went down before the Nazi hordes, when every capital city but Moscow and London displayed the flags of the fascist conquerors, that the situation in 1947 could be so entirely different?

But already in 1935 Georgi Dimitrov warned not only of the danger of fascism, but declared what would be the positive outcome of its defeat:

"Fascism, which appeared as the result of the decline of the capitalist system, in the long run acts as a factor of its further disintegration. Thus fascism, which has undertaken to bury Marxism, the revolutionary movement of the working class, is, as a result of the dialectics of life and the class struggle, itself leading to the further development of the forces that are bound to serve as its gravediggers, the gravediggers of capitalism."

Yes, the victory over fascism, although it was achieved as a result of the united efforts of democratic capitalist countries and the Socialist Soviet Union, has resulted in an all-round weakening of the capitalist system, and an all-round strengthening of Socialism and the tendencies and developments towards it throughout the world. This is what explains the apparently overnight change of policy on the part of all the enemies of Socialism, immediately the Second World War was won. They understood better than many in the Labour movement how deep

were the political changes which the fight against fascism had developed. The enemies of the working class know that now far more than one-sixth of the world is withdrawn from capitalist exploitation, that capitalism faces a tremendous economic crisis in the next few years which will be in sharp contrast with the rising production in the Soviet Union and in those new democracies in Europe whose productive resources are planned to meet the needs of their peoples. They know, too, that now colonial peoples, and their own working class as well, will strengthen their fight to seek a way out from capitalist exploitation through their advance towards Socialism.

In Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Albania, there are now new types of Governments which, in spite of all obstacles, have carried through sweeping agrarian reforms and nationalised the key industries; following on this they have launched national economic plans which in a few years from now will have resulted in the complete reorganisation of their economies, and will enormously accelerate the drive towards new Socialist societies in accordance with the traditions and conditions existing in these countries.

The Polish Three Year Plan, the Czechoslovak Two Year Plan, the Yugoslav Five Year Plan, the Bulgarian Two Year Plan, the Albanian Plan—all these plans give their people the certainty that, whatever hardships they have endured, a brighter future lies before them. The Hungarian Plan, too, initiated by the Communist Party in that country, but discussed, elaborated and agreed upon by the main political parties, including (and let it be noted) the Smallholders Party, was to begin in August this year.

In Hungary and Finland, too, the greatly strengthened working-class and democratic forces are battling to steer their countries along the course of democracy in face of tough opposition from internal and foreign reaction.

Sometimes I think we all underestimate the gigantic character of the revolutionary changes which have taken place in Central and Eastern Europe. Gone are kings, feudal barons, and military dictatorships; the former powder magazine of Europe has vanished for ever; and in their place are rapidly developing democratic and Socialist nations, from which we in Britain are going to learn very much indeed in the next few years.

The reactionary Press, and also Labour leaders like Attlee and Bevin, condemn all these new political and progressive developments as being a new kind of "dictatorship." I wish

this type of person, who so glibly talks about "mothers crooning over their babies" or misleads the Yorkshire miners at their Annual Gala, could have known what it meant to be a worker or small peasant, or a progressive student, under the pre-war Balkan dictatorships. I wish they could have known the poverty of the Polish peasant, or the prisons of the Bulgarian and Yugoslav secret police.

Today in these countries the workers rule, and I for one am going to shed no tears either about that, or the measures these same workers take to protect their new life and forms of government.

Today in these countries there are new people's armies, a new type of civil servant, new kinds of Ministers and Ambassadors. The managers of nationalised industry there are closer to the people than ours are, and because of all this the people naturally feel that it is their country, that they really own it; and that is why they are performing such miracles to reconstruct the whole of their industrial and agricultural life, and why they remain so dignified and calm despite a note of warning from a Marshall or a Bevin.

In considering the new constructive part played by the new democracies in Europe, both for their own peoples and as their contribution to world economic prosperity, unity and peace, we need again to remind ourselves that reaction never gives up.

After the great revolutionary changes which have taken place throughout the Balkans, it wouldn't be in accord with all past experience if reaction made no efforts to try and stage a comeback. Of course it will. But now it meets with the united resistance of people who have no intention of ever again going back to the old, bad, dark days, not even to please either Fleet Street sensationalism or writers of Ruritanian musical comedies.

I doubt, however, if there has been anything quite so despicable in modern journalism as the shameful attempts to misrepresent the legitimate steps which a number of Balkan Governments have had to take. We have seen this in regard to Yugoslavia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Albania, Rumania and Poland; we have seen how tamely and servilely Britain falls into line behind Notes of Protest sent from Washington to these countries when they take the necessary action to protect their new democracies and progressive way of life. I wonder what would happen if the people of Hungary or Bulgaria sent a note of

protest to Washington against the lynching of Negroes and the practice of racial discrimination; against the faked elections in the Southern States of America with people like Bilbo or Rankin involved. The wigs would be on the green with a vengeance. We remind younger readers that what is now being tried on against the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe was attempted by Britain and America in the first formative years of the Russian Revolution. Armed forces of intervention were sent by many countries including Britain to help the Tsarist Generals Kolchak, Yudenitch, Wrangel, and Denikin. A complete blockade was placed around the Soviet Union. The phrase "*cordon sanitaire* against Bolshevism" featured in thousands of anti-Soviet speeches and articles. These despicable efforts failed then, as they will fail again, but so long as we permit them to continue or are taken in by what lies behind them, so long does it hinder the development of those closer political and trade relations between Britain and the new Europe which are for the common good of all of us.

In China, Chiang Kai-shek's Americanised armies are unable to conquer the People's Democratic armies and territory. In Spain, resistance to Franco grows at a formidable pace, as the character of the recent strikes so significantly demonstrates.

In Greece, American arms and British Spitfires cannot conquer the Greek democratic fighters. The Greek armies and police, armed and advised by the British and American Military Mission, declared war on the Greek guerillas. They sent in planes, artillery and naval units to attack them. The Greek Bevins and Marshalls boasted all this would lead to the "total annihilation" of the fighting Greek democrats. General Napoleon Zervas, Minister of Public Order, became so bold as to lead his troops into battle on a new white horse; he must never have heard of Napoleon. The Greek guerillas continue to fight on and on, and they will never be defeated.

The National Liberation Movements in the colonial countries have made great strides on the road to independence. Who could have said ten years ago that—even with the present limited character of the concessions which British imperialism has been forced to make—India, Burma, Malaya and Ceylon would have reached the present stage in their historic struggle for national independence?

But this is not the whole picture. There is China to consider where 150 million people work, fight, and live in a democratic area of that huge country; where there is a new type of democracy, where the corruption of Chiang Kai-shek and Chicago is unknown; where the rule of the landlord, money-lenders, usurers and police has been ended.

There is the new power in Indonesia, the examples of Viet Nam in Indo-China, and the new developments in Madagascar.

The colonial peoples are fighting for freedom with a tenacity that I would like to see copied by the workers of Britain.

Just look at the organised working class forces which now exist, and which represent a factor of tremendous international importance. The International Federation of Trade Unions, which existed before the war, had a total affiliated membership (1936) of twelve millions from twenty countries, mainly in Europe and the British Dominions.

Today the World Federation of Trade Unions unites seventy million workers; the central trade union organisations of over sixty countries are affiliated to it. The Soviet trade unions are there, with 27 million members. There are the great new European organisations built up after the overthrow of fascist rule, such as those in Bulgaria (385,000), Hungary (888,000), Italy (5,200,000), Poland (1,600,000), Rumania (1,267,000), Czechoslovakia (1,500,000), Yugoslavia (662,000). Even more indicative of the changed world, perhaps, is the representation from colonial and semi-colonial countries, such as Korea (650,000), India (850,000), Cuba (557,000), Iran (300,000), Nigeria (500,000), Malaya (120,000), Burma (625,000), Philippines (300,000).

The real significance of these figures can only be grasped when one remembers that, before the Second World War, in many countries there existed two rival Trade Union Congresses, that the Soviet Unions were not a part of the old International Federation of Trade Unions, and as far as the trade union movements of the oppressed colonial countries were concerned, they had no place at all. Now all this has been changed, to the permanent benefit of the trade unionists of the whole world.

What a tremendous new force in the world this is! Not only because of the great numbers now united. For the first time in history the organised workers in all countries, of all races and creeds, are linked together to safeguard their common interests.

Let us note also the contrast between the proceedings of the

World Federation of Trade Unions and those of other international organisations such as U.N.O. At the former, despite the fact that the Russians have the greatest membership and number of delegates present at such conferences, there is no conflict between "East" and "West." The entire proceedings are characterised by a constructive effort to reach agreement, pool ideas, and advance the aims of the W.F.T.U. in its fight for the interests of the workers of the world. It is because it is worker acting with worker.

Along with the growth in industrial organisation, the political organisations of the working class have gained enormous strength. In Britain we have seen the greatly increased strength of the Labour Party; the Communist Party, too, has grown from 13,000 ten years ago to 40,000 today. In other countries the growth of the Communist Parties has outstripped that of the Socialist Parties, though both are far stronger than before the war. In 1939, outside the Soviet Union and China, there were not many more than a million in the Communist Parties. Today there are eleven million, making with the Communist Parties in the Soviet Union (6,000,000) and China (2,000,000) a total of nineteen million. There are Parties over a million strong in France and Czechoslovakia. The Party in Italy has over two million members. In Germany, there is the Socialist Unity Party in the Soviet zone (1,576,000), and the Communist Party in the Western zones (350,000). In the new democracies, where formerly the Communist Parties were banned and had to exist illegally, there are now legal Parties in Bulgaria (450,000), Hungary (650,000), Rumania (500,000); Yugoslavia also has a great and experienced Communist Party. Among the great new Parties in Latin America, there is the Cuban, with 152,000 members; and there is the Brazilian Party with 130,000 members. Communist Parties now exist in 68 countries, including many colonial countries.

The existence of these Parties, basing their outlook and policy on Marxism, and working wherever possible in close unity with the Socialist Parties, represents a progressive force, the like of which the world has never before known. In many countries the Communist Party is the strongest political organisation, steering their country confidently towards the Socialist goal of the working class and making it a bulwark against the warmongers and the exploiters.

Above all, do not let us make the mistake of being so mesmerised by the power of the Almighty Dollar, that we think that nothing is happening in the United States. As compared with 1935, when only four million workers were in trade unions, there are now fifteen million. The growth of the Committee of Industrial Organisations; the mighty strike wave which has struck terror into the hearts of American Big Business; the growing influence of the American Communist Party; the tremendous response to the recent campaign of Henry Wallace, which will yet prove to be the turning point in American history; the promise of a third party to challenge all the present reactionary policies of the Democrats and Republicans alike at the Presidential Election in November, 1948—these are the indisputable facts about the growth of the labour and progressive movement in the United States of America. The very ferocity of the anti-labour campaign being carried out by Wall Street is also the proof of how strong the American labour movement has become and how afraid Big Business is that it will continue to grow.

All over the world the trade unions, Co-operatives, Labour, Socialist and Communist organisations are stronger. Everywhere there are stronger ties than ever between workers by hand and brain, between industrial workers and peasants too. In many countries, the powerful new organisations have grown up out of the fight against fascist and imperialist rule and represent a conscious progressive force in the fight for a new society that will bring a better life for the peoples.

Stronger numerically, and also far stronger politically. Millions who in 1939 were content with a purely trade union outlook are now animated and inspired by the political outlook of Socialism, and are making magnificent efforts to carry through the economic plans of their governments. Their task is made more difficult because of American aggression and Britain's foreign policy. They will take a little longer to do the job, but it will be done.

Socialism is on the march. The principal issue of our time is: Advance to Socialism, increased prosperity and lasting peace, or be dominated by an aggressive American imperialism, with economic crisis, poverty, mass unemployment, and the danger of a new war.

We have no doubt of the outcome, and I will quote again

from Georgi Dimitrov because he so splendidly describes the great perspective:

"The whole course of historical development, comrades, favours the cause of the working class. In vain are the efforts of the reactionaries, the fascists of every hue, the entire world bourgeoisie, to turn back the wheel of history. No, that wheel is turning forward and will continue to turn forward until a world wide Union of Socialist Republics shall have been established, until the final victory of Socialism throughout the whole world."

It is as well to realise the significance of that great thought, and to say to these enemies and exploiters of the working class, "Gentlemen, you are too late. What you couldn't do in 1918 and 1919, you are not going to do in the coming years." Of course, they will try. They will use the stomachs of hungry men and women as the bargaining counters in their efforts under the guise of "liberty," "free trade" and "private enterprise," to try and impose their will, their way of life, their mode of thought, upon millions of peoples, in an endeavour to contain, to stem, to hinder the growing movements throughout the world towards Socialism and Communism.

And if any who read this tend to shrug their shoulders and scoff at my balanced optimism, that what the workers fight for they will achieve, allow me to remind them that in 1921, when the Russian Revolution was fighting for its very life, when the famine was at its worst, the Soviet Commissariat of Health sent a report to the League of Nations Epidemic Commission on disease and famine in the Soviet Union. It was a terrible document. It makes one's blood run cold to read it again. It made an appeal to the League of Nations, which for all practical purposes was turned down, but it concluded with these prophetic words, which in my opinion, when in Britain we are experiencing so many difficulties of our own making, we would do well to remember:

"In any case, if such aid is not forthcoming, Russia, thanks to her natural resources, will ultimately triumph over her present troubles, though in a much longer time and at the cost of countless lives. And if the crisis is prolonged its evil effects will be eventually felt throughout the civilised world."

I repeat, you gentlemen of reaction, you did your damndest to stop the advance of Socialism then, you did not succeed, and you will not now.

CHAPTER II

THE AIMS OF WORLD REACTION

To the infinite surprise and alarm of all the enemies of the working class and of Socialism, when the victory over fascism was achieved the workers did not say, "Thanks for all you have done, Churchill and company; we will now call it a day and get back to where we were in 1939." Oh, no! On the contrary, in Britain they promptly fired Churchill, and in a number of European countries proceeded to form new kinds of democratic governments in which the key positions were held by Socialists and Communists.

This is what terrified the Big Business men of America and Britain. They saw what was at stake all right! Truman ended Lease-Lend as his blow against a Labour Britain. We survived that one, as we shall any others which may yet come along from the same quarter.

It is quite simple to define what is at stake for the capitalist class. It is their right to live by the exploitation of others; it is their profits, luxuries and privileges; their town and country mansions, their select universities and public schools. It is centuries of extracting millions by robbing the workers and peasants, so that they may live in a world which at their end of the scale is Berkeley Square, and at the workers' end, Poplar.

It is to be able to invest capital in foreign lands to obtain higher returns than they can get in their own country. It is to dispose of the commodities turned out by a vast production machine not on the basis of their usefulness, but of the scale of profit they can secure for them.

It is to keep the poor in their place, to dope them with false theories and beliefs, to warp minds and judgments by the control of the press, radio and Church.

They understand that for them and their way of life Socialism is the end, and they are class conscious enough as a result of their training and privileged position to resort to any means through

which they can halt the onward march of the workers of the world.

They look around for saviours who will not demand too high a price for their services. That was Hitler's mistake. He was the idol of world reaction as long as his mission was "to crush Bolshevism," but when it became clear he was out to obtain the domination of the world for German Big Business, it became another matter, and Hitler had to be crushed.

Now America, the greatest stronghold of imperialism, has taken the place of Hitler Germany. The methods, of course, are different, but the aim is the same, to obtain the domination of the world so that the commodities produced by American Big Business can be sold at a profit.

The Wall Street millionaires and trust magnates would blanch with righteous anger at the suggestion that they should "contain Communism" (and by that, please understand they mean Labour as well) by the method of concentration camps, no freedom of speech, press or organisation; but they find it thoroughly just and "Christian" to starve millions by withholding from them the food America has in such abundance because they don't like their politics. We shall never know how many people have died since the end of the war and will continue to die as a result of America's reactionary doctrine. And all done in the name of "freedom," "the American way of life," "democracy," and as a blow against "totalitarianism."

Never was there an industrial country in the world where so great a part of the wealth and power lay in the hands of so few people. In 1926, the U.S. Federal Commission showed that the richest one per cent of the population owned at least 59 per cent of the wealth of the nation, and that the mass of industrial workers, small farmers, and self-employed shopkeepers, forming 89 per cent of the population, owned about 8 per cent of the total wealth. Even before the war, the real rulers of America were the eight great groups, headed by Morgan, First National, Kuhn-Loeb, Rockefeller, Mellon and Du Pont. During the war, as the Senate Report on "Concentration of Economy in World War II" has shown, the power of the great American trusts grew still further.

Today, these trusts have emerged as the open Government of America. With the vast profits and the rapidly-shrinking

purchasing power of the American people, the U.S. Trusts, the National Association of Manufacturers, live in a continual nightmare of the coming economic crisis. To forestall the crisis they have launched a fierce attack against the rights and standards of U.S. labour; at the same time, with the Truman doctrine, they have launched a world offensive aimed at dominating the world.

I ask of those British trade unionists who fought so hard to get the infamous Trade Union Act repealed by the Labour Government, how can that same government find itself in such a close relationship with America, and such distant relations with the Socialist Soviet Union, when you read the anti-trade union Act that American Big Business supported. Just read the main points of this measure, aimed to destroy the Trade Union movement in America:

- (1) The Bill forbids the closed shop, and union shop (which means that all employees hired must become union members within a definite period after starting work) is sanctioned only by the employers' consent.
- (2) National and industry-wide agreements are forbidden; contracts can only be made between labour and employers within a single enterprise, or within a group of small enterprises each employing less than 100 workers and not situated more than 50 miles from each other.
- (3) Anti-labour injunctions may be issued by the Department of Justice under certain ill-defined circumstances.
- (4) Strike action is illegal unless voted by a majority of all employees, and in any case a 30-day cooling-off period is compulsory. Sympathy strikes, jurisdictional strikes and sit-down strikes are forbidden.
- (5) Unions must expel from office all Communists or those who can be regarded as Communist supporters. Unions failing to do this will not be recognised. Strict conditions are laid down for questions such as benefits, election procedure, finance and disciplinary procedure. The unions are forbidden to contribute to election funds.

I wonder if Ernest Bevin ever thinks of what Ben Tillett, Tom Mann, John Burns and Will Thorne went through to build trade unionism in Britain, and how he squares it with his conscience that his ideal land is one where the aim of the leaders is to crush trades unionism.

Now reaction never gives up. It is fighting for the preservation of a system of society whose death knell history has already sounded.

It looks around for leadership, and today there can be no doubt where it is. It is in the United States of America, and let no British reader of this book think it is of no concern to him what America is doing in Greece and Turkey, what it aims to do in France and other countries, its aims in the Middle East, its plans against the Soviet Union. The centre of world reaction lies in Wall Street. Who are the main allies of Wall Street, the junior partners of world reaction? Franco, the Greek Government, Peron, the dictator of Argentine, Salazar, the oppressor of the Portuguese people. There, where reactionary governments can only maintain their power with foreign help, they look to Wall Street for comradely aid.

But throughout the whole capitalist world, the trusts, monopolies, bankers, the royal families, Tories and their ilk, landowners and press lords fear the pressure of the people, fear the people's determination to take power in their own hands. Thus the most reactionary groupings in each country, seeing that by their own devices they cannot hope to preserve their power and their privilege, or where they have lost it, to restore it, turn to Wall Street for support. The unholy alliance of the Churchills and De Gaulles, German Junkers and industrialists, Japanese Mikado and the trusts, Italian bankers and ex-fascists, Dutch reactionaries, Belgian bankers, Chinese warlords and Indian Princes is formed as a great international network of quisling representatives of the traitor class, who are prepared to sell out to a foreign power the interests of their own nation in order to win back or maintain their personal control.

In Eastern Europe, where the people now have won power, these quislings also operate. In little groups, working secretly, plotting and conspiring, they dare not openly state their real programme to the people, but work silently to provoke conflict between the great powers, take bribes and supply false information to the agents of the State Department and the Foreign Office, and look to Wall Street to give them back their loot.

Even within the Labour movement, sections of the old reformist leadership, fearing and hating the mass movement of the people, turn to Wall Street, that democracy of millionaires and negro-lynchers, and prefer to tie their countries to the U.S. trusts rather than engage in that hard class battle for the defeat of capitalism in their own country. Whatever they might think they are doing, these men are acting as quislings.

It would be a profound mistake, however, to believe that American imperialism is the only imperialism that exists. No one should be deceived into thinking that British imperialism has been liquidated because it has been forced by the development and strength of the National Liberation Movements in India, Burma, Malaya, Ceylon and Egypt, to make certain concessions. Even behind every concession is the old aim of trying to perpetuate the traditional policy of "divide and rule." This is the essence of the position in Burma, Malaya and India. In Ceylon and Transjordan it is even more transparent, for despite all the great fuss about the new era, British imperialism still retains the main power in both these countries.

British policy in Palestine, Egypt, the Middle East, Cyprus and Africa simply plays into the hands of the American imperialists, who, under the pose of being a more beneficent power, are aiming to replace British imperialism by their own. The aims are the same, and the more we and the colonial peoples compel the Labour Government to give self-government, independence and to withdraw British troops, and open up entirely new relations with the freed colonial peoples, the sooner we shall win powerful allies that can prevent the predatory aims of an aggressive American imperialism from being realised.

America is not leaving Britain alone. She is soaking us right and left over the American loan. Owing to the rise in prices of American goods, from the time we signed the Loan Agreement to the time of actually drawing on it, £100 millions had disappeared. She compelled Britain to accept indefensible conditions before granting the loan. She intends to use those conditions to weaken Britain's position in the world market. She aims to use her production resources, tremendous compared with ours, to drive Britain out of every important market.

With that effrontery which characterises reaction at its worst, America would gladly foot the bill in Greece and Palestine for our boys to die there while hers remain safely at home. She will make Britain a junior partner, like some Chicago gangster, ready to make some slight concessions to his rival so long as he keeps out of the big-time rackets. But she will aim to push Britain out of the Middle East, and her policy in Greece and Turkey has that in mind as much as it is directed against the Soviet Union and the New Democracies in Europe.

The American journal, *Time* (March 24, 1947), made this point quite clearly:

"The loud talk was all about Greece and Turkey, but the whispers behind the talk were of the ocean of oil to the South."

America would like Britain to become its advance base if another war broke out—its aircraft carrier, its rocket and flying bomb base. It wouldn't matter a tinker's cuss to them that Britain and its industries and people would be speedily wiped out in such a war.

So the sooner this present unprincipled alliance between Labour Britain and aggressive American imperialism is broken, the better for the common people of both nations.

Truman has now become the hope of world reaction. His policy in Greece and Turkey has given reaction a new life. It has been applauded by Churchill and De Gaulle, by every enemy of democracy and of the working class in Greece and Turkey. The rats in a number of other nations have begun to emerge from their holes—in Hungary and Bulgaria, for example—believing that it is now safe for them to raise their heads again under cover of praising "the American way of life" and how it hopes to save the world from the "menace" of Socialism.

Every honest Labour man and woman in Britain ought to be proud and envious of the zealous way the peoples in the new Europe are on guard against the rise of reaction, and how swiftly they nip it in the bud at every possible opportunity. They are determined to stand no nonsense from the remnants of the old ruling class. When they catch them at it, they arrest them. Some of them, seeing the danger light when their own pals have squealed on them, go to Switzerland and resign from that country, just because, cowards as they are, they are not prepared to face a trial that would establish their guilt before the eyes of the world. Oh, no, not for this class of person is that the game. Far better to rely on their other pals in the State Department at Washington and the Foreign Office in Whitehall, with the hope that they will send Notes of Protest to the new democratic governments in Europe, with the hope that they will ask for documents which these same gentlemen would never dream in like cases of transmitting to any other government.

It must be said for them, they do not hope in vain. Bevin soon gets on the job. But after Marshall, if you please—the big

fellow knowing his place when there is a bigger one about. But does this same Bevin, the fellow who is prepared to stand up to anybody and "talk rough," ever send a Note of Protest to his Royalist Fascist Government in Greece, which day by day is exterminating the flower of Greek democracy? He does not. Their blood is on Bevin's hands, and no water in Whitehall will ever wash it out.

Does Bevin protest to Franco about the infamies that fascist scoundrel is inflicting on the best Republican sons and daughters of Spain? Not on your life. He would much rather pirouette with a Peron.

Let no one be deceived into believing that it is only the Soviet people who need to be worried by the great anti-Soviet campaign now sweeping the United States. The Labour and progressive forces of the whole world have to be worried.

Wall Street millionaires and monopolists have only been able to go so far because the international working-class movement does not realise its own strength and power, does not unite all its forces and organise forms of international co-operation between the democratic and progressive nations which would compel the U.S.A. to change its present reactionary policy. Until this is done, the American ruling class will continue to think and act as if its divine mission is to state its demands and see they are accepted.

When Sweden signed a trade pact with the Soviet Union, the U.S.A. protested to Sweden. It received a calm and firm reply that reflects the changed world situation which Sweden recognises. The U.S.A. did the same to Czechoslovakia, and promptly stopped the negotiations which were going on for a loan. It protested to the Swiss Government about negotiating a trade agreement with the Soviet Union. When the Hungarian people solved their recent political crisis, this is what Stuart Gelder, the American correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, wrote on June 3, 1947:

"The United States today took swift action against the new Soviet-sponsored Hungarian regime by suspending the unused half of the £7,500,000 surplus property credit . . . Mr. Marshall used the occasion to serve notice to all European countries that they can expect no help or sympathy from America if they compromise with Communism, even to the extent of including Communists in Coalition Governments."

In the same issue of the *News Chronicle* the following statement appeared:

"Mr. Winthrop Aldrich, the American banker, who opened the Congress, paraphrased the American Declaration of Independence. 'The International Chamber of Commerce,' he said, 'holds this truth to be self-evident; that freedom and economic progress are possible only in the realm of free competition in which the allocation of resources takes place by a price system rather than by direction from a central planning authority.'"

There it is, plain as a pikestaff, and "these guys," to use their own cultured expression, are not kidding. In present circumstances, that threat is of greater danger to Britain than any other country in the world. It cannot hurt the Soviet Union. It will not affect very much those European nations who are tied to each other by reciprocal trade agreements and by trade agreements with the Soviet Union.

Capitalism cannot plan. It cannot be regulated by a central planning authority. In 1928 the world was regaled with all kinds of fairy stories of "how Ford had replaced Marx," of how organised capitalism would facilitate the advance towards Socialism. But in 1929 the crash came in the States, and soon every country in the world, with the exception of the Soviet Union, was involved in it. In the years when the capitalist world experienced its greatest depression, the Socialist world was organising some of its greatest constructive achievements.

It is the coming crash in America, which none doubt and of which so many in that country are terrified, that explains the present reactionary character of its policy. The time when the crash will come is not in itself the decisive factor. What does matter is this. If Britain still remains tied to American policy, dependent on American dollars, and has not negotiated new trade agreements with the Soviet Union and the New Democracies, then we can be hit harder by a crisis in America than any other country in the world.

There are two other aspects of the position arising from an American slump that are worth noting: first, those nations which have agreements with the Soviet Union will be largely immune from the consequences of an American slump. Second, do not forget that in the slump of 1931 the Labour Government in Britain tried to borrow money from the United States. It was offered on conditions that unemployment benefit was cut by 10

per cent and similar drastic reductions made in expenditure on social services.

In case there is any doubt about the accuracy of this statement, I will quote from *Arthur Henderson*, a biography by Mary Agnes Hamilton published in 1938. Describing the situation in August, 1931, she states:

"At 7 o'clock in the evening of that August Sunday, the 23rd, the members of the second Labour Cabinet met as a Government for the last time. It was known that there had been consultations with the Opposition, and their result. But they did not know when they assembled, whether New York would grant a loan if a ten per cent unemployment cut were agreed to.

"By a majority, it was agreed that New York should be asked on the telephone. The call was made. The night was sultry and oppressively hot. People drifted out of the Cabinet room into the garden as they waited; stood about there in scattered groups . . .

"At last the answer came. On condition that there was a ten per cent cut in unemployment benefit and £7 millions additional were raised from other sources, Mr. Harrison, President of the New York Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank, thought that there would be no difficulty in raising the required credits in New York and possibly also in Paris . . ."

It led to a split in the Labour Government. MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas ratted. They formed a "National Government" with Baldwin, and set going a sequence of events which culminated in war in September, 1939.

Wall Street will try that game on again, and we need to be on guard to ensure that it finds no support in any section of our Labour movement.

Now, while noting the significance of American policy towards the Soviet Union, and its attacks on Communism generally, let us get it clear that the real aim of that policy is to try and stop ordered, democratic progress and planning everywhere. Truman boasts about America's fidelity to the United Nations Organisation, but by-passes it in the case of Greece and Turkey. Emboldened by Churchill's support of that policy, Truman now blatantly offers a military alliance with Canada, encouraged no doubt by his military standardisation agreement with Britain. He follows it up by an official visit to Canada, but certain Canadian newspapers were quicker to realise what this means than the British press, as two typical comments prove:

"A bloc of nations cannot supersede international agreements. Hopes for general peace rest in international agreements and not in an agreement of hemisphere scale." (*Toronto Star*, May, 1947).

"Truman's statement openly admits that Canada is put at the disposal of the United States Army, and Mackenzie King's attempt to represent it as the collaboration of equal parties can deceive nobody. There can be no equality under such circumstances. The sovereignty of Canada is at stake. The Canadian Government has tied the Canadian people hand and foot to the Truman doctrine, the aim of which is the domination of the whole world." (*Daily Tribune*, May, 1947).

Now let us see how the Tories stand in relation to the development of American policy. It would be a mistake to lump them in a solid block, because while undoubtedly some sections of the British capitalist class fully support and encourage the development of Truman's policy, others see its dangers to their vital trade interests.

But the dominant group, led by Churchill, make no pretence about this wholehearted support to Truman. It was not accidental that it was at Fulton in America that Churchill fired the first shot in the anti-Soviet campaign, with Truman on the platform as his enthusiastic applauder. That line was taken further at Zurich, and further still in the Albert Hall speech on the United States of Europe. By the irony of fate, it has come about that the Tory leader, Churchill, who saw the menace to British trade interests from Nazi Germany and helped Britain to play its full part in the victory over Hitler, is now so terrified of the new democratic and Socialist forces which have developed in the course of the struggle against fascism that he is prepared to hand Britain over to the United States of America.

The alleged great patriots of yesterday are preparing to become the British quislings of tomorrow. They recognise their weakened position in the world, they smart under their defeat at the General Election and know that never again will there be a Tory majority in Britain. They hate nationalisation and planning. They see "their" Empire dissolving before their eyes and are helpless to do anything about it. Their inefficiency and greed is responsible for the technical backwardness of our key industries, which will shortly have to face the all-out competition of the high-powered American productive machine. They gloat over Britain's economic difficulties; the very weather seemed to be on their side during the winter. They tried to take advantage

of it, but Labour, in its best Socialist sense, remained steady.

And so they look for new allies. The once proud monopolists of the world are now prepared to sit at the feet of the American Colossus in the vain hope that it will restore them to their own former position. But it is a vain hope, as Churchill seemed more and more to realise in his conversations with the late President Roosevelt when he pathetically exclaimed :

" Mr. President, I believe you are trying to do away with the British Empire. Every idea you entertain about the structure of the post-war world demonstrates it." (Elliott Roosevelt, *As He Saw It*).

Well, well! I am afraid, to use a common expression of my son's, " he's had it," and the Tories are going to have a lot more unpleasant surprises. But in all fairness, let me hasten to add, so are the people of Britain, unless in quick time there is a reversal of our present reactionary foreign policy.

For consider the recent American Trade Agreement with the China of Chiang Kai-Shek. It closes the Chinese market to Britain for all practical purposes.

Then take the American Trade Mission recently in India. Was it there to help Britain preserve the " rarest jewel in the British crown?" Not on your life! America's vast productive resources are to undercut and undersell British goods, to drive Britain out of the Indian market. At the end of April this year, the United States signed a diplomatic and trade agreement with Nepal, a part of India that Britain has formerly guarded very jealously against any other kind of foreign penetration. The United States has been extending its diplomatic activity in India. To the American Consulates in Delhi, Madras, Bombay and Calcutta they have now added a Consulate in Lahore, the capital designate of Pakistan. On May 19, the American warship " Toledo " visited Bombay, demonstrating that Britain is not the only nation with warships. As the *Hindustan Times* pointed out at the time, the United States is trying to appear to the Indians as a progressive power anxious to abolish all Empires and desirous of liberty for the peoples, whereas in reality the United States is interested only in capturing the markets of the world, India included.

Take the Middle East, where the Americans are making the attractions of the dollar plain for every Sheik with oil under his feet to see.

And yet this once proud British Tory Party, which dominated the world, which was so dizzy with success that it couldn't see beyond the end of its nose, so hates the thought of a Socialist Britain that it will lick the boots of its own conquerors in America if it thinks they will hinder the advance of Socialism.

Do not let us underestimate the Tories. They have their internal differences, but they are united in their hatred of Socialism. They control the great millionaire daily and Sunday press. They have formidable influence in the B.B.C. They still own the land and the greatest centres of industry. They have powerful trade and political organisations. They polled 9,000,000 votes at the last General Election. They have millions to spend on subversive propaganda against nationalisation, as with ~~their~~ their campaign against the nationalisation of road and ~~and~~ rail transport. They are skilful enough—and the Government ~~is~~ foolish enough to allow it to come off—to place *their* people in the leading positions on the nationalisation boards and working parties.

They will have to be fought every inch of the way. We need to look out for a new, cunning type of propaganda from these traditional and implacable enemies of the working class. It is as clear as daylight that because of the Government's wrong foreign policy, Britain is going to face unnecessary economic difficulties for some time to come. The Tories will put it around: "We can only turn to America." "Stop the drive to nationalisation"; "Abolish bulk purchases," "Reduce the Food Subsidies," "Call a halt to extending social services," "There is a national crisis—there is need for a National Government," "Take us in on the basis of our demands, and our kind American friends will be only too anxious to give us a real helping hand." That kind of propaganda will be plugged, and if food rations are cut, or the cost of living continues to increase, then the Tories' line of talk can find an echo among certain unstable sections of the community.

Meanwhile we also have to note the revival of activities by the Tories' other allies, the fascists. All over the country they are getting busy. You talk about a Solar System—the Tories certainly have got one: Housewives' League, League of Ex-Servicemen, Knights of St. George, etc., etc. Anti-Semitism is their main theme as the cover to win support for their fascist

political aims. More and more they will be financially assisted by Big Business, more and more encouraged to extend their activity on the basis of "British freedom of speech, press and organisation." The Tories and their fascist allies need to be fought at every turn; no quarter offered; no concessions given; no coalition with them; no slowing down of Labour's programme. This is the way to spike their guns and to smash their hopes of winning the next General Election.

When I read the three broadcasts made to America immediately after the General Election in 1945 by prominent Labour Party leaders, a cold shudder went down my spine. It was clear what game was afoot. No broadcasts were made to the Soviet Union or to the new European democracies. America was assured that because Britain had a Labour Government this did not mean that Britain had "gone red." Great virtue was made of the fact that 80 per cent of industry was to be allowed to remain in the hands of private enterprise.

The Churchill policy in Greece was continued and intensified. British troops were sent to Indonesia, a trade agreement made with Franco Spain, a more aggressive policy adopted in Palestine, and a whole spate of propaganda let loose about the character of the new governments in Central and Eastern Europe, alongside a studied offensiveness to the Soviet Union that shocked the Labour movement.

At every Conference of Foreign Ministers, Britain's policy was, in the main, identified with that of America, and I have yet to hear any explanation as to why a Labour Britain that is true to Labour can on any issue find more in common with American imperialism than with its natural Socialist allies in the Soviet Union and other countries in Europe. Bevin echoed every sentiment of Byrnes and Marshall. His name became a byword throughout the international Labour movement and the peoples of the world. So much had been expected; a new era was anticipated in British foreign policy, and instead we got only what Churchill and Truman alike in the main support.

Alongside this reactionary Government policy, the Labour Party did everything in its power to try and prevent the growing unity of Socialist and Communist Parties throughout Europe, a unity which, cemented in the heroic struggles and battles of the Resistance movements, terrified the Labour leaders. They sent

their delegations to many European countries to do all in their power to smash this unity. In many cases they failed, but they certainly brought confusion and doubt and retarded developments towards a single united party of the working class in some countries.

They fought against the affiliation of the British Communist Party to the Labour Party in 1946, and they won, but what gains has it brought to the working class of Britain? That question will no doubt be put rather forcibly the next time working class unity is demanded.

Harold Laski was one of those who toured Europe, and he seems to have forgotten some of his own words, such as:

"The hour of victory may well prove the hour of danger unless the workers are ready to act. At present they are gravely divided. Ideological differences are still keeping Socialist and Communist apart . . . if when the war ends there is to be a continuation of that fratricidal strife which did so much to wreck the Labour movement of Italy and Germany, and to blunt their strength elsewhere, the result of the war for freedom may well be the achievement of a more bitter slavery." (Harold Laski in *Left News*, January, 1943).

The Commander-in-Chief in the British zone in Germany even forbids any propaganda on behalf of a United Workers' Socialist Party, although such a united party can make a mighty contribution towards the democratic development of Germany in a way that could guarantee against any future German aggression for all time.

It is this reactionary policy of the Labour Party which has encouraged American reaction to put forward more boldly its aggressive policy and aims. The Labour Government bears a heavy responsibility for the existing international situation. It could all have been so different. By now we could have all been on the way to prosperity. The period of shortages could have been almost ended if the leaders of a Labour Government had not hated Communism more than they ever did capitalism. To retard the former they will make the most unprincipled alliances with the latter; but it is not they who pay the price, it is the working class. This is now being recognised on a wider and deeper scale. It explains the voting at the trade union and Co-operative conferences against the Truman policy, and the revolts in Parliament on our military commitments reflecting

feeling in the factories and constituencies. It will continue to grow. Margate was not the real expression of feeling in the movement, and I make bold to say that before the end of 1947 many important changes in foreign policy will have been made as a result of the mass pressure of the workers on the Government.

For again I repeat—strong as reaction is, audacious as it is, the forces of the workers are more united and stronger, and, given a correct policy and leadership, they will rout the present reactionaries as decisively as they did those they fought against from 1939 to 1945—only this time it will be by political and not military measures.

CHAPTER III

PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE UNITE

The great strength of the Socialist, Communist, progressive and democratic peoples and movements which exist throughout the world has already been noted, and the urgent problem is how they can be firmly united in a common effort to solve common problems.

To win such a world-wide unity for common and progressive aims which can safeguard the future for the common peoples, is above all the responsibility of the working class. It is not a question of opposing one world against another, or one nation against another. Such aims are those of reaction and have to be fought and defeated. It is a question of trying to inspire such confidence in the strength of the progressive forces of mankind, that countries at present pursuing reactionary policies can have a halt called to them, and their peoples be roused to the point where they insist on governments and policies fitting in with the new ideas of world co-operation, which at the same time will safeguard national sovereignty and independence.

There is a place in such a front for countries whether they are Socialist or capitalist, whether they have Labour governments or governments of a mixed character, or the new National governments such as are just emerging in India, Burma and Ceylon.

To those who say that this is impossible, I reply that it was done during the war, and given the same sense of urgency and the wider political outlook that has since developed, it can be done even more successfully in the conditions of peace.

It is an insult to the intelligence and the strength of the newly-awakened masses all over the world to think that, in a world suffering from acute shortages of all kinds, a world in which such gigantic tasks of reconstruction await the hands of men, a world in which such vast new developments open out, and when mankind has at its service new forms of energy, they will be content to take things as they come. On the contrary, given the correct leadership and unity the people will actively challenge the

ordinary laws of capitalism which were not challenged in former periods, and find new solutions to the problems facing them.

Just look out on the world at the moment and survey the facts: shortages of some form or other of commodities in every land; Europe awaiting tremendous constructive activity to repair the damages of war; India, Africa and China could provide the basis of international co-operation that would keep many industrial countries busy for years on end producing the things needed by these great countries and their teeming millions of people.

Everywhere the people want to live better, eat more, have houses that are homes, have better transport, better lighting, sanitation, roads, schools and universities, wear better clothes, enjoy better chances for education and culture. People who want things can be organised to fight for them. No one pretends that to want is to have—not at all. But to want and be determined to unite and fight to get can be half the battle once the issue is put to the people.

I know this: when the world was at war, those nations that were clear in their intention to survive made up their minds to pool their resources. The same kind of idea needs to be popularised now, so that the peoples of the world who have survived fascism can begin to live in a new way and on higher standards than they have enjoyed before.

If nations could lend-lease for war they can surely find ways and means for new forms of economic co-operation in peace conditions. You may say this is over-simplification. Maybe it is, but is the idea right? Is the point one that people can be got to be interested in? I believe it is, and that is why it is essential to work to organise the people to fight for what they want, and to force their governments to organise their resources and carry out policies to ensure that this new kind of battle against reaction and for the needs of the people is also won.

Such aims were not possible in 1919 after the First World War, because the features in the situation I have just mentioned did not then exist. But they are possible today. In 1919, many nations at once began to spar for position in a new competitive rivalry for the world market; today there is only one power which makes the capture of the world market its main political aim—the United States of America. On the other hand, there

are now many countries anxious to try and find new forms of international economic co-operation which will, in a certain measure, correspond to the new kind of planned economy they are trying to organise in their own lands for the benefit of their people. Is not this fact half the battle won already?

Instead of moaning about "everything seems hopeless," why not get cracking to win what we want? Why all this defeatist talk about international conferences being failures? Replace it by the spirit intent upon fighting to bring about those changes of purpose, the action and the unity that can make them a success.

The progressives of the world have a common interest in defeating the reactionaries of the world, so that the resources of the world shall be used for their mutual benefit. This is the present dividing line, and all progressives have to decide on which side they will line up.

It is our duty in Britain to begin to show the example. I am convinced that once we force the Labour Government to operate a real Socialist policy, both at home and abroad, then in every nation in the world the progressive forces will be strengthened, and will be able to fight effectively against the danger of war and against the economic crises which are the inevitable result of so-called "free enterprise."

We have to find the way to a new conception of commonwealth relations, freely entered into with aims perfectly clear—the mutual use of mutual resources for the betterment and advancement of all the peoples of the Commonwealth. The hateful past of a brutal imperialist rule can be wiped out in a generation by a new epoch of mutual assistance, exchange and development.

Let the Labour Government convene a conference of representatives of the nations, the working people as well as of the governments, which made up what was called the Empire. Let them come from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India, Burma, Malaya, Africa, the East and West Indies, all the Crown Colonies. Let our resources as a whole be examined, our requirements from each other estimated, and it will be amazing what we could do together to satisfy common needs and open out entirely new paths of development and construction.

We know very well what we can do in Britain. We have coal; we are the finest makers of machinery in the world; our ships sail the seven seas; and there are none to equal them in line,

craftsmanship and skilful and lasting construction. "Made on the Tyne and the Clyde" has been said with pride in every seaport of the globe. We have craftsmen with generations of skill behind them—men with the touch, men who can make anything fit to go anywhere. Our machinery and tools are equal to any in the world. Our locomotive builders are talked about wherever British locomotives have been. This is the real Britain, not the Britain of luxury goods to tickle the jaded palates of rich Americans; not the Britain which can only produce whisky, expensive and fancy textiles.

I wonder how often any of us seriously take the trouble to consider what tremendous resources of raw materials, foodstuffs, machinery, factories, mines, textile mills, steel works, transport, technical skill, inventive genius, craftsmanship and manpower Britain and the Dominions, India, Burma, Malaya, the West and East Indies, and all the Crown Colonies have at their disposal?

In the form of crops, there are in one or another of the nations we have in mind at this moment, wheat, barley, cocoa, coffee, cotton, maize, oats, rice, rubber, rye, sugar, tea, tobacco, wool. In minerals we have asbestos, bauxite, china clay, chrome ore, coal, copper ore, diamonds, gold ore, iron ore, lead ore, manganese ore, mercury, nickel ore, nitrates, petroleum, phosphates, salt, silver ore, tin ore and zinc ore.

It's an eye-opening list when you think of it for a moment or two. What folly to allow ourselves to be so at the mercy of the United States of America, when unity and co-operation between Britain and its associated peoples could so swiftly bring about those changes of policy inside the United States of America which would then allow even wider forms of economic co-operation to be organised.

Then think of the enormous amount of reconstruction needed at home, at the moment proceeding at a snail's pace, the modernisation of our industry, the expansion of our agriculture, the rebuilding of our towns and cities, the revolution that is needed in every aspect of life in the countryside.

Look also upon the never-ending vistas of development needed in India, in which we could play such a gigantic and proud part, the new harbours, the industrialisation of that country and all the machinery and technical assistance we could give; the opening up of that great nation by new railways, telegraph and telephone equipment; the collectivisation of agriculture and

modernisation of industry, the housing schemes, the schools and universities which will be needed on a colossal scale—for let there be no mistake, India is going to proceed on a great progressive path at a greater speed than is yet realised. The same goes for Africa, the East and West Indies, for Burma, Malaya, Ceylon and the Crown Colonies.

Will Canada and Australia stand still? Of course not. There, too, great development schemes cry aloud for work to be begun upon them, not to find new outposts for firing rockets and flying bombs, not for experimenting with atomic bombs, but for peaceful construction and the extension of agriculture, industry and farming.

How can these new forms of economic co-operation be established? I give a rough and ready reply. Our locomotives for wool; our ships for tea; our coal for cotton; our textiles for wheat, our machinery and coal in exchange for raw materials we need; the willing assistance of our skilled workers and technicians in helping forward the industrialisation of countries crying aloud for such development and also to assist in the training of skilled workers in such countries, and so on. These proposals *are* practical, and I am deeply convinced that if the way were found to operate them, as it could be, then we should all be gratified by the results.

Let me say that such a policy has nothing in common with Beaverbrook's ideas about "Empire Self Sufficiency," or "Empire Free Trade," or an "Empire Bloc against the rest of the world." What I am proposing is meant to be organised on an entirely different basis and produce entirely different political results. It is a conception of policy in which the contribution we can make is at the same time unified with the planned economies of other nations. One which does not seek to revive or strengthen British imperialism in new forms, or to increase the profits of "Empire Builders"—and there is no difference between a Rhodes and Beaverbrook—but to weaken imperialism, to extend, expand and exchange the common resources of peoples with the same democratic, progressive and Socialist aims.

I propose this not for the Empire countries to be used as a bloc against the rival imperialism of America, but for this common action to assist, not only in the all-round improvement of the peoples associated by past and present ties with Britain, but also as a means of strengthening the development inside

America against the policy of its reactionaries and imperialists, and making it possible for that nation to play the great constructive part in enabling itself and the world to march steadily forward on the path of social progress.

I look upon such a policy as being an essential part of our support for the principles upon which the United Nations Organisation is founded, an essential part of our policy for ending imperialism, for the fullest international economic co-operation despite differences in social systems and political outlook.

I see it as vital to the successful solution of the German problem, so that as we explain elsewhere, a new, really democratic Germany can be developed that never again will be a menace to peace and will make its full contribution towards economic prosperity. It is an integral part of the struggle to reduce armaments and the size of the armed forces, and for the prohibition of the manufacture and use of the atomic bomb.

It is a policy in short that is meant to assist the democratic and progressive peoples of the whole world, but it is also a policy meant to assist in striking mortal blows at reaction all over the world. If at the same time such a policy were consciously linked to a serious effort to make an entire change in our present relations with the Soviet Union and the new European democracies, then we begin to go places. But here I must make what I think is an important digression.

The Communist Party is sometimes charged with paying too much attention to the Soviet Union. Well, here is a little confession of faith. I give it only to try and get the right slant on the most important problem of our time, how to work with the peoples of the Soviet Union.

When the news of the Russian Revolution on November 7, 1917, came through, because I had been victimised from big factories and shipyards, I was working in a little shop in Swinton, Lancashire. I had read a little of Marx, but never anything of Lenin. I had never heard of Stalin, but I feel now what I felt then. "The workers have done it at last". It wouldn't have mattered one of Shinwell's "two hoots" to me where this revolution had taken place, Timbuctoo or Costa Rica. The thing that mattered to me was that lads like me had whacked the bosses and the landlords, had taken their factories, their lands and their banks. I had never

heard of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat or the expression Soviet Power. All I knew was the workers had conquered, were the top dogs somewhere in the world. That was enough for me. These were the lads and lasses I must support through thick and thin. And don't drop dead with fright when I also say that for me these same people could never do, nor ever can do, any wrong against the working class. I wasn't concerned as to whether or not the Russian Revolution had caused bloodshed, been violent, and all the rest of it. I had lived my life in Lancashire. I had read and seen what the kind-hearted British bosses had done to the Lancashire working-class. I knew about Peterloo. I had seen too often on the promenade at Blackpool, when on holiday in our Sunday best, what a stunted deformed bunch we were. I hated every thing that the violence of the British Industrial Revolution had done to my class and my people. All this may be hard to grasp, but there it is.

I did not then fully understand the significance of the polemics between one section of social democracy and another. All I was concerned about was that power was in the hands of lads like me, and whatever conception of politics had made that possible was the correct one for me. Don't you see, that still has to remain the conviction and guiding line in our attitude towards the Soviet Union and its people, for *it is only the Soviet Union and its people who can say that the whole of the means of production, distribution and exchange are in their hands*. It is only in the Soviet Union that there can be a complete planning in which each aspect of the economy of the nation fits one into the other; only there where there is no competition for markets, no class against class, no race against race, and a political and moral unity which amazed the world during the war and thwarted the hopes of reactionaries, whether capitalist or Social Democratic.

The fundamental historic facts also give rise to the simple truth, that whatever the policy of the Soviet Union it is always in the interests of its people and the working people of every other country in the world. This is what gives rise to such deadly hatred in the minds of the capitalist class and their Social Democratic allies. This is why they slander the Soviet Union, and why the fight against such slanders is the fight for the everyday interests of our own people and the advance towards Socialism in our country.

The campaign of slander against the Soviet Union is the cunning attempt of reaction to split the international Labour movement, to weaken it, to create doubts in its mind, and to enable the capitalist class to strengthen its political hold on the working class. I say openly, you cannot be a real Socialist and enemy of reaction, and at the same time assist in any way to carry on a struggle against the Soviet Union and its people, however cunningly you try to pretend that it is "only the tactics of certain Soviet leaders" that you are protesting against. The attitude towards the Soviet Union and its people is the real test of the devotion towards Socialism in every land on the part of all who call themselves Socialists.

Since November 8, 1917, when Lenin sent out his historic call for an immediate armistice to the imperialist war then raging—a call the Governments of that time deliberately kept from the knowledge of their peoples—right down to the present time, the Soviet Union has never once formulated a policy that was not in the interests of the common peoples of the whole world.

A real Socialist Government, such as the Soviet Government, which represents a nation where the exploitation of man by man has ceased to exist, cannot have any other kind of policy.

At the Hague in 1922, it advanced its proposals for the basis upon which lasting peace could be organised. Its despatch of food to the Ruhr miners in 1923 out of its own scanty store was a great act of class solidarity, as was its help for the British miners in 1926. Its solidarity with the working people of every nation in their struggle against reaction is unparalleled. Its demand for world disarmament at Geneva in 1927 revolutionised the proceedings of that gathering; its positive proposals at the Economic Conference in London in 1932 could have averted the world suffering which followed. It defended the Abyssinian people. It assisted the heroic people of Spain when the British Government was stabbing them in the back. In 1938, it was the only nation to offer to fulfil its treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia, as President Benes has testified, when Britain adopted the policy of Munich to the cheers of the Labour Party.

Its proposal for a Peace Alliance against fascism was rejected by Britain. Its proposals for a Nine Power Conference in 1939, which could have prevented the Second World War breaking out, were again rejected by Britain. Stalin's warning in 1939, about the desire of the Soviet Union for peace, but that it would not pull other people's chestnuts out of the fire, went unheeded.

It consistently struggled against Hitler. The deeds and sacrifices of its people in the anti-fascist war will compel history to record that it was the Soviet Union's part in that struggle which played the major role in saving the world from the barbarism of fascism. Its determination to fulfil the decisions of international conferences, such as those at Yalta and Potsdam, and its proposals for the reduction of all armed forces, are an example of its moral probity.

We live in an age when the discovery of the atomic bomb has ushered in a new terrible weapon of war. No one who has read of the effects of two atomic bombs dropped on Japan dare minimise what the future holds for mankind if another world war broke out. And no one, reading the reactionary American Press, can remain in any doubt as to the use to which those it represents are prepared to put their present exclusive monopoly of the atomic bomb.

Now I ask you to read the positive proposals advanced by Mr. Andrei Gromyko, on behalf of the Soviet Union, in relation to the atomic bomb and atomic energy:

- (1) Strict international control is established simultaneously over all enterprises engaged in obtaining atomic raw materials and in the production of atomic materials and atomic energy, in order to assure the utilisation of atomic energy only for peaceful purposes, in accordance with the International Convention on the prohibition of atomic and other basic weapons of wholesale destruction, and with a view to preventing the violation of the Convention on the prohibition of the atomic weapon and to protect States abiding by the terms of the Convention from the risk of violation and evasion of that Convention.
- (2) An international committee for control over atomic energy, called the International Control Committee, is established within the framework of the Security Council to implement measures for control over enterprises of atomic energy.
- (3) In carrying out the inspection of enterprises of atomic energy, the International Control Committee undertakes the following functions: (a) Investigates the activities of enterprises obtaining atomic raw materials and atomic energy and checks their accounts. (b) Checks up available stocks of atomic raw materials, materials and semi-finished commodities. (c) Studies production operations as much as is necessary for the control of the utilisation of atomic materials and atomic energy. (d) Supervises the fulfilment of technical operation rules prescribed

by the Convention on control and elaborates and prescribes rules for technological control over such enterprises. (e) Collects and systematises data on the extraction of atomic raw materials and the production of atomic materials and atomic energy. (f) Conducts special investigations in cases when it is suspected that the Convention prohibiting the atomic weapon has been violated. (g) Presents recommendations to the Governments on matters pertaining to the production, storing and utilisation of atomic materials and atomic energy. (h) Presents recommendations to the Security Council on measures for prevention and checking as regards those who violate the Convention on the prohibition of the atomic weapon and control over atomic energy.

Section 8 of the proposals deals with research activities, safeguarding "unrestricted research in the field of atomic energy directed towards discovering means of utilising it for peaceful purposes" and "the wide exchange of information related to this field."

These are the foolproof and inescapable facts which give the lie direct to every slander about the Soviet Union refusing atomic energy control and inspection.

The Soviet Union has no other aims than economic prosperity for its peoples and those of all lands, lasting peace for its peoples and those of the entire world. Any other aims would be alien to the conception of Socialism for which the people of the Soviet Union have been working, fighting and dying since they became the first and only nation in the world to have really conquered power, and entered upon the path of peaceful Socialist construction.

Having got that off my chest so that you will see where I stand on this vital matter, let me proceed. There is no doubt the present relations between Britain and the Soviet Union are a deep disappointment to every thinking person in this country, especially after our wartime solidarity, but I believe I have stated the real reason why this situation has developed.

Why not try afresh, not because the demands of a rapacious American imperialism compel us to do so, but out of conviction that the overwhelming majority of the British people and certainly the whole of the Soviet people, with their mutual ideas about Socialism, have more in common with each other than they have with America? You know this is the case.

Not one of you who reads these lines has ever heard of a case of "Johnny Walker" being labelled "For Truman," but

when we and the Russians were fighting for our very lives, the British workers proudly labelled the tanks they made "For Joe." It is that class outlook and understanding with which we now have to make the machinery the Russians need, and get the timber, and, given a bumper harvest in the Soviet Union, the wheat the Russians can give us.

The news of negotiations for a Trade Agreement between the Soviet Union and Britain had a tremendous effect in the factories and the Labour movement generally; it was an indication of what could happen once new political relations with the Soviet Union were established. Limitless possibilities open up before the two nations, and I know that both the British and Soviet people would enthusiastically welcome such new relations and make an astonishing response.

These new relations with all these countries, and particularly with the Soviet Union, can never be made unless there is a change of attitude on the part of the leaders of the Labour Party and the Labour Government. Such a man as Ernest Bevin, like many others in the Labour Government, is totally incapable of making that political change in attitude towards the Soviet Union which the present and future interests of the British people demand.

In case you think I am a prejudiced person, allow me to commend to your notice the following statement made by a great American journalist, Eddie Gilmore, who won the annual Pulitzer Prize for international telegraphic reporting, and who was six years in the Soviet Union, and not seven weeks. You may have read it in the London *Star*, but it is worth reading again. Here it is:

"Two years after the worst war in history, most Russians are convinced that there will not be another in the near future. The Russians are trying to get their badly-damaged land in order, so that they may continue their vast Socialist plan. They have abiding faith in their leaders and their system.

"They are convinced that, not only is their way of life best for all peoples, but that one day the rest of the world will come round to that way of thinking . . .

"The Russians see no danger to world peace in their way of life. They do see danger in the American way of conviction. And they are sure that influential people in various parts of the world see in the U.S.S.R. a permanent challenge to their selfish desires, and, therefore, want war. This war they think will not come about because the people of the world do not want it. But they remain prepared."

Now are we prepared to make new efforts? I believe the people wish it. But let them be made convincingly, not forced upon us by the logic of events. Then we shall see how profound are the results of this new British-Soviet co-operation throughout the world. Then all the forces in the United States of America, like the Communist Party, the C.I.O., Henry Wallace, and countless others, will receive more power, and the movement they will develop will help to sweep from power those who at present think that dollars, atomic bombs, and Jane Russell have the attraction to seduce the world. Let them learn that you cannot stop the development and the consequences of dynamic ideas even if you do—at present—possess the sole monopoly of the manufacture of the atomic bomb.

Look at another part of the scene. I refer to the new European democracies. Never had any nation in the world such eager and willing allies as we have if only we will make the overtures in time. Things are different in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania. Do not let us make the fatal mistake of pretending that this is not so. Let us remember the shameful memory of the years of intervention against Soviet Russia. We lost out on that. We were at last compelled in 1921 to make a new approach. We shall also be compelled to make a new approach to these other nations as well.

It was not that sight of Warsaw in ruins that brought tears into the eyes of Bevin (there are enough and to spare if you look at certain parts of Poplar and Canning Town) that made him develop a new attitude towards Poland. It was the situation Britain has to face in the world today. Other nations are anxious to establish friendly relations with us. They want some of the things we can provide, and, goodness knows, we want some of the things they can provide.

These countries all had their economic plans long before Britain ever heard of the existence of Plowden the Planner. Their two, three, and five year plans are going ahead. They face and endure great hardships and difficulties. How I respected the quiet dignity of Marshal Tito when, in an interview, he explained the present ostracism of Yugoslavia meant increased hardships for his people, especially food shortages, but nevertheless they would face them and come through. Isn't that the faith that moves mountains? Have we not more in common with those people, because of our own shortages, than with those who

flash their beefsteaks in their advertisements, and look down pityingly on us, and gloat over our difficulties?

Here again a new effort needs to be made, not at the last minute or the last hour, but now. So many times have we been caught short because of a wilful, blind opposition to the new democracies, because they are alleged to be Soviet stooges. Should we not be proud that such profound and far-reaching changes have been made in nations which in one form or another have caused Britain to be involved in two world wars since 1914?

It is not compatible with British dignity that every time an American Byrnes or Marshall sends a note of protest to one of these new democracies, our Government should feel compelled to do the same, and then a little later be compelled to eat its own words.

Just think of it. A new approach to the countries of what is known as the British Empire or Commonwealth, call it what you will, a new approach to the Soviet Union, a new approach to the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe—would it find an echo in the Scandinavian lands, in Italy, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium and France? Would it help to restore Big Three unity? I'll say it would.

Then let us make up our minds. What we want we can get. There can be hope in the world; there can be joy in the world; there can be a new constructive common endeavour in the world.

I put it to any serious-minded reader: is it not madness to sit down and think the end of the world is in sight because of our present troubles, so many of which are of our making, but which, given the will and the struggle, we could soon abolish?

I am under no illusions about the reply the armchair pundits will make to such proposals as I am now suggesting. They will look up some quotation that once had meaning, but does not apply today. The defeatists will say it cannot be done, as Churchill so often said of the Second Front. What does it matter, so long as you and I are determined it shall be done? If it cannot, then better throw the towel into the American ring, and beg that the once proud British will at least be given a little better deal than Wall Street gives to its Negro population in the South.

CHAPTER IV

A WORD ON GERMANY

Nowhere is the conflict between reaction and progress, the conflict between the advancing forces of Socialism and the interests of capitalism, seen so clearly as on the issue of Germany.

The older generation of Socialists will remember what happened after the First World War. The German Revolution followed close on the heels of the military defeat in 1918. The revolution was put down by the combined forces of German reaction and the Scheidemanns and Noskes of German Social Democracy, with the support of the Allied Powers. While the Weimar Republic was founded, outwardly one of the most democratic in the world, the real economic power remained unchanged in the hands of German big business, the Krupps, the Stinnes, and others, and the land continued to be held by the Junkers and big landlords.

It is common knowledge, of course, that these reactionary capitalist forces eventually founded, subsidised and developed the Nazi Party. If their power had really been broken in 1918 perhaps the Second World War would have never come about.

Even in the twenties and early thirties, however, German heavy industry and the landlords could never have restored aggressive fascist Germany without the assistance of British big business and the Tory Party and Wall Street high finance. The heavy reparations (£6,000 millions compared with the £5,000 millions demanded now) were successfully watered down and eventually abandoned. More was poured out in loans by America and Britain into Germany than was ever taken out in reparations. German heavy industry was successfully modernised. German rearmament was winked at, and the Chamberlain Government line of building up Germany as a bulwark against Bolshevism in the West brought about the position where at the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 Germany was stronger than in 1918.

Even when a shrewd politician like Lloyd George saw that a conflict between Britain and Germany was looming up, he was worried about what would be the position if Nazi Germany were defeated. In his now famous speech at Barmouth (*The Times*, 9.8.33) he said that:

"He knew that there had been horrible atrocities in Germany, and they all deplored and condemned them, but a country passing through a revolution was always liable to ghastly episodes owing to the administration of justice being seized here and there by an infuriated rebel. He was neither a Nazi, nor a Fascist, nor a Communist. If the Powers succeeded in overthrowing Nazism in Germany, what would follow? Not a Conservative, Socialist or Liberal Regime, but extreme Communism. Surely that could not be their objective. A Communist Germany would be infinitely more formidable than a Communist Russia. The Germans would know how to run their Communism effectively."

This double aim of seeking to defeat the German menace to imperialist interests, yet preserve intact German heavy industry and the landlord and capitalist forces against a democratic and Socialist Germany based on the German working class and common people, has been the constant aim of British policy.

It is this same issue which is the kernel of the German problem today, and the root of the disagreement between Bevin and Marshall on the one hand and Molotov on the other. The real issue is who is going to rule Germany: German big business or the German working class. Is the power of German big business in Germany to be broken and a real democratic State based on the anti-fascists in Germany to be created?

At one stage it appeared as if the necessary decisions to break the reactionary power of big business in Germany and lay the basis for a really democratic Germany existed in the Potsdam Agreement signed by Attlee, Truman, and Stalin. This laid down four aims of the occupation of Germany: complete disarmament and demilitarisation, and elimination or control of all German industry which could be used for war purposes; to convince the German people they had suffered a total defeat; the complete elimination of Nazism; to prepare for reconstruction on a peaceful and democratic basis. Supreme authority was vested in the Four Power Control Council. It was decided that German economy would be decentralised, the trusts and cartels broken up, that the main emphasis in rebuilding would be on agriculture and peaceful domestic industries, Germany was to

be treated as a single economic unit, German administrative machinery to be set up and prompt measures taken to repair transport, enlarge coal production, maximise agricultural output and effect housing repairs. In view of subsequent propaganda it is important to note that the level of industry decided at Potsdam would leave Germany:

Coal	130,000,000 tons (3rd in the world)
Steel	7.8 mn. tons (4th in the world)
Electricity.....	55 milliard kilowatts (4th in the world)
Cement.....	8,000,000 tons (2nd in the world)
Lead.....	95,000 tons (3rd in the world)

On reparations the Crimea Agreement Protocol laid down that these could take the form of removal of plant and equipment, annual deliveries from current production, or the use of German labour. The United States and the U.S.S.R. agreed that a figure of £5,000 million should be suggested to the Reparations Commission as the total reparations to be paid, and of this one half or £2,500 millions should go to Russia, and out of this Russia would pay Poland. This figure was one-twelfth of the total damage done by Germany to Russia, officially estimated at £32,000 millions. The Potsdam Agreement further specified the arrangements for the dismantling and removal of plant and equipment and the payment of reparations from the Western Zone, where the main base of German heavy industry is, to the Soviet Union.

The big thing for every Socialist to grasp is that if these decisions had been applied, German capitalism and the landlords would have been finished, and the possibility created for a real advance of the German working class. But the ink was hardly dry on this agreement, which bore Attlee's name, before every reactionary in Britain was deliberately creating a totally false impression in the public mind about the Potsdam Agreement and campaigning against it. With the end of the Second World War the Anglo-American big business and monopolist interests tried to put into operation precisely the advice which Lloyd George gave them in 1933, and the Labour Government and Bevin led the way.

The aim was threefold. First, to maintain German strength while delaying the recovery of Russia as much as possible. Despite war damage to German industry, 75 per cent of the productive capacity was left unimpaired, while much more of Russian industrial capacity was destroyed. Secondly, to halt

the unity of the German working class, federalise Germany, and keep political power in the hands of the reactionaries. Thirdly, to attack the new democracies, and delay their recovery, while assisting reactionary forces in every country in Europe.

The result of all this was seen in these hard facts. Up to the beginning of 1947 only 7 per cent of military factories in the British Zone had been dismantled; of 1,554 factories in the Western Zone listed for reparations removals, only three had been fully removed and 37 partially. In the U.S. Zone 33 per cent of the judges and prosecutors were still Nazis from the Hitler regime, and in the British Zone 43 per cent, and the French 50 per cent, and in the 18 months since Potsdam the Soviet Union had received only £1¼ millions in reparations from the Western Zones.

Finally in December, 1946, the Anglo-American fusion agreement was signed without reference to the Allied Control Council and in violation of the Potsdam Agreement. By this Germany was economically partitioned, and a three-year economic agreement was drawn up which made no provision for the payment of reparations or dismantling of war industries or the fulfilment of the Potsdam obligations.

No serious land reform was carried out and no factories were nationalised. The Stock Exchange was reopened. The old German ruling elements were left in key positions. The zones were parcelled up politically in the so-called Länder or Provincial Governments; the trade unions were denied any real power, and in the six Länder Governments the new capitalist parties, to which the German reactionaries and vested interests flocked, are in effective political power, especially in the American Zone.

All this was in complete contrast to the Soviet Eastern Zone. The workers' parties united, and as a result won the elections. Nazis were removed from all key positions, industry put back on its feet, key enterprises were nationalised, the land was taken over and divided up, agriculture rehabilitated, and a complete democratic transformation carried through. It was all this which was the real basis of disagreement at the Moscow Conference over reparations, the level of industry, the basis of German political and economic unity, etc. It will be noted also that the Truman doctrine was announced two days after the Moscow Conference was started.

The basic issue at Moscow was the class future, not only of Germany, but of Europe. But this issue has been distorted out

of all recognition by the type of propaganda put around by Bevin—he, it is alleged, is for unity of Germany; the fusion arrangements were open for Russia to join at any time; because of the deficit in the zone the British taxpayer would have to pay the reparations; the first job is to pay for German imports by German exports; the permitted level of industry must be raised, and so on.

To say that Russia is invited to join the fusion agreements is, of course, meaningless and begs the real issue. The Soviet Union is for the economic and political unity of Germany on a democratic basis. At Potsdam, Stalin proposed that a Provisional Central Government for Germany should be set up immediately. This was opposed by Britain and America. It was agreed that Central German Administrative Departments in all economic spheres be established, but this was never carried out. At the Moscow Conference, Molotov proposed the establishment of a democratic Republic with an all-German Parliament elected by universal suffrage, secret ballot and proportional representation, with similar democratic institutions for the States and local self-government. This was opposed by Bevin and Marshall, who sought to keep reaction in power by dismembering Germany along the lines of placing the main power in the old separate States.

The British-American line has proved in practice a costly failure and exposed the bankruptcy of the whole policy. The collapse of the plan is admitted on all sides. Reparations, as we have shown, had nothing to do with this collapse and in fact they have not been paid. The real reason for the collapse was the political line of Britain and the U.S.A., the administrative chaos arising out of the various Länder Governments, the lack of land reform, the maintenance of key Nazis in high positions, the lack of support from the people, and the widespread black market and corruption.

Nowhere was this more clearly seen than in the food crisis. It is generally assumed that the reason for this is that the Eastern Zone is the agricultural area, while the Western Zone is heavily industrialised and weak on agriculture. This is not so. The Soviet Zone includes 17,840,000 acres, just over one-third of the total agricultural area of present Germany, while the Western Zones have 32,900,000 acres. It should also be noted that the Soviet Zone has taken 5,256,000 Germans from Poland and elsewhere, or one million more than the three Western Zones

put together, a fact which disposes of that line of propaganda.

The reasons are otherwise. In the crop year 1946 to 1947 only 49 per cent of available food grains in the fused zones came from within the zones, and 51 per cent was imported. Food production, controlled by a Nazi Junker who fled from East Prussia, is a scandal. *The Times* Agricultural Correspondent, writing from the British Zone (November 16, 1946), said: "... the German farmer is still allowed to look after his own interests first at the expense of the industrial population of the Ruhr." They were keeping too many cattle, pigs, and poultry; there was too much grassland and too little food grown.

A large amount of the food which is grown, it is officially admitted, goes into the black market. General Sir Gordon Macready, Regional Commissioner, said at a meeting of the Lower Saxony Landtag that the existence of the black market was well known, and he estimated that as much per head of the population as 300 calories a day went to the black market (*The Times*, May 14, 1947). Mr. Mayhew admitted (House of Commons, May 18) that receipts of bread grains reached only 91 per cent and coarse grains 60 per cent of expected saleable crops. The American Zone was the worst offender in dodging its food deliveries to the British Zone. As a matter of fact *The Times* correspondent (June 3, 1947) hailed the new fusion agreement because it would help "particularly in food deliveries, which the Southern States (U.S. Zone), were unwilling to make to the British Zone; this weakness contributed greatly to the present plight of Western Germany". It should be noted, however, that the Soviet Zone, in contradiction of Mr. Bevin's statement at Margate, delivered to the Western Zone from the 1946 harvest (according to the German administration for Trade and Supply) 2,312,000 cwts. of grain; 2,280,000 cwts. of potatoes, and 578,000 cwts. of sugar.

The position regarding industry is similar, where despite talk of the "low" level of industry permitted by Potsdam (a very high level of peacetime industry—in fact), the Western Zones are in no way running at this permitted level. It has been estimated by the North German Coal Control that existing German equipment is adequate for a production level of 350,000 tons a day (*Economist*, May 10, 1947)—the official target is 300,000 tons a day by September. Output rose from 191,000 to 238,000 by the third week in March, but after the one-day strike on April 3, the daily rate was under 225,000 tons. Coal out-

put, of course, controls everything else. Steel output is nowhere near the permitted figure of 7.8 million tons a year. Commenting on the general industrial situation, *The Times* Berlin correspondent (May 18, 1947) said: "As in any case the two Western zones have not been able to reach the production permitted in the Allied Control Council's admittedly imperfect plan, the upward revision of that plan, though ultimately necessary, is not pressingly urgent."

It is these facts which have brought about the deficit and the burden on the British taxpayer. Of the total of £102 millions to be spent on the British Zone in this financial year, £71.2 millions are for the U.K. share of relief imports for Germany. Of all this the biggest single item is food. Between January 1 and April 30 of 1947, for example, 1,500,000 tons of food, seed, and seed potatoes and fertilisers were imported into the fused zones at the cost of 163 million dollars or £40,750,000. It should be noted also that our commitments in Germany are largely dollar commitments. Commenting on the fusion agreement at the time, the Parliamentary Correspondent of *The Times* stated (December 4, 1947): "Although our purchases for Germany are to be made in sterling as far as possible to ease the strain on our dollar resources, circumstances will probably make it inevitable in 1947 that most of these purchases should be made in exchange for dollars." How much the policy has cost us in dollars up to now it is impossible to judge, but of course the main import is wheat (2.3 million tons in the crop year 1946 to 1947), and as things stand at the moment the United States is the main supplier. Suffice to say that of 500 million dollars drawn on the United States loan in the first quarter of this year, 320 million was for materials to be used in Britain and 70 million for our zone in Germany.

On the export side a similar calamitous state of affairs prevails. During this year imports have cost 163 million dollars. Exports according to official figures only equal 31 millions for the first three months, or were running at 124 million dollars a year against an export target of 350 million dollars. The main exports have been coal and timber and cottons and woollens (*The Times*, May 24, 1947). But to be effective many of these German exports would have to be dollar exports (any separate deficit in the British Zone must be paid in dollars) and as *The Economist* (March 8, 1947) wrote, this will raise three big queries: what will happen when these enter into com-

petition with British dollar-earning exports; what if there is a deadlock on the joint Anglo-American body controlling German exports ("for example, if the Americans insist on directing them into channels which injure British interests"); and what is to be the British policy regarding German trade with Eastern and South-Eastern European countries with no dollars to offer?

The new fusion agreement does not change any of the basic problems. What it does is to set up an Economic Council of 54 representatives from the various provincial councils or Parliaments and an executive committee under it to take decisions, more or less binding, on the provincial Governments on all economic questions of the two zones. On major policy questions, these decisions are to be subject to the Anglo-American authority. It has been stated in *New Times*, that in the Anglo-American Zones, of 2,000 officials in the administrative apparatus, 1,600 are former Nazi Party members.

It is difficult to see what real difference these things will make to any problems of the British taxpayer, but what is clear is that the whole matter is a fundamental step in the direction of creating a separate West German State. It is consolidating the power of reaction in Germany; it is aimed to perpetuate the division of Germany and hold up the foundation of a genuine democratic German Republic. That it has nothing to do with Bevin's concern for the British taxpayer is seen from the following quotation from the Berlin correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune* (10.4.47), written while the Moscow Conference was still on:

"Moderate reparations to Russia out of current production in the Western Occupation Zones of Germany would cost the American taxpayer less than a German split permanently between East and West, according to a hitherto secret memorandum of American Military Government experts . . . the import of food and other necessities . . . totals 350,000,000 dollars a year or only a third of what it costs to keep the American Armed Forces here . . . Given unity, each of the four Allies could in a short time cut their occupation armies to 10,000 or 12,000 men per country. This would cost American taxpayers around 150,000,000 to 200,000,000 dollars per year compared to the present cost of one billion dollars a year for the Army. The taxpayer would thus save 800,000,000 a year on occupation costs or eight billion dollars in ten years."

Well, these are the facts, it is up to you to judge for yourselves. A solution of the German problem will be found, but

not if the German working class is never to be permitted to make the same kind of political advances as we claim for ourselves.

Germany must never again be allowed to become a menace to the peace of the world. The German people as a whole bear a serious responsibility before history for the rise of Nazism and all that was done in its name. But the German people, like every other people, live and learn. The best of them did fight against Hitler. They did suffer unheard-of torture in concentration camps. The flower of them were destroyed. But do let us avoid being too self-righteous. This fight was made all the harder because the ranks of the German working class were split through the very policy the British Labour Party is still trying to carry out and encourage throughout Europe today.

It is Schumacher who is now the idol of Transport House, as once it was Noske. As far as the leaders of the Labour Party were concerned, it was never a Liebknecht or a Thaelmann that represented the Germany that would never have aggressive designs.

History will also not fail to show the correct political conclusions from the last reactions of the leading Nazi politicians and generals as the Red Army advanced towards Berlin. They at least understood politics. They knew that despite the wartime alliance, both American capitalists and British Social Democrats were alike in one thing: they both hated Communism as it is alleged the devil hates holy water. They knew where to surrender. Not to the Red Army, but to the British and American—and there is a political meaning in that which should shame us all.

That such a position could ever have existed is a burning indictment of what these foul and deadly enemies of social progress and democracy believed that Britain and America stood for. True we have executed some of them, but the main body still remains. It is indeed true that some of them were a little surprised at their subsequent fate, but there are others—and they are many—who still believe there is hope, and that the thought of a world system of Socialist Republics is still sufficient to consolidate reaction against Socialism all over the world.

None more than the Nazis rejoice in the breakdown of Foreign Ministers' Conferences on the German problem. Just as the British Tories hope to gain from Labour's difficulties, so

do the Nazis from difficulties between Britain, America, and the Soviet Union. These foul elements have not yet shown their real hand. They will yet cause trouble. It will be one of the tests of the new German democracy, how it will root out and crush the last vestiges of fascism in Germany. The sooner the Potsdam decisions are applied in their entirety, the sooner this will be done. But the sooner British Labour leaders cease to be terrified of Germany going Communist (and one of its principal leaders can never open his mouth—and it's a big mouth—without expressing that fear), the sooner there will be agreement as to the best kind of peace treaty to draw up.

There have been no strikes, no mass protests and demonstrations in the Soviet Zone. Isn't that fact something to think about? The illegal Nazi movement and Wall Street, our own Foreign Office and Fleet Street, would have given their right hands if there had been such strikes. You can imagine the headlines, the intonation and insinuations of our B.B.C. announcers, if this had been the case.

The British taxpayer is not paying through the nose because of Molotov: he is doing so because of Bevin and Marshall, and the sooner that fact is realised the sooner there will be a new approach to the German problem. It won't please the American National Union of Manufacturers or the British Federation of Industries, but it will be in the interests of the British and American as well as the German peoples; and because of this it will herald a new epoch in the history of the German working class, who will yet play a leading part in fashioning that new world which all men and women inspired by Socialist principles hope to accomplish in their time.

CHAPTER V

BRITAIN'S CRISIS AND THE WAY OUT

Today Britain is experiencing a crisis of under-production and inability to produce the goods we require at home and for export abroad. The reason for such a position is not only the war and post-war difficulties. It is because we can no longer maintain our standard of living in the modern world, much less increase it, as we are determined to do, unless we transform our industry and the pattern of our foreign trade as they still principally exist after generations of capitalist rule.

We are short of both home-produced and imported materials. Of home materials like coal, cloth and steel because our basic industries, so long neglected and starved of capital by the monopolists, have such a tradition of low wages and bad conditions that workers, and particularly young workers, refuse to go into the mines, mills, foundries, or railways if they can find any other way to make a living. We are short of imported materials and foodstuffs because, in addition to world shortages, our share of supplies is limited by our inability to supply goods in exchange. Stocks were used up during 1945 to 1946 and are now at a low level. Last winter millions were unemployed because of fuel shortage; what is not yet fully realised is that millions more are still under-employed, producing less of the goods urgently required than they are capable of doing, because of lack of materials, machinery, and tools.

How has the Labour Government dealt with this critical situation? I ask this question, not as an outside critic, merely trying to score cheap debating points against Labour, but as the representative of the Communist Party which worked hard to put a Labour Government in power, and will work harder than any other to ensure that the programme it was elected on is achieved. And I say in all seriousness that the Government's economic policy today will not lead the nation out of the crisis, but, if persisted in, will endanger even the economic reforms it has already enacted and the social reforms it has promised.

After two years we have coalmining, and only coalmining,

working under national ownership. Nationalisation of power and transport is proceeding at as leisurely and gentlemanly a pace as if no one had ever heard of an economic crisis; so-called "democratic planning," it seems, requires that the House of Lords should be permitted to slow matters down still further, and it will be no one's fault if chaos on the railways causes a repetition of last winter's bitter experiences. Steel, which together with coal is the very backbone of the nations' economy, is still controlled by the steel "ring" masters, who plan only to expand its production by one million tons in the next five years—and even if the Government has now agreed, under pressure from the rank and file, to nationalise this industry after all—that measure, at the rate we are going, will not be put through until 1949 at the earliest.

As for privately-owned industry, it is not working to a Government plan—indeed, no detailed plan exists. It is left to its own devices and allowed to make the highest profits where it can. As a well-known progressive economist, N. Kaldor, wrote to *The Times* (February 25, 1947) commenting on the Government's *Economic Survey for 1947*:

"The really disturbing feature of the Government's Economic Survey is not what it contains, but what it lacks . . . more in the nature of forecasts of what is likely to happen if things go reasonably well than of intermediary objectives in a clearly conceived long term plan . . . How many more crises are needed before it is recognised that it is not possible to run a 'planned economy' without a plan?"

For example, the engineering industry, the greatest asset with which Britain emerged from the Second World War, is not being used in a planned way or to break bottlenecks in other key industries, and the engineering workers, therefore, lack the enthusiasm which brought such splendid results during the Second World War. More than half a million engineering workers—over 30 per cent of the whole—are employed in making motor cars, cycles, and aircraft, while turbo-generators take over three years to deliver, large electric motors 2½ years, pumping plant for mines and mine conveyers over a year; and automatic loom makers at the present rate will take 10 years to complete their existing orders. Out of a total of over 400 Government-owned factories assigned to peace-time uses by February, 1946, only four were listed as making mining equipment, while dozens were on refrigerators, electrical appliances,

motor cars and motor accessories. At the end of the first quarter of 1947 motor-car production had reached almost pre-war level, while cotton-yarn production was still only half pre-war, coal production 20 to 25 per cent below pre-war. The monopolies in cement, in electric generating plant, in textile machinery are left to organise production as they see fit.

At long last, priority for steel has been given to firms on mining machinery, generating plant, and transport equipment, but few new firms, and few of the splendidly-equipped Royal Ordnance Factories built during the Second World War with public money, have been brought in to increase enormously the production of these key things for home and export use.

In textiles, after two years, we have two Government Working Party Reports, and one Report on Wages, but so far the Lancashire and Yorkshire employers have been too busy raking in profits from the shortage to take any practical steps to improve their wages and production methods. Sir George Schuster, Chairman of the Cotton Textile Working Party Committee, made a revealing confession of the attitude of the Lancashire cotton masters, when he wrote:

"The four Trade Union representatives on the Cotton Working Party of which I was Chairman, committed themselves without any reservation to progress on these lines, although they knew they might have great difficulties with their rank and file. If this generous gesture on their part had been responded to immediately by the employers, I believe that an entirely new atmosphere could have been created in the Cotton industry. That chance was lost a year ago, and since then, discussions have been dragging on with painful slowness." (Sir George Schuster, *Picture Post*, 19.4.47).

No amount of "experts" fiddling with the cost-of-living index can disguise from the workers the fact that prices are going up faster than wages, and that profits are reaching an all-time record. The shortages which mean so much hardship for the workers never seem to mean hardship for the capitalists. Building is held up by a cement shortage, and although cement production is only 80 per cent of pre-war, the profits from it are double pre-war. Cotton cloth production is under half what it was before the Second World War, yet all the big Lancashire companies are paying their highest dividends for years. Equal pay for equal work is refused as being inflationary; the builders' claims for a wage increase are turned down flat. Tobacco tax falling on the workers is increased, but

Excess Profits Tax is taken off, and only a trifling profits tax put in its place—a present to the capitalists this of approximately £500,000,000 a year, which is more than the Government spends on food subsidies. A worker earning £5 a week is paying approximately £1 10s. a week in direct and indirect taxation, where on the same income he paid only 20s. in 1941 to 1942. No wonder the Tories are encouraged to demand that food subsidies shall be reduced so that prices and profits can rise still further. Government Ministers plaintively exclaim: "You can't squeeze the rich any more"—the poor receivers of rent, interest, and profits who got one-third of the net national income after tax in 1946! And because the workers see and feel all this, the production drive does not get under way as it should.

We have indeed travelled far in the year between the Bournemouth Labour Party Conference of 1946 and the Margate Conference of 1947. From Bournemouth it was going to be roses all the way; all the Ministers were equally cocksure about the future. Now they are wavering in face of the difficulties, and retreat before the pressure of the capitalists. The Government in its *Economic Survey* sets its production targets for basic industry dangerously low, and it is clear that this has been done because higher targets could only be reached with much more "drastic and detailed" control and compulsion against the capitalists.

The Trades Union Congress pointed out that the 200 million tons of coal planned for would not enable industry to produce at more than two-thirds capacity (unless a risk is taken with stocks). Steel production was to be "not far below" the 12½ million tons reached in 1946—even if achieved this would mean under-employment or unemployment in engineering. The programme of electricity generating equipment was so inadequate that there was expected to be an *increasing* deficit for the next two years, rising from 1.4 million k.w. last year to 1.7 million k.w. in 1948-49. Only 240,000 houses were to be built. Investment in industry was fixed at only 15 per cent more than pre-war, despite all the arrears there are to make up.

With the fuel crisis and shortage of material stocks, even these targets are being lowered. The housing target has been scrapped; steel output may, it is thought, fall as low as 10 million tons; there is no planned campaign to make good the output lost in January and February. Manpower is drifting back into

unessential and luxury jobs, while the most vital industries remain undermanned. Compared with the end of the war, in March, 1947, 267,000 more insured workers were employed in the distributive trades, 64,000 more in hotels and restaurants, 43,000 more in commerce and finance, and 47,000 more in entertainments and sports. Yet at a time when all engineering firms are crying out for castings, the foundries only got an additional 13,000 workers; cotton spinning, one of the worst bottlenecks, only 30,000, the whole woollen textile industry, only 32,000. The old wasteful pre-war pattern of a parasitic country, employing more workers in distribution than in engineering and textiles put together, is re-appearing.

Perhaps the most serious aspect of all is our foreign trade position. The Government set out to balance our trade by a great export drive. Not a planned drive based on agreement with the countries that wanted our goods and having regard to long term orders for what they could send us in return, but a free-for-all export drive, with the manufacturers able to send their goods pretty much where they liked in a terrific sellers' market, and pick up the profits of world shortages.

That sellers' market is already beginning to disappear.

Because we have not made full use of these two years going all out to build up our basic industries and helping our Allies in Europe and the Empire to build up theirs, we are still far more dependent than we need be on America for food, materials, and even some finished products.

In 1946 we spent in foreign countries £400 million more than they spent in Britain (including Government expenditure, of which more than £200 million was on military commitments). The deficit was met by drawing £279 million from the American and Canadian loans, by selling overseas securities and by increasing our debts.

For 1947 the position looks still more serious. Taking trade in goods alone (excluding military expenditure, shipping, interest in investments, etc.), we had a total deficit of £20,500,000 in the first quarter of 1947 in our trade.

Even more dangerous is the unbalanced position of our trade with North America and some other countries (mainly neutrals during the war)—such as Argentina and Sweden which through the war became economically stronger—which export more than

they import, and whose currencies are therefore "hard"—meaning roughly, hard to get hold of. We had a trade deficit of £14 million with the U.S.A., and with the whole "hard" currency group of countries our deficit in the first three months of 1947 was no less than £116,400,000. Meanwhile we were exporting to the "soft" currency countries (Europe and part of the Empire), more than we imported from them, and in consequence had a credit balance of £95,900,000 with them. The hard currency deficit, however, was running at the rate of £464 million a year.

The American loan, when we got it in the middle of 1946, was supposed to last us up to four years—long enough to see us through reconversion and set us on the road to prosperity. But with the rise in prices caused by American profiteering, and the difficulties in British industry (due especially to the lack of coal), half the loan has been used up in a year, and it is thought that the other half may be used up by early 1948. The U.S.A. has insisted on our spending some of these precious dollars on "token" imports of luxury goods, such as Fifth Avenue gowns, hats, tinned oysters and cheap American books—while we lack dollars to import papermaking materials for our own presses.

This is the state of affairs in 1947 when world markets are still gasping for imports and U.S. industry is still busy supplying its own home market. What will it be when the crisis breaks in the U.S.A.? Already small savings there have largely been used up, the end of the boom is in sight; few Wall Street commentators give it longer than a year. And U.S.A. big-business politicians are preparing now to "soften up" Europe and European markets for their big offensive; this is one of the aims of the much-boosted Marshall plan.

There are some people who think that when the slump in America comes, as it will, Britain's troubles will lessen because we will get American supplies more cheaply. Don't let's kid ourselves. An American slump will hit our export markets. Unless we plan our exports ahead now, above all with Socialist and near-Socialist countries, what chance shall we have to sell if world trade in the capitalist countries is hit by the depression from the U.S.A., and if competition from America is greatly increased at the same time? The British export drive, based on radios and motor cars, will fold up like a pack of cards in such conditions, whereas one based on planned export of capital

equipment and articles of consumption for working people would be a lasting gain.

It may be all very pleasing to the gentlemen in Wall Street who see the future Britain as a lesser satellite of America. But anyone who wants to see the British people independent and prosperous, gaining more and more control over their economic and political affairs, surely must realise that we are drifting to economic breakdown. And the more the Government bases its policy on trying to accommodate big business and the Tories, the more certainly is it opening the way for the Tories to work on the economic difficulties and make political capital out of them.

It is perfectly true that if the Tories were in power chaos would be even worse, prices and profits soaring even higher. But this is no excuse. The people elected a Labour Government just because they did *not* want another post-war boom followed by another 1921, and did want national production planned to meet the national needs. And they begin to realise with growing force that they are not getting the policy they voted for.

The Government explain that all this slowness in Britain getting on its feet is inevitable because we are not "totalitarian," and because we, contrary to certain other nations in Europe, are making a great experiment in "democratic planning." It is said that the State has a right to compel people to do things in war (for example, to direct labour), but in normal times, the people of a democratic country will not give up their freedom of choice to their Government. Therefore, the Government argument in its *Economic Survey* runs, any plans for developing industry and economic life in the national interest can only be carried out if "both sides of industry and the people accept the objectives and then work together to achieve the end."

But since when, may we ask, has the "capitalist side of industry" accepted the objectives for which the people voted in July, 1945—higher wages, better social services, closer control of prices and profits, more nationalisation, more control of production by the working people? Since when has the "capitalist side" been more interested in national recovery than in profits? By refusing to use compulsory powers against the capitalists, by basing itself on the goodwill and voluntary co-operation of big business, the Government has paralysed its own policy. It cannot carry out any plan which the capitalists see as a threat to their wealth and power. And so it is now

more and more driven to make only such plans as it can persuade the majority of the capitalists to accept. That is why we have no plan in Britain comparable with the National Economic Plans the peoples of Europe are working so hard to carry out.

All the talk about "democracy" covers up the continuation of the old capitalist methods which are completely undemocratic. The question is not whether labour should be directed (no one is arguing that at this stage). The question is whether the *capitalist* is to be directed, compelled, obliged to work in line with the national plan in his sector of industry.

As for the next argument, that we cannot have planning because "the public is accustomed to a wide range of choice and quality in what it buys" and "will not give up its freedom of choice to the Government," bitter experience made this look pretty silly at the very moment when the Government published its statement in February, 1947. "The public" might be used to a choice between six grades of house coal, electricity, and gas, but in that month they could get none of these, because such essential supplies were not there through production not being planned. If it comes to choice, the working-class and middle-class public would prefer enough food, clothing, housing, and entertainment at controlled prices, rather than be able to choose between 45 types of vacuum cleaners, or a dozen makes of luxury cars—if only they could afford to buy these things.

There is nothing "democratic" about allowing engineering employers to squander the nation's materials and skilled manpower, and run us into further crisis. There is nothing "democratic" about letting the rich employ as many people as they choose in domestic service, hotels, luxury restaurants, or on the production of expensive clothing.

Democracy at the General Election in 1945—democracy in the most strictly Western pattern—made clear that the British people wanted to finish with these things and to control and lessen the powers of the handful of rich profiteers that gain from them. If democracy means anything, it means that the wishes and interests of 95 per cent of the people who work must prevail over those of 5 per cent who live on the labour of others.

Is there no alternative for Britain but to continue drifting along on the loan, with unnecessary shortages and inflationary dangers, and to stake our whole future on getting another loan

when this one is finished on whatever terms Wall Street is prepared to impose?

There is an alternative. But it demands a drastic reorganisation of all existing policy both at home and abroad, of relations with other nations, and great changes in the present composition of the Government. There are no short cuts; no easy roads. There is only one force which can solve Britain's problems, and that is the working class.

Sooner or later this great fact will have to be recognised and acted upon. We cannot risk the people having to go through last winter's experience again. They deserve a better prospect than that of endless queueing and shortages. Their part in the Second World War, and their patience over the past two years, demands that they begin to receive this reward. What are some of the measures which need to be taken immediately?

The Home Front

The Government should declare an emergency situation, and take emergency powers to organise the nation's resources as seriously as was done after Dunkirk. The main aim in this must be to satisfy the needs of the people, to reorganise our key trades, to be able to pay our way, and to prevent our precious manpower and raw materials being squandered in order to pile up profits or satisfy the luxury tastes of the rich and their hangers-on.

First and foremost the nation must realise that coal is the heart of the problem, and that everything this industry and its miners need to increase output must be provided without the slightest hesitation.

Consider for a moment what an abundance of coal would mean. We need no ships to bring it to Britain, we need spend no precious dollars. It is here under our feet in abundance, the finest coal in the world, enough to last us for 200 years, and we have the finest and most experienced body of miners in the world to help to get it. Wherever you turn, whether it is houses, steel, textiles, generating stations for electric power, food and timber from abroad—coal is the solution of most of the problems associated with all these things. Sweden wants coal from us in exchange for their timber. That timber would break many bottle-necks in our housing plans. Denmark and the Argentine want coal in exchange for their food supplies, and present prices for meat

would soon come tumbling down if we had the coal to offer rapidly from Lancashire and Yorkshire. Steelworkers are working short time, and that means short time and unemployment in ship-building and engineering, and the holding up of new construction all over the country. If we had the coal there would be more these countries. Short time working in textile mills because of lack of coal would end, and the cloth would begin to flow more steel.

The official target of 200 million tons of coal means restriction of industry, the continued risk of industrial dislocation, and nothing for exports. The T.U.C's proposed target of 220 million tons would meet all home needs and allow some exports, enabling us to import timber and food at reasonable prices, and at the same time to make a contribution to the reconstruction of certain countries in Europe which have been traditionally dependent upon Britain for coal. This target can be achieved, given (1) recruitment of 50,000 men above the Government's target; (2) rapid planning and carrying through of development; (3) priority in all other industries for coal production requirements.

If it means conditions for the miner superior to those of any other section of the working class so as to induce greater output and attract new manpower to the industry, it will have been well worth while two years from now.

It is said that other sections of workers will not be content to stand at the end of the queue for wage advances while the miners get wage increases and all-round better conditions. Better to stand in such a queue than the one at the Labour Exchange, which some workers experienced in the fuel shortage last winter.

How many people yet realise that if we could export 30-40 million tons of coal, as we did before the war, we could be independent of the American millionaires and blackmailers? We would begin to pay our way; other countries would be anxious to supply us with the goods they have and we need; we would begin in reality to see the end of our present difficulties and face a bright and happy future.

What practical proposals, therefore, can be made to see that the coal we have in Britain is obtained to save Britain? Here are a few things that need to be done at once.

The Coal Board, instructed by the Government, should further improve the conditions of mineworkers by (1) increasing the

minimum wage to £6, with consequential adjustments pending the negotiation of a complete new wages structure; (2) applying the scales of Workmen's Compensation laid down by the National Union of Mineworkers; (3) better lighting and safety precautions underground; (4) increasing home rations to miners of bacon, fats, etc.; (5) increasing clothing rations and allocating to miners scarce consumers' goods; (6) exempting miners' wages from income tax; (7) priority to miners for new houses.

The Government should call on the Trade Union Congress to organise and carry through under its auspices a great recruiting campaign for the mines. Workers volunteering should be entitled to special lodging allowances, free railway travel at holiday periods, and reinstatement in their jobs at the end of the emergency period.

Within the coalfields, production should be concentrated in the best pits within a small radius, so that the coalface workers are employed within travelling distance of their homes. In many of the best pits, with modern machinery, double shifts could be worked. A special civil engineering labour force should be formed to carry out large-scale development work in the coalfields, new sinkings, driving of new roads, opening of new seams and more efficient haulage methods.

The Coal Board should begin immediately to place large-scale orders for standardised items of mining equipment, on the basis of which production can be greatly expanded and mass production methods introduced. Patent rights could be compulsorily pooled as they were on aircraft and tanks in war-time, to allow outside firms to produce the best designs in the quantities so urgently needed.

An Economic Plan

Alongside the plan for coal, the Government must formulate and enforce an economic plan covering the other key industries—steel, power, agriculture, engineering, transport, textiles, building and building materials.

What do we mean by an economic plan?

We mean first, setting production targets over two years or more for these key industries, such that, when achieved, they will make possible a steadily improving standard of life for the people, and a stronger and more independent position for Britain in the world. These plans, aimed at increasing the national output,

must be linked with a plan to ensure that the products come more and more to the working people, a plan for increasing wages, lightening taxation, and squeezing profits.

We place first the plan for production in these key industries, because unless the necessary output is achieved there, it will be impossible for the people to be better housed, clothed and fed. Target aims should be set as high as these industries can achieve given efficient use of our resources, and not be based merely on their present showing.

For example, the plan for coal cannot be based on the present level of output per shift, for the aim must be to increase it by better organisation, better supplies, increased mechanisation of transport and power loading—and the plan for engineering must take this into account. Our plan for steel must be based on building up a larger and more balanced industry in Britain, and ending its dependence on importing semi-finished steel from U.S.A. or Germany.

The plan must be worked out as a whole, so that first needs are met first. We have had too many plans from the Government which on paper give priority to everything and in practice result in shortages of coal or power or cloth, bringing other sections to a standstill. How is the plan to be enforced?

First, by speeding up nationalisation of the steel, transport, electricity, and gas industries. The situation is so serious that it demands immediate requisitioning of these industries, so that Emergency Boards can get to work at once increasing their output and planning technical advance. The Tories will argue that you cannot start policy making till you have gone through a long process of legislation, otherwise irrevocable decisions may be wrongly taken. We reply that this is just what happens if we leave the steel masters in control for another 18 months, for if anything is irrevocable it is the years that the locust has eaten.

The composition of the National and Regional Controlling Boards of nationalised industries must be changed from the present pattern of a majority of capitalists to that of a majority of experienced workers from the trade unions concerned and from the Labour movement, enjoying the full confidence of their unions and working closely with them.

Secondly, in those industries which are not nationalised, strict control must be introduced to ensure that they produce first what is required for the national plan. This means that the

general targets must be broken down so that each region and each firm knows its own target within the plan. Contracts should be placed direct by the Government where necessary for essential goods, machinery, and supplies required by the key industries and for export programmes which are arranged with other governments—for example, for mining machinery, electrical generating equipment, “utility” cloth—and firms should be directed to give priority to these orders. Priority for essential work should be enforced by a strict allocation of the use of fuel, steel, building materials, and other bottleneck items to the work most essential for the plan. Wartime experience has proved that this can be done effectively once a definite and detailed plan has been worked out.

Employers who deliberately divert materials to non-priority work must be exposed as black marketeers, imprisoned, and their businesses taken over. A railway worker who pilfers a couple of tomatoes or a pair of silk stockings is sent to prison and sacked from his job without hesitation. The building employer who “fiddles” materials got on a housing licence into luxury decorations, and the woollen manufacturer who sells cloth at black-market prices to be made into luxury goods, are robbing the whole community and must be made an example of.

Manpower

The Government should assist the trade unions to establish greatly improved wages for the workers in the undermanned priority industries, to apply at once the principle of equal pay for equal work, and to negotiate incentive bonus systems where these do not exist so as to give every worker the chance to earn bonuses while the basic rate is guaranteed.

It is no use appealing to women to go back into the textile mills, where their average earnings are still under £3 10s. per week for highly-skilled work. It is no use appealing to railway workers to stay on the railways and keep traffic going if they earn less there after 21 years' service than they can get starting afresh in an unskilled job making plastic combs.

It is not a question of the Government settling wages over the heads of the unions. But the Government has a duty to intervene and see that the union's just claims are met without delay, without waiting for the threat of a stoppage to force their hand. The employers must not be allowed to sabotage the wage improvements on which production depends. These necessary

wage increases can and should be made without increasing the level of prices. Huge profits are being made now during the shortages which could be used to increase wages and modernise the factories, and attract back enough labour to end the shortage. This would help cut down the waste of labour in distribution and bring it into productive work. An increase in farm workers' wages, if it brought 50,000 to 100,000 workers to the land, could save us £80 million a year in foreign currency and help to stave off rising prices.

Increased rations and reduced rates of tax should be used as further inducements. Ration books should be issued only to persons willing, if physically capable, to perform useful work. (Housewives, students, and old people, should of course, receive theirs.) Holidays abroad should be prohibited except for those usefully employed in connection with the economic plan.

The workers are rightly indignant at the endless parade of rich parasites appearing in the police courts for defrauding the nation by evading the currency regulations. If a mining laddie takes a shift off to attend a dog track, there is a hullabaloo as if the world was coming to an end. But these useless idlers spend their ill-gotten gains in Nice or Monte Carlo, tell their fairy stories to indulgent magistrates and get away with small fines, instead of being sent to penal servitude. It has not passed unnoticed among the workers that no miners, railwaymen, bricklayers, boilermakers, textile workers, or agricultural workers have appeared in the dock for weakening the nation's financial position. Stop the rich and useless from going abroad, and if they don't like it, let them lump it!

All emigration should be stopped for three years until we are through the crisis. I ask you, does it make sense that we allow 500,000 of our best young people to put their names down for emigration abroad, when at the same time we employ Poles who ought to be back in their own country, and bring to work in Britain displaced persons who ought also to be sent back to their own countries? We want our own workers to have confidence in their own land, to take a pride in building it up.

British troops should be brought home immediately from every country other than ex-enemy countries.

Drastic restrictions should be imposed on the employment of labour in less essential industries, and on non-essential work within the engineering and building industries. It is time this Pool racket was cleaned up; time to stop a position where strong

young men and women are knocking on the doors of busy housewives asking them to take the coupons of particular Pool firms; time to clear the West End of all the idlers who can be seen in their thousands every day, spending their money readily and causing hundreds of thousands of workers to be employed in unproductive labour. If we want the manpower for our mines, mills, farms, steel works, building jobs, then let us take every possible measure to see that we get it; for make no mistake, the types of persons we have in mind for being made to do useful work are precisely those who are Labour's worst enemies, who blame everything on the Government and wonder what the miners will want next. Let them all be given a dose of constructive, hard work. It will do them and the nation all the good in the world.

Employers on non-essential work should be prohibited from engaging new labour. Employers should be compelled to make the fullest use of disabled workers fit for light work, either directly in industries associated with the economic plan, or as substitute labour in other industries so as to release manpower for the key trades. Employers should be obliged to give full facilities for the employment and promotion of women in all suitable occupations and to organise part-time employment.

Less for the Rich—More for the People

To lessen the power of the rich to divert resources to their own use, and increase conviction and enthusiasm for the nation's effort, the Government should tighten up price control, reducing the profit margins allowed, especially to middle-men and distributors, and impose a steeper tax on all profits.

Isn't it time we stopped believing that we cannot soak the rich any more and that equality of sacrifice is already here? The cost of the Royal Tour to South Africa would give the Old Age Pensioners the smoke and solace to which they have a right. The cost of making Buckingham Palace fit for the Royal Family to live in would have built many hostels for new entrants to the mining industry. The British currency of which we have been defrauded by rich parasites holidaying abroad would have been more usefully spent on increased compensation for the miners, because for every case tried at Bow Street there are a hundred that have dodged the column.

When the Ritz, the Savoy and Claridges are used to house

workers on holiday in London; when Simpsons, the Criterion and Oddeninos are turned into British Restaurants; when the great country houses are rest homes for miners and agricultural workers; when Harrods, Debenhams, Fortnum and Masons and Bond Street shops cease displaying the luxury goods that at present insult the eye and mind alike when you think of the shops in Tonypandy, Ashington, Bellshill, Wigan and other working-class centres; when the Golden Arrow (on which you can still reserve seats, though you cannot to Southend or Blackpool) has been knocked off; when silence reigns in the Stock Exchanges of our cities; when the rich and their families queue up at the Labour Exchange for jobs—then you can believe that at last the rich are being soaked and we are at the beginning of a Socialist policy in Britain.

The official figures given in the Government White Paper on the National Income show that, comparing 1946 with 1936, profits and interest rose by 85 per cent, wages only by 74 per cent. After deducting all income tax and profits tax, rent, interest and profit in 1946 still took 33 per cent of the national income—6s. 8d. in every £1. What is more, *The Economist* index of company profits shows a further rise of 24 per cent in the first four months of 1947. The net profits of companies are showing big increases compared with last year, the result of lower taxation on profits, while the workers are labouring under the increased tobacco tax and the rise in prices (from August 1946 to April 1947, wholesale prices rose by nearly 6 per cent, wages by only 1 per cent). As long as this goes on, the capitalists can't be expected to bother about increasing production. Investigate their real costs; cut down their rake-off, and prices can be fixed at a lower level that will save the workers' pockets and compel the employers to reorganise these technically backward industries so as to raise output if they want to make profits.

While this policy is being carried through, taxation should be reduced for the workers. The personal tax free allowance should be increased to £250 for all workers, with no tax on overtime earnings.

A plan such as we have outlined, making inroads into the wealth and power of the capitalists, will never be carried out by relying on a State machine headed by Civil Servants from the best Public Schools, reinforced by a stiffening of company directors

to supply the expert industrial knowledge, with the trade unions playing only an advisory part. It can succeed only if the organised working class is fully mobilised in its support.

The Government should build up the forces to fulfil this plan by extending the democratic rights and responsibilities of the working people, bringing into the leading positions of State control men and women who have proved themselves in the labour and trade union movement.

The Government should make its plans in full consultation with the trade unions and the workers concerned, so that the workers in every industry and enterprise know and discuss their contribution to the plan, and the best means to achieve it.

A definite legal status and responsibility should be given to Joint Production Committees at every level. They will give results only if the active trade unionists are convinced of the need for output; but the Government can make them much more effective by compelling employers to recognise them, by giving workers' representatives the legal right to receive all statistical and financial information on the factory (including the right to inspect the books) and by ensuring that in case of a dispute or difficulty with the employer about carrying out the plan, the Government Department concerned meets the workers to settle the matter without delay. In this way the Joint Production Committees and shop stewards can become the Government's main organised force for carrying through the plan.

The Regional Boards for industry should be strengthened by giving them stronger and more democratic trade union representation, more staff, and definite powers and responsibilities for the use of plant and labour in their region to carry out the plan, as they had to some extent during the war. Trades Councils and Union District Committees should be given full facilities to help in the work, especially by bringing the rank and file trade unionists together to organise practical work, and helping to enforce their suggestions and problems upon the planning organisations. We need to break down the bureaucratic idea that planning means doing everything from Whitehall, and instead find the means for the largest numbers of working people, through workshop organisation, trade union branches and local authorities, to join in making and fulfilling their part of the plan.

On the national level, the Government should appoint an Emergency Cabinet Committee on which will sit representatives

from the Trades Union Congress and Co-operative movement, to check and advise continuously on the progress of the plan and the new measures needed from time to time. This would both help the Government to decide its policy without leaning heavily on capitalist "experts," and unite all sections of the movement to carry it through.

The Government should call on all workers associated with the key industries (including those producing their equipment and supplies) to work one week-end in four, at the appropriate overtime rates, as their special contribution to helping to solve the production crisis in these industries. It should examine the possibilities of organising great week-end volunteer brigades from all other industries to help in any way possible in the key industries, for example, in agriculture, in the construction of pit-head baths in mining areas, in cleaning and decorating mills, etc. There are tremendous possibilities here, if only these are exploited. All that splendid initiative and sacrifice that was shown during the war by the Home Guard, the A.R.P., the Fire Watching Parties, can once again be called forth and enrolled in a constructive drive to help the nation in peace as well as war.

The Government should organise a great political campaign for increased production, showing exactly what positive improvements it will bring to the workers and their families in the form of better conditions, no more queues, higher wages, more goods, more houses, schools and new factories.

Every phase of the workers' response should be featured by the press and the B.B.C. Every target hit or surpassed should be trumpeted forth as was done when our airmen hit their targets during the war. The nation's best actors, film producers, artists, speakers, should all be drawn into this campaign; every phase of it popularised, every success applauded, every weakness exposed and its seriousness carefully explained.

The poster "Work or Want" should be withdrawn from all industrial areas, and compulsorily displayed in Buckingham Palace, the homes of the rich, every posh hotel and restaurant, in every pool and betting establishment, in all luxury stores, wherever the rich and idle foregather. We have got to put the wind up this section of the community, and make them understand that the workers are not tearing their guts out getting coal, weaving cloth, puddling steel, getting in the harvest, build-

ing the houses, transporting the goods, while the rich go on as if nothing out of the ordinary was taking place.

This is the way to put it over, to win a response from the workers that will end all this defeatism about "Britain being down and out," and guarantee the economic prosperity and independence of our nation.

Redirection of Trade Relations

The recent trade agreement with Poland and the opening of trade negotiations with the Soviet Union are steps in the right direction, but much more needs to be done and with greater speed.

Closer trading relations must be developed with the planned economies of Europe. These countries at the end of the war faced far greater difficulties than ours, but by dealing fearlessly with the landowners and monopolists, by telling their people the facts and mobilising them fully to carry out recovery plans, they are now able to look forward and plan ahead with confidence. There is great scope for expanding our trade with them; they will have raw materials and some foodstuffs we need in exchange for British machinery and manufactures. The Soviet Union can supply timber, raw materials, wheat and cotton, if we can send the sawmills and transport equipment and other engineering products, in which British skill is unrivalled; Poland can supply more foodstuffs, Yugoslavia timber and metal ores, Bulgaria tobacco, given fair trading terms and credits to buy British machinery and transport equipment.

We must also make a completely new development of trade with the colonial peoples of the Empire. We must end their exploitation by the big monopoly concerns, which buy colonial produce cheap and sell British manufactures dear. We must give the colonial peoples full self government and help them with capital equipment to develop the riches of their countries. This is in our interest, as well as theirs, for it will mean a big increase in trade on equal terms, with Britain supplying capital equipment and other goods which they cannot as yet produce, in exchange for much greater supplies of vegetable oils, tea, fats, rice, timber, tobacco, minerals and raw materials of all kinds.

For instance, a recent mission to the West African colonies reported that exports of vegetable oil and fats (badly needed to maintain the fat and soap ration in Britain) could be greatly increased if we could immediately supply locomotives and rolling

stock for the railways, simple processing plant and more textiles and consumer goods, so that the farmers can buy something in return for increasing production. Much larger increases could be obtained by planned agricultural development, including the supply of fertilisers and machinery to producers' co-operatives, and the construction of larger "pioneer" oil-mills.

We reject the conception of recent Government plans for Africa that capital development of the colonies means developing large plantations, whether managed by Unilevers or by Special Corporations, employing local labour at the existing low rates. Economic progress and planning must be part of a big extension of democracy and political power to the colonial peoples; it must be based on encouraging co-operative agriculture and nationalised industry and not the domination of monopoly.

Unless Britain does change its foreign policy along the lines we have suggested here, the price of Bevinism will continue to be seen in a steady rise in the cost of living, the postponement or rejection of legitimate wage advances; a further rise in fares; the prospect of acute shortages of raw materials for our industries, causing delay in building new houses, schools, factories, power stations, the shedding of the load, short-time working and unemployment, less foodstuffs being available, constant appeals to be patient, to practise austerity and sacrifice and to experiment with all kinds of alleged food on which the rich would scorn to feed their blood stock.

Stand Up to Wall Street

The Government must take a firmer attitude in its economic relations with the United States, recognising that if Britain and the world need American goods, no less does America need British and world markets and fields of investment. It must be recognised that, owing to the rise in U.S. prices, the value of the loan has greatly depreciated; many essential imports from the U.S. have not been forthcoming and Britain has been forced to take imports of luxuries. Nor have the U.S. carried out their side of the agreement by adopting measures to secure full employment, removing barriers to imports, and making massive loans without political discrimination for the reconstruction of Europe, as envisaged in the Roosevelt era. In this situation certain clauses in the existing U.S. Loan Agreement must be revised as unworkable for Britain and hence, in the long run, disastrous for the American people. Full sterling convertibility cannot be

restored. Britain can no longer be compelled to import luxuries from America, when she is pinched for dollars to buy necessities. She must have the right to import without restriction from non-dollar areas. She must be in a position to plan her trade ahead in relation to that of other countries which wish to do the same.

This is not a policy of making an economic bloc against the U.S., but of strengthening U.N.O. and working for an all-round expansion of world trade. Unplanned trade between unplanned economies, financed by dollar loans, will no more lead to stable and expanding world trade than a similar policy did in the 1920s and 1930s.

British Initiative in World Affairs

Let Britain take the lead in all international conferences in putting forward a policy in line with the needs of Socialist and democratic nations. This would in itself exercise great influence on American policy.

The U.S.A. capitalists have their own problems. By March, 1947, the U.S. was supplying foreign countries with goods and services at the rate of about £5,000 million per annum, of which only about £2,000 million is paid for by imports. Another £1,500 million is paid for by credits, gifts, etc. (including occupation costs and the loan to Britain), leaving £1,250 million odd to be covered by drawing on gold or dollar reserves. Clearly the American capitalists cannot go on exporting £3,000 millions to the world above their imports unless they are prepared to make loans to cover it—and if they are not, they will be faced with sure overproduction. There is no charity about this. If the democratic and Socialist countries, Britain and her real allies, refuse to agree to loans upon conditions which threaten their right to plan their resources and increase their living standards, if they insist on maintaining their national economic sovereignty and independence, they are in a strong position to make a bargain with the U.S.A.

Already we have seen that the approaches towards increased trade by Britain with Poland and the Soviet Union have produced a renewed desire by the U.S.A. to lend to Britain and Europe.

Why was the Marshall policy announced in June? I believe for the following reasons:

The progress being made in the fulfilment of the economic plans of the Soviet Union and the new European democracies.

The prospects of good harvests and the increased trading power of these countries with Britain and France as their American loans rapidly run out—contrasted with the coming economic crisis in the U.S.A.

The growing support for Wallace, and the general opposition movement to America's foreign policy as a whole, with all its significance in view of the Presidential Election in November, 1948.

The endeavours of the American monopolists to prevent a slump before the Presidential Election in 1948.

The Labour opposition in the U.S. toward the new anti-trade union measures, which is having adverse effects on the economic situation in that country.

The failure of the Truman policy to intimidate the main European nations against whom it was directed.

The aim to formulate a new kind of Dawes Plan for the whole of Europe, in which Germany is meant to be the spearhead in an effort to hinder the progressive and Socialist developments taking place in Europe.

The knowledge in America of Britain's deep immediate economic crisis, and the certainty that it is going to be intensified during the coming months with adverse consequences for the United States as well as Britain.

Does the Marshall policy represent a contradiction of the Truman policy of March? No. It is a continuation of that policy in new forms and in a new situation. It is important to note these points: Truman did not stampede the Soviet Union at the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers; the Greek Resistance Movement is stronger and unconquerable; the exclusion of Communists from the Governments of France and Italy has only succeeded in deepening the crisis in these countries. The movement in democratic China also develops much more strongly.

The Marshall policy, with the backing of Bevin, is intended to be one in which the industrialisation of Eastern Europe is deliberately retarded; where the concentration on industry will be in the West, with pressure being exerted on Eastern Europe to confine its main productive activities to the growing of food supplies. This is not only for the purpose of making Eastern Europe the market for industrial goods which it is hoped these countries themselves will be prevented from making, but as a deliberate act of policy to keep them weak from an industrial standpoint in the event of any new war.

One of the aims of Marshall was to wreck the November Conference of Foreign Ministers, where the German question is

the main issue, in order to facilitate the breakdown which will enable separate Peace Treaties to be made with a dismembered Germany by Britain and the United States. The aim here is to increase the possibility of American monopoly capitalism obtaining the domination of the principal bases of German heavy industry.

The Soviet Union made its position on the Marshall policy perfectly clear at the Paris Conference on June 27. It does not reject assistance from America, when that assistance is not designed to interfere in the home and foreign policy of nations accepting help from America. Molotov quite rightly warned Britain and France of the danger of committing themselves to acceptance of the Marshall policy as announced at that time.

But Bevin is too big to learn from anyone, and he and Bidault lost no time in telling the world they would go ahead without the Soviet Union. With a great flourish of trumpets it was stated that speed was the essence of the contract, and a new conference was held in Paris on July 12. The principal Central and Eastern European democracies and the Soviet Union were not represented at this conference, but Bevin and Bidault seemed to be quite satisfied that their places should be taken by Turkey, Eire and Portugal, whose "magnificent" deeds in the struggle against fascism are known the world over. Endless were the boasts about the "speed with which the conference got to work now that the Slav nations were not present with their difficult procedural questions." People thought the flow of American dollars would begin the day the conference finished. But the day it actually finished, came two announcements. First, that Congress would not even discuss the Marshall policy until some time in 1948. Second, that building up the Ruhr industry was an integral part of America's intention. In other words, the aim is a new Dawes Plan for Germany. The British Labour movement will do well to remember that the adoption of the first Dawes Plan in 1924 was followed by the defeat of the First Labour Government, and the people of France will remember the terrible price they had to pay for the building up again of German monopoly capitalism and Nazism as a direct consequence of American and British Big Business policy at that time.

We must not let Marshall "buy us out" of the company of the planned economies, for this would not only hinder their recovery, but would leave Britain, France and any

other country that agreed to it fully at the mercy of Wall Street and of the American depression. Dollar loans must be rejected if they have political "tags." These "tags" may take the form of excluding the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, discriminating against countries with Communists in their governments, a bar on further measures of nationalisation in the loan-receiving countries, freedom for U.S. capital to acquire shares in the basic industries of these countries, prohibition of import control or of bulk trade agreements between countries. To stand up to Wall Street is not only more dignified than kneeling; it is also better policy. The more we prepare to do without dollar loans, the more likely we are to get them, if we need them, on acceptable terms.

No international policy, however, can solve the problem unless Britain is reorganised to produce for her own and the world's needs. What we propose is the very minimum to save Britain from disaster. It is the lead for which our people are waiting, together with millions of democratic and progressive people throughout the world.

Of course, it will be no easy matter to carry through such a policy. It will require a steel-like firmness, a will to carry it through, a determination to crush all opposition.

A real fight will have to be made against the opposition of the Tories and their fascist allies, against the vested interests of Big Business and those who look at every difficulty as their means to regain power for their own reactionary ends. The capitalists will have to be made to organise their sector of industry to fit into the national plan. Their propaganda will either have to be made to support the national effort, or it will have to be stopped. We are fighting for our very existence as an independent nation: we cannot afford to tolerate any lukewarmness; any half-hearted efforts. It's all out for everybody, with everybody in full support of what has to be done. Drastic, you say? Of course it's drastic. But think of the housewife standing in the endless queue for this, that and the other (and by the way, since the five-day week, there are a lot of husbands whose wives now make them have a basinful of queueing on a Saturday morning, who now know what it must have been like to do it for six years). We are in a desperate situation. Drastic measures have to be taken to meet and overcome it. The longer they are delayed, the greater the hardships the people will have

to endure, the longer the time of shortages, the harder will be next winter. Time is against us, not for us.

The Tories will gloat like the ghouls they are over the difficulties of the nation. They think the workers have forgotten that it has been their greed in refusing to modernise the key industries, their rapacity in investing their surplus profits in colonial lands because the gains would be greater than if they ploughed them back into industry at home, their class privileges, rent, interest and profit, which have so largely contributed towards producing the problems which we, the working class, are now called upon to solve. But if these Tories, these Churchills, Wooltons, Edens, Stanleys, Brackens, Lyttletons and Hudsons, together with their secret weapon, Mosley and his thugs, believe they are going to get away with it, then they have another think coming to them.

Let the Government give this kind of lead, and what a welcome will be given to it! What a spontaneous response will be evoked! Even the *Daily Herald* will be inspired to write, as it did of Attlee's speech after Dunkirk:—

"We accept the new law. We salute the intelligence of the statesmen who have introduced it. We rejoice in the part the Labour leaders have played to bring about this revolution in the national economy . . . It shows a realism, an energy and a boldness in our leaders without which we could not hope for victory." (*Daily Herald*, 23.5.40).

Strengthen the Government

It has been well said that once the correct political line has been accepted, the organisational measures to achieve it are then of decisive importance. If ever this was true, it is of the present situation in Britain. If ever a worthy people deserved a better kind of Labour Government it is the British people. Their loyalty and steadfastness as unexpected blow after blow has hit them, so many of which could have been avoided, has been remarkable. But the present position cannot be allowed to continue except at the risk of grave disillusionment setting in, and playing into the hands of reaction.

Those members of the Government who are the principal compromisers with big business, and those whose foreign policy is that of the Trumans and Churchills, must go. New leaders must be brought forward, not on the basis of Attlee's Old School Tie and Toynbee Hall connections, but on the basis of

their class struggle experience, their ties with the working class, their success in leading the working class. Those who will stand up to Big Business and Tory sabotage, those who find more in common with the working class than any other section of the community, those who want Britain to remain strong and independent, and those who are prepared relentlessly to carry through an all round policy to save Britain and are not afraid that vested interests they hurt, what nettles they have to grasp and crush. Those who want unity in the Labour movement, who see where the principal allies are to be found, who stand for peace and friendship with the Soviet Union and the new European democracies. Those who find a common language with their natural Socialist allies all over the world, those who would find the way to use the gigantic resources of the homeland with those of the Dominions and freed colonial peoples in a new positive way.

In short, we want a new kind of Government whose members have faith in their own movement and land. Who are Socialists in theory and practice; who in the tremendous tasks that lie ahead are prepared to go to it, as the old guard once went onto the street corners with the gospel of Socialism, even though the next day in the workshops they were the butt of the scorn, jokes and sneers of their fellow workers who had not at that time reached the political outlook and class consciousness that is so widespread today.

The people are ready for anything. They have finished with the past, they want a Government and leaders in the same frame of mind. They want a Government whose leaders hate the rich more than they do their own people still fighting the battle of the poor.

CHAPTER VI

THE BRITISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM

Would the fulfilment of the policy and programme which I have outlined in previous chapters mean only that this country was taking measures to combat the immediate serious problems facing Britain? Would it mean that we were attempting to organise the capitalist State in a more stable and effective way than the capitalist class has itself been able to do? No. The fulfilment of our immediate programme would be an important step on the road to the establishment of Socialism in Britain. For this policy is a class policy which, at the same time, accords with the best interests of all democratic and progressive people. It aims in its every aspect at strengthening the position of the working class and the people who in this country do the useful work. It aims at raising their standard of living, at increasing their share in this country's wealth, and in this way encouraging service to the nation. It would end feelings of restriction and frustration on the part of important sections of professional workers, technicians, artists, writers and thinkers. It is a policy that aims at weakening the power of the capitalist class, strengthening the power of the workers by hand and brain, so that through this organised power such a policy is successfully carried through.

We are fighting for the independence of Britain, for its independence from Wall Street and the American trusts, and from those Tory reactionaries in Britain who, in order to maintain their own privileges and personal power, are ready to sell out the interests of this country to foreign trusts. A Britain which is a puppet of Wall Street is restricted in its fight for freedom. In fact, the first aim of the American trusts is to see that capitalism in Britain is maintained along traditional reactionary lines. To stop even those developments towards a planned economy which have taken place, to make sure that this country shall remain open to the "free enterprise" of American capital.

Our economic programme—the development of nationalisation, the launching of a general economic plan—means that we are

fighting to give higher wages and a higher standard of living to the working people of this country and to reduce the rent, interest and profit of the ruling class. If the plan which we have outlined is carried out, by the end of it the share of the working class in the wealth of this country will be greater. A greater part of industry and of the national resources will be controlled by the people in the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population, and removed from the hands of the bankers, industrialists and landowners, the small privileged minority who use them—or misuse them—for personal profit.

The nationalisation of the key sectors of British economy at the present time would constitute an important progress towards Socialism. It would weaken the powerful trusts, take a tremendous weapon out of the hands of the capitalists and put in the hands of a democratic government immense means for the economic development of the country in the interests of the people.

Every step that is taken to make the Government and the State more democratic means an increase in the control of the working class and people and a decrease in the power of the present ruling class. We have demanded that all sections of the Civil Service, the Army and the Police should be opened to the representatives of the working people. We believe that workers, and the children of workers, those with experience in industry and in the Labour movement, are as capable as the sons of rich financiers, landowners and industrialists of becoming generals, organising armies and navies, looking after the peace and security of this country, organising the Civil Service and administering industry. We believe that every step taken to strengthen representation of the majority of the people in the State apparatus, and to remove it from its present exclusive control by the representatives of the capitalist class, is a step along the road to Socialism in Britain.

The foreign policy that I have dealt with is also a class policy. It means associating Labour Britain in world affairs with the Labour movement throughout the world. It does not mean the formation of a bloc against the United States of America, but it does mean that the weight of a Labour Britain will be exercised in the direction of the development of Socialism and democracy throughout the world and not as at present towards hindering this development or trying to encourage reactionary

groups with the aim of destroying the new democratic movements and countries that have emerged so united and strengthened from the Second World War.

The policy of friendship of Labour Britain for the advancing colonial peoples is a class policy also. It means concrete help for those forces in the colonies and the dominions that are fighting for national independence and Socialism, help for the workers and peasants, craftsmen, small traders and intellectuals, rather than for the large landowners and capitalists, who are prepared to become junior partners to any foreign imperialism.

Our proposal for replacing many of the old diplomats, consuls and foreign representatives of Britain with new personnel recruited from the Labour movement is a proposal aimed at strengthening the power and position of the working class in this country, and removing from office those people who are at present operating both in the Foreign Office and abroad, not in the interests of the people of Britain, but of that small minority of rich and powerful families who at present dominate Britain's economy and foreign policy, and of their opposite numbers abroad.

Thus the application and successful carrying out of our programme is not something separate from the fight for Socialism in Britain. The success of our programme will not give us Socialism, but it will change the country in which we live, and change the minds of the people who live in it, and strengthen the influence and power of the vast majority of the population. Above all, it will give the working class a greater confidence in tackling and solving greater problems to the lasting benefit of all workers by hand and brain. It will advance us along the road to Socialism and put us in a position from which we can make further strides forward. It constitutes the first step along the British road to Socialism, which now opens so gloriously before the people of this country.

Roads to Socialism in the world today

Marxists have never maintained that the road to Socialism in any country is neatly mapped out and time-tabled, that each country will pass to Socialism in the same way and at the same speed, with similar forms of State organisation, with similar methods of overcoming opposition. Communists have never said that the Russian Revolution of October, 1917, is a model which has exactly to be copied. Indeed, the whole work of Marx and

Engels, Lenin and Stalin and of the present-day leaders of the Communist Parties in all parts of the world has been to explain to the people how to recognise the deep laws of development of society, and to show how the working class and the people can decide on correct slogans and correct programmes based on a study of the economic and political forces at a given time. Communists have always said, on the other hand, that the study of the Russian Revolution and of all previous revolutions, such as, for example, the English and French Revolutions, is pregnant with meaning and lessons for the working class. But this does not mean that these lessons must be learnt by heart, or imitated mechanically or applied at different times and under different conditions.

The progress of democratic and Socialist forces throughout the world has opened out new possibilities of transition to Socialism by other paths than those followed by the Russian Revolution. The path, in any case, is necessarily different for each country, as we have already shown. Communist, Socialist and progressive forces are today far stronger throughout the world than they were in 1917.

The Russian workers organised and carried through their revolution in the course of a world imperialist war. They had to overcome the violent resistance of the most reactionary Czarist regime, the resistance of feudal landowners, the capitalist class, the influence of national chauvinism amongst the intelligentsia and large sections of the peasantry; the resistance of the *Kulaks* and most of the traders and small business people. Above all, at the time of the Russian Revolution the strength of world reaction was very great, the strength of the world progressive movement was relatively weak.

Socialism in 1917 was for so many throughout the world only a theory. There was no hard practical experience which could show the peoples that this theory was one that could and would work out in practice. World reaction attacked the Russian Revolution violently, treacherously, ceaselessly, using every weapon at its disposal. The issue for Lenin and Stalin and the Russian workers was to fight or be exterminated. There was no other alternative. Lenin was no lover of violence. But the violence both of Russian and world reaction had to be crushed if the glorious gains of the workers' and peasants' revolution were to be upheld. This is the background of the Russian Revolution,

the background of the dictatorship exercised by the Soviet proletariat in the years succeeding the Revolution. History has shown that these measures taken by the Russian workers under the leadership of Lenin were a thousandfold justified. How many British and French lives would have been sacrificed to Hitler if the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union in the first formative years of its development had not safeguarded the fruits of the Revolution!

But the success of the Russian Revolution and of the dictatorship of the proletariat which followed it made it possible for the Russian people to build up with astonishing speed a strong and powerful Union of Soviet Socialist Republics whose very existence profoundly changed the balance of world forces and made it possible under certain circumstances for the transition to Socialism to take new and other forms.

What is the position in 1947? Today the Soviet Union, which has embarked on its fourth Five-Year Plan, is a material force of the first order. The experience of the last war showed to the doubters and hesitators, and even to the worst enemies of the Soviet people, that Socialism is a force to be reckoned with. The war showed, too, the great moral unity of the Soviet workers and peasants and intelligentsia in a country where the exploitation of man by man has been once and for all eliminated. At the end of the war, in 1945, the Soviet Union had an immense influence and prestige amongst the peoples of the world, many of whom before the war had believed the propaganda stories of the weakness, disunity, and material exhaustion of the Soviet people.

During the war, 100 million people in Eastern Europe, in Poland and Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Albania, in a heroic struggle against Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy and against their own reactionary cliques and governments, who worked as puppets of the anti-Communist Bloc, broke the power of the old ruling classes and laid the basis for the new popular democracies, the new States in which the overwhelming majority of the people, the workers, peasants, intellectuals, craftsmen and small traders, the people who do the useful work, play a decisive role, and the State apparatus is manned by their representatives, not representatives of big capitalists or landowners as it used to be. In Western Europe,

particularly in France and Belgium, the working class and progressive forces leading their countries' resistance to fascism gained tremendously in influence and prestige. In Germany and Italy, with the defeat of Hitler and Mussolini, strong working-class organisations are being developed.

The national liberation movement, the movement for national independence and for democracy, gained tremendous strength in China, India, Burma, Malay, Vietnam, Indonesia, amongst the Arab people, amongst the Negro peoples of Africa.

Thus, 1947 is different from 1917. In a number of countries where popular democracies have been established, a new road to Socialism has opened before the people. In these countries where the old ruling class were discredited as quislings, where the defence of the nation and its interests was led by the working class and the people, where new popular States have been or are being established, it is possible to see how the people will move towards Socialism without further revolution, without the dictatorship of the proletariat, and how the transition will be far less painful for the people than it was in Russia.

The road to Socialism in any country depends first on the international relationship of class forces, and secondly on the relationship of class forces within the frontiers of that country. In every country it is different, but nowhere can the advance towards Socialism be made without intense and continuous struggle. If the people of Eastern Europe have found new roads it is because in the course of the war they fought with such heroism and with such success, not only against the aggressive forces of fascism, but also against their own landowners, bankers, industrialists and quislings. It is because, also, the strength of the Soviet Union protected them from the intervention of foreign reaction, and allowed the people in these countries to develop freely along the path that they had freely chosen.

The strength of the progressive forces in the world makes the advance to Socialism easier in every country, but in the last analysis the character of the transition is determined by the unity and strength of the working-class and democratic movements within each country. Socialism is not an article of export, and each people must move to Socialism in its own way.

In Britain

In Britain the capitalist control of the State is as yet substantially untouched. British economy is still overwhelmingly

capitalist. The leaders of the armed services and the people have not been changed. The secret police and military intelligence work increasingly to check the development of left and progressive forces, and remain quite unworried at the efforts of foreign reaction to penetrate this country. The heads of the Civil Service are, for the most part, the heads of the Civil Service before the war. Our ambassadors are still from Eton and Oxford, with even Harrow and Cambridge a small minority. The full economic programme of the Labour Government includes only the nationalisation of 20 per cent of British industry, and that programme has only just and very slowly begun to be fulfilled. Those measures of nationalisation taken are positive but timid, do not allow for that necessary measure of popular control, either from above or below, and are heavily paid for by large-scale compensation to the capitalist class. British democracy therefore remains restricted; the wealth of the nation and the power of the State are still, in spite of two years of Labour government, for the most part in the hands of the old ruling class.

Yet the Britain of today is not the Britain of 1939, or the Britain of 1919. The elections of July, 1945, showed a deep change in the outlook of the people, a deep desire to do away with the old conditions and build a new Britain ruled by the people. Thus there exist today new possibilities of advance to Socialism in Britain also, new ways in which power can be removed from the hands of the capitalist class. The fulfilment of our programme at every stage raises question of class power. To carry through our programme means that important changes in the State machinery will be necessary. It will be necessary to develop new forms of democracy from the factory upwards, a new democratic development of local government. It will be necessary to purge from the State machine at every stage those elements who are working against the interests of the Labour movement and the people.

We should have no illusions that the capitalists will gracefully accept such changes. We know from experience in this and all countries that no ruling class ever allows power to slip from its influence without furious and prolonged resistance. Socialism will never be given on a plate. But in the measure to which the Labour movement is united, in the measure to which it presses forward energetically for the fulfilment of its programme, the development of a general economic plan, extended nationalisa-

tion, reduction of rent, interest and profit, democratisation of the Armed Forces, the Courts and the State, increased working-class and popular control of industry, new recruitment of personnel from the Labour movement for every part of the State machine—to that measure it will succeed in changing conditions in Britain. In that measure it will reduce the power of the capitalist class, increase the power and control of the workers and the people, and carry Britain along a new British road to Socialism in which British democratic institutions will be preserved and strengthened, and which will not necessarily be the road the Russian workers and peasants were compelled to take in 1917. It would be stupid to think that it is possible to map out at this time every stage of this road, but the key is the unity and determination of the Labour movement, the refusal at any stage to withdraw before counter-attacks of the capitalists, the steadfast resistance to the colonisation of Britain by the American trusts.

There is another road open to the British people. It is the road indicated by the Tory Party. It is the road of that section of the Labour leadership which is capitulating to the Tories. It is the road indicated by Wall Street for the British people. This road means cessation of struggle against the capitalists. It means that British capitalism remains in power and becomes still more entrenched. It means not only attacks on the living standards of the people, rising prices and lower wages, but the return to the full anarchic chaos of capitalist economy, the surrender of all economic planning, the colonisation of Britain by the U.S. trusts and the establishment of the British Islands as a base for atomic warfare on European democracy. If such a road were followed, the path not only to Socialism, but to maintain any ordinary decent standard of life, would be bitter, painful and extremely violent. It would mean untold suffering for the British people. The people of this country will refuse to tread this path which can only lead themselves and Britain to disaster.

Marxism and Reformism

What separates our policy from that of the reformists? Does the road forward which we now indicate mean that we have changed the basis of our theory? On the contrary, for us Communists the fundamental issue remains the issue of power, the fundamental and the only method, that of ceaseless and united struggle against capitalism.

The reformists see the State as a neutral organ above politics and above classes, which operates as instructed by whatever government at whatever time. They consider that it is sufficient to elect a Labour government once in five years and that on the orders of the Labour Government the Army, Navy and Police, the Civil Service, trade officials and colonial administrators will joyfully and willingly carry out the instructions of the Labour ministers.

We on the other hand see the State as a weapon of class power. We see that today in Britain the State has been unchanged and that the State is operating in favour of the ruling classes. We know that that State must be changed, that new personnel must be found at every level, that all obstacles to the expression of popular will by obsolete State organs must be removed, that popular control must be developed and increased.

The reformists are planning as a careful adjustment between the interests and desires of employers and employees; we see planning as a method not only of more advantageously using our natural resources and developing production, but also of obtaining a greater share of the national wealth for the working class and reducing the share of the capitalists. The reformists see foreign policy as a form of diplomatic negotiation between States; Marxists understand that States can only be judged and understood on the basis of the class that holds power in them, and that foreign policy, like home policy, is a class battle.

The reformists are passive and opportunist. They dream of an inevitable gradual movement towards Socialism without upheavals and struggles, difficulties and obstacles; Marxists realise that the capitalist class resist every step forward made by the working class and that only by struggle can victory be won. Marxists understand that a Labour Government does not inevitably mean progress towards Socialism, that if a Labour Government capitulates to the steel lords or follows the policy of Wall Street, a Labour Government can lead not to Socialism but to Tory reaction, and that a Labour Government only means progress towards Socialism to the extent that it carries on the struggle for removing power from the hands of the capitalist class.

On Reformism

The Labour Party states that its programme of State ownership of certain key industries, public boards and controls, improved

conditions for the workers and the continuation of capitalist shareholding, etc., is a programme of Socialism. It is not.

Socialism means more than the State regulation of economy or the State ownership of industry. It means the abolition of the entire profit-making system, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man.

The only Socialist system today is that in the Soviet Union. There no man can make profit out of the labour of others. The exploitation of man by man has been completely abolished. The ownership by the people, of the land, the raw materials and minerals, the factories, the workshops and the banks is complete. This is the basis of the Socialist planning which has made the Soviet Union famous and the staggering but orderly and systematic increases in production achieved each year and the complete abolition of booms and slumps and the permanent disappearance of unemployment.

In the present period in office, the Labour Government intends to nationalise one-fifth of industry, leaving four-fifths in the hands of monopolist big business to continue making its huge profits. Even in the nationalised industries, however, the capitalists of these industries have been transformed into State bondholders and continue to draw in interest each year, amounts equivalent to what they formerly drew in profit. Such interest can only come from the unpaid labour or exploitation of the people.

Nationalisation, therefore, is a form of State capitalism, it becomes a stage in the transition to Socialism only if it is accompanied by drastic measures to weaken the power and reduce the wealth of the capitalist class.

Of course the Communist Party advocates and supports nationalisation and strict control of the economy as measures for the immediate handling of the economic crisis. Even here, however, the key point is whether nationalisation and controls are used to weaken the real power of capitalism and advance the power of the working class, thus paving the way for the ultimate advance to Socialism.

In actual practice the Labour Government's handling of nationalisation, leaving the old capitalist elements in the key positions on the Boards, the excessive rates of compensation paid, the propaganda that the workers could not run industry, all results in whittling down the real effects of nationalisation. The

position before the country, however, and the actual situation in which nationalisation is being carried through is such that the Trade Union movement has been roused to demand that the nationalisation measures be carried far beyond the limits envisaged by the Labour Government. The economic crisis and the nature of the measures required to overcome it is making it increasingly difficult for the Government to maintain its position and poses with the greatest sharpness the need for measures which mean decisive inroads into capitalist economic power, irrespective of what the Government thinks.

The real roots of reformism lie in the capitalist system and especially in imperialism. The classic exponent today of the necessity of maintaining the colonial system in order to maintain "our" standard of life is Bevin. Again and again he has stated that "we" must keep "our" positions in the Middle East to keep up "our" standards of life. In essence, therefore, reformism does not seek to abolish the capitalist system or the imperialist power politics in spite of statements to the contrary but merely to reform them. This explains the basic approach of Morrison to the crisis, "co-operation of all classes," is needed, "profits should be reasonable," that he is "not to abolish private enterprise". It is also the real reason why in foreign policy Bevin carries out a policy that has the backing of the Tory party. It is the real reason for the deep-rooted opposition of British Social Democracy to the only Socialist system, the Soviet Union.

For Socialism in Britain

We do not disguise what our final aims are. We are fighting for Socialism in Britain. Many hundreds of years ago Socialism was a vision and a dream of individual thinkers, who saw a future in which men and women would live without poverty and exploitation and war. But in those days the world was not ready for Socialism, nor did the forces exist that were capable of establishing it.

Today the position has changed. We have charted the natural resources of the world and we know that there is food and fuel and clothing for everyone. Today our scientists have developed technical methods of production, of adapting the natural resources of the world for the use of man, which were not thought of even in the wildest dreams of the earlier thinkers. Today, moreover, the force exists in all countries, the working

class, which is capable of leading the people to establish Socialism.

Over more than a sixth of the globe Socialism has been established. Its stability, its superiority over every other form of existing organisation has been demonstrated by the role of the Soviet Union in the Second World War.

Yet in the greater part of the globe, the natural resources of mankind are the private property of an incredibly small section of the community; poverty and squalor, disease and filth stand out in utter contrast with man's knowledge and capacity to produce. The latest discoveries of science and the development of our knowledge of atomic energy brings to a final head the mad contrast between what could be done in our lifetime for bringing health and happiness to mankind and what is, in fact, being done to use this force for the maintenance of power in the hands of the greedy few.

We are fighting for a Socialist Britain, a Britain in which the public ownership of the means of production and exchange will replace the existing capitalist system; a Britain in which the factories, mines and workshops, the ships and the land and the transport, will pass into public ownership and out of the hands of the capitalist class; a Britain in which the conflict between private employers who need low wages and high prices and workers who need high wages and low prices will be ended; a Britain in which the artificial gap between manual and intellectual workers will disappear, in which women will live and work with equal rights and equal rewards as those of men; a Britain where there are no longer large luxury hotels and well-furnished flats and houses within a few yards of squalid, dingy slums where large families live in poverty.

We are working for the Britain where good restaurants and good food, good clothing and good holidays are not the special privilege of a tiny fraction of the non-productive class; where all men will work and make in their own way their contribution to the development of their country.

We are working for a Britain in which the British people, when they build roads and houses and machines, produce textiles, grow foodstuffs, would know that they are not doing this for the profit of a small capitalist clique, but for the common good and for the development of a country of which they are jointly owners and governors.

We are working to end the days when fine clothes and fine living are offered to the working class in films and novels to make them forget for a moment the difficult conditions under which they live today; for a Britain in which the best will not be good enough for the working class, for a Britain in which the good life will not be postponed to the after-life but be given now and here on earth; for a Britain in which education at all stages is open equally to all, in which the Press is in the hands of the people, and the radio controlled by the people.

This Britain is not a dream of the distant future, but something which can be rapidly achieved, something that corresponds to concrete practical possibility. It was the view of such a Britain that inspired our pioneers of the Socialist movement to give their lives preaching Socialism, explaining the need for Socialism and how capitalism can be overcome. In fighting our immediate battles we should never lose sight of our aims. A hundred years ago the early British Socialists fought against great odds. They were weak and isolated and the working class was as yet ill-organised. Yet Marx and Engels, studying the British working class in those days, were inspired to develop their theories which have given guidance to millions of workers in their fight for Socialism.

Today the working class and those who fight for Socialism are no longer weak and no longer isolated. There are millions here in England, and tens, hundreds of millions throughout the world. But to achieve Socialism it is necessary above all that the working class of this country should be united, and that the whole people should find unity in carrying out the programme for the prosperity and independence of Britain.

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNITY OF OUR LABOUR MOVEMENT

There is only one force which can pull Britain through its crisis and place its whole economy on a new and firm foundation which will guarantee the fulfilment of all the aims and aspirations of the common people—it is the organised Labour movement.

That being so, the problem is how can this movement be so strengthened and unified that it can carry through this historic task as rapidly as possible? Now no honest and sincere Socialist can be satisfied with the present position of the Labour movement. It is fine we defeated the Tories at the General Election, that we have made such gains in the Local and County Councils, that the people remain politically steady in spite of acute difficulties and the provocations of the class enemy.

It is splendid our Trade Union and Co-operative movements are so strong and powerful. But—and this is *the* question—how much further we would have been advanced in operating the programme of *Let us Face the Future*, and securing the aims of the Trade Unions and Co-operatives in their special fields, if the whole movement had been more closely united, and a real effort made to carry through the General Election programme?

The test of leadership is not the winning of spectacular Movietone News arc-flooded victories at a Margate Labour Party Conference, but whether it has succeeded in bringing together all sections of the movement, at all levels, to force through against capitalist opposition a policy upon which there is a complete conviction and readiness to work and fight.

Have we got that position in the movement at the present time? No. The situation in the Parliamentary Labour Party, the constant revolts, the jealousies and bickerings and groupings are one proof. The misunderstandings and rivalries as between the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress afford another

proof; the alarm which certain leaders of the Co-operative movement express about Nationalisation affecting the interests of this section of the movement is still further proof.

It is a sober fact that the leaders of the Labour Party are so fearful of the advance of Communism throughout Europe that they think it is a greater victory to pull a fast one against a Communist than a Capitalist. And such a conception of policy and leadership does prevent the full force of the movement as a whole being organised and exerted against capitalism at every point of the struggle for Socialism.

From our standpoint, I emphasise that there are no personal questions or issues at stake. For us there is only one aim, how to unite the whole working class and win the professional classes in support of their aims, so that the crisis can be solved, the needs of the people fulfilled, capitalism weakened and the possibilities of a speedier advance to Socialism realised.

It is essential, therefore, that the placing of the issues shall not be blurred, that the significance of the present transition stage shall neither be distorted nor glossed over, that the entire position shall be seen and explained to the people, its strong and weak sides understood, the relation of forces clearly grasped.

I mention the necessity of this kind of approach to the situation for the reason that we have all paid a bitter price because the Labour leaders once failed to explain to the workers the real class nature of fascism, did not organise them to struggle against it, talked airily about it being no menace, and discouraged any efforts to build a united front against it. Because of all this, those Labour leaders (and they are the same people who dominate the Labour Party and Government today) bear a heavy historical responsibility for fascism playing the role it did in world politics, until by the sheer force of necessity and self-preservation the entire democratic world was compelled to unite its resources to destroy it.

Today, also, any glossing over of the seriousness of the position, any underestimation of the intentions of American reaction and their satellites in other countries, any refusal to unite in common action all the available organisations of the working class, will result in prolonging the economic crisis and making future fights against reaction more difficult.

This is why the unity of the Labour movement is so vital

to securing that wider unity of the people upon which the nation's whole future development now depends.

The great new change in outlook and policy must come from within the Labour Party itself, and this is not going to be an easy job. They say of some people that the more they change the more they remain the same. But there can be a certain danger in remaining content to believe this is the case with our Morrisons and Attlees. Can it pass unnoticed much longer how these two Labour leaders in particular are making constant appeals for unity? But what kind of unity? Between the Labour Party and the Trade Unions? Between the Labour Party and the Communist Party? No. The unity they have in mind in the last analysis is unity between Labour and capitalism.

Now let me make our position clear. We yield to none in our desire to accomplish the strongest forms of unity between the organised workers by hand and brain, small businessmen, shopkeepers, working farmers and all who have a truly democratic and progressive outlook. But this cannot be the substitute for working-class unity, and the stronger this becomes, the sooner and the stronger will the ties begin to develop between the working class and all those other sections of the community who have also awakened to a new political understanding as a result of their war-time experiences, upon the background of their memories of the years between the two wars.

They neither want future wars nor future restrictions on production with all that it means for the professions with which they are associated. They want to see the expansion of production, a better life in every respect, for in that development also lies their own, whether they are doctors or teachers, scientists or architects, writers or singers, poets or painters, lawyers or small businessmen.

They are attracted to the cause of Labour when it is virile and strong, fighting and not apologising, hitting out and not pulling punches. This explains why it is that in countries like France, Italy and many others, all that is best in the middle sections of the community have joined up with the Socialist and Communist Parties, the urge to do so undoubtedly being strengthened because they have seen these Parties in action together.

Because at present the Communist Party is not allowed to be

affiliated to the Labour Party, and its members in the trade unions are not eligible to represent their union at any Labour Party Conferences, the fight to change policy and leadership inside the Labour Party can only be carried on by the Left inside that organisation.

It is clear that many efforts in this direction are being made—the fight in the Parliamentary Labour Party, the critical character of the resolutions on the agenda of the recent Labour Party Conference, the line of thought revealed in the publication *Socialist Review*, the votes given for the “lefts” for election to the Executive Committee of the Labour Party, the publication and response given to *Keep Left*, the first attempt from inside the Labour Party itself to set out an alternative policy. All these reveal the discontent and striving to find a new way forward that at present exists within the Labour Party.

This Left activity will not die down even after the recent Margate Labour Party Conference. On the contrary, the Left feeling inside the Labour Party itself will grow even stronger with every month that passes. The real question is, however, why is it so ineffective? Why the fiasco of the Left at Margate? It couldn't be blamed on the Communists, because they were not permitted even to be delegates from their trade unions.

It couldn't be blamed on the lack of tacticians or speakers, because so many of the Left made it clear to me at Margate that “not having you fellows slung around our necks, we'll show you how to put the case and organise the tactics to put it over.”

Well, well. I am a charitable person, and have no wish to rub it in. The “Lefts” of the *New Statesman & Nation* and *The Tribune* have been doing that to each other for weeks after the Margate Conference. The far more important and decisive issue is: “How can the Left inside the Labour Party be united and strengthened?”

The answer to this demands a straight approach and plain speaking. There can be no real Left movement inside the Labour Party that excludes the Communist Party from participation in it. There can be none, either, that is not based on, and in direct contact with, the masses in the factories and trade unions. There can be none depending exclusively upon “an intellectual leadership” of the Crossman type. There can be none that looks upon the fight of the Left as being simply a Parliamentary fight, one confined to an occasional meeting in a flat or House of Commons Committee Room.

There will need also to be a recognition that to want to change policy and leadership, to want the movement to "keep Left," is not enough. It has to be fought for, and to fight successfully means that the Left inside the Parliamentary Labour Party will have to face up to four things.

First, it must make up its mind what side of the political fence it is on, that of working in unity with the Communists or sticking to the present harmful "middle-of-the-road" conception, both of the character of the advance towards Socialism and the role of the British Labour movement in the international situation.

Secondly, those associated with the Left inside the Labour Party will have to develop a stronger loyalty one to another than has yet been forged. At present the Left inside the Labour Party in Parliament is divided into half a dozen rival and competing groups. It has not yet found the common denominator of the common fight. Its tactics at Margate were pitiful to watch. The open gloating over Zilliacus in *The Tribune* and *New Statesman* for the overwhelming defeat of the Gateshead resolution was a dirtier stab in the back by the "Left" on the "Left" than the one Bevin complained about.

Thirdly, this Left will have to learn to fight and to be able to take it on the chin. It was known before the Margate Conference opened how the big trade union bloc votes were going to go, and it knocked all fight out of the Left. Some of them had been so careful and meticulous to let it be known they weren't going to touch with a barge pole anything that would remotely identify them with the Communists in any shape or form; and they proved this in their silence on the issue of the British Soviet Society and their dissociation from support for any aspect of the policy of the Soviet Union. Such defeatist tactics didn't win them a single extra supporter, but they did cause a lot of effective talk that carries with it a certain contempt.

Fourthly, the policy of the Left can only be a correct policy when it has been formulated in consultation with the lads in the factories and trade unions, and afterwards made the subject of a fighting political campaign at the factory gates, in the union branches and District Committees, in great public meetings, so that the policy of the Left is known, discussed, and becomes the policy backed by thousands of resolutions, finds its way on the agendas of all important Labour and Co-operative organisations, and provokes a counter-attack from Transport House that can be challenged and replied to.

You may have your own ideas of what was accomplished by the Unity campaign in which Cripps, Aneurin Bevan, Maxton, and myself took a leading part, but it did rouse the movement. It did force the Labour Party leadership to make it a principal issue at the Southport Conference.

You may have your views about the wisdom, or otherwise, of the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labour Party, but we do make it the subject of a political campaign and an issue of principle for discussion at any Labour Party Conference where it comes up. The fact that we are heavily defeated is beside the point which I am driving at here, and that is that there is no hope of the Labour Party Left making an impression on the movement until what it stands for is made an issue of principle in the movement and not only discussed in flats, bars, lobbies, and clubs so that no coherent and constructive alternative appears.

Above all, this Left will have to be united by principle and not held uneasily together by opportunism and seeing in being a "Left" the time-dishonoured method of securing political advancement for oneself. In view of the situation into which we are rapidly moving, there are sufficient Labour members of Parliament, sufficient support in the local and divisional Labour Parties and in the Trade Unions, if the Left were organised along the lines I have suggested, for it to make a profound change in the Labour Party inside and outside of Parliament in the immediate period ahead and at the next Labour Party Conference in particular.

Such a Left will realise that it is also the work and policy of the Communist Party that has helped to win so many in the movement for the policy which the Left is now advocating, and that the attack by the Right on the Communists is really an attempt to prevent Left influence growing.

The Trade Unions and the New Situation

For some time now, in speeches, articles and pamphlets, I have been trying to show that there is need for a completely new approach by the Trade Unions and the Trades Union Congress to the problems of the day, and to the new forms of leadership, policy and organisation which they involve. It is impossible to allow the position to continue much longer where you have entirely new tasks to face, and leave unchanged the old forms of organisation, policy and leadership.

In a situation where you have a Labour Government and the nation faces serious economic crisis, where the nationalisation of the key industries will have to proceed at a greater pace, where an economic plan alone can save Britain from economic disaster, the Trade Unions are compelled to review what their policy and function is in relation to the new situation as a whole. I have no hesitation in declaring that the essence of the period we are now in is that of a transition stage towards Socialism.

Unfortunately, up to the moment, there are few signs that the principal Union leaders recognise the obvious new facts confronting them. This was made painfully clear at the Margate Labour Party Conference, when the division between what is called the political and industrial sides of the Labour movement became so obvious for all to see. I will refer to this in a moment in more detail. But here I would like to make this point. Is it not time that the Trades Union Congress which gave the lead and found, in the main, the money necessary to form the Labour Party, should once again exert its historic function by giving a new lead that will not only allow the Trade Union movement to face the new situation four square, but will result in that pressure on the Labour Party and Labour Government which can prevent some of the present reactionary policies being carried through?

How can we have the nationalisation of a key industry without the closest unification of the various Trade Unions associated with it? How can we have any effective economic plan, without planning on the part of the Trade Unions, to ensure that it is carried through, the interests of trade unionists safeguarded, and the Trade Unions guaranteed the leading role in carrying it through? How can all these new tasks and responsibilities be adequately dealt with by the organisation and leadership of the Trade Union Movement being carried on as if nothing new had happened? Millions of organised workers have developed a new political consciousness that demands new forms of expression and opportunities to prove that in the ranks of the working class there are the men and women who can plan, organise and lead the way forward in the whole economy of the country.

It seems to me that these are only a few of the new questions which have to find a place in Trade Union branch meetings, and on the agendas of Trade Union Annual or Biennial Conferences.

Of course we can go along pretending that changes can take

place everywhere, but not in our particular corner of the front. It may be that such a tendency is only natural, as the saying goes, but I cannot help feeling, in view of the job in hand, it displays a sectional and selfish outlook which, if persisted in, is fraught with great dangers to those we represent.

There are millions of new, young trade unionists in the movement today. They are not bound by all the hard struggles of the past in defence of sectional and craft interests. They want a new approach, they are ready to bear their full share of responsibility, once they are given the chance. It is from their ranks that the Shop Stewards, Branch, District and National Trade Union officials will come. It is high time the older leaders were giving these new people an example of how to face up to new times and the new tasks which develop from them.

Which is the best organisation, therefore, now to set the example on behalf of the Trade Union movement as a whole in focusing attention on what has to be done? Undoubtedly the Trades Union Congress.

This organisation has many times in the past responded to a new situation by giving a lead in regard to its own functions and organisation that has provided the means through which the Movement has made a step forward. The weakness in this, however, has been that it has always had to be very careful not to step on any private preserves or prerogatives of its affiliated organisations. The time has come when it needs to make a further examination of the position, and on this occasion boldly to grasp the problem as a whole, without regard to inter-Union jealousies and rivalries.

The first thing that needs to be discussed in this respect is: can the present General Council, on the basis of its method of election, its preoccupations with its particular union problems, be the best kind of body to grapple with the new issues? I do not think so. The existing methods have served their purpose, and their usefulness is long outmoded by the march of events.

Consider the position. The trade unionists in the branches have no opportunity of making their nominations for election to the General Council. It is not a question that is ever placed before the rank and file. I doubt if one trade unionist in a thousand could tell you who are the members of the General Council, and yet they ought to be as well-known as the members of each union Executive Committee.

It is elected on the basis of a grouping system, a mode of election which lends itself to the bargaining of votes. It is not on the basis of the best men and women the trade unions can provide, but largely on past services. The result is that the General Council consists of a majority of people who play no leading part, even on the basis of its present limited functions, in the work of the General Council.

If you want the proof of this, watch carefully the proceedings at the Trades Union Congress, and note the handful of people the General Council are able to put up to state a policy or defend one. This position has been accentuated since Lord Citrine took up other duties, and I have no hesitation in stating that in this respect a crisis position is being reached. The Trades Union Congress this year has passed through one of the most fateful years in the history of the Trade Union movement. Can anyone be satisfied it has played the part it ought to have done? How many know either its Secretary or its President? Where has been its resounding voice and lead during times of crisis, confusion and desire to know what next is to be done?

These things are not mentioned in any personal sense, but simply to drive home the point that what is needed now is a General Council of a new type. One that represents the best the trade union movement can elect. A full-time General Council that can think and plan, lead and organise. Not one left to the tender mercies of a staff which, however competent, because it is not composed of people with mass experience and class understanding, is not capable of giving the leadership the position demands, and what is equally important, of driving it through the movement. The present position can also be dangerous when so much of the preparation of policy statements is made by those who are so deeply imbued with reactionary religious ideas that they are incapable of putting class ideas before a sectional and dividing outlook.

Only in this way can the drive be undertaken that can cut through the mass of rivalries, craft outlooks and sectional jealousies that at present deprive the Trade Union movement of half its strength.

Some people's feelings and interests may be hurt by operating such ideas, but you cannot carry through revolutionary changes without someone or something being hurt or not liking it. The main thing is the interests of the movement as a whole, the interests of the nation, and the necessity of the oldest Trade

Union Movement in the world again setting an example to its own trade unionists and to the Trade Union movement of the world.

Meantime there is urgent need to settle some of the decisive questions which are before the Trade Union movement. I refer, for example, to wages policy. Can any single leader defend the present position where each union wants to paddle its own canoe? Can anyone be satisfied with the present out-of-date methods of negotiation as between union and employer? Is there anything which provokes more resentment in the workshop than the present long, drawn-out methods of settling disputes, and what good is there in refusing to recognise the adverse effects they have on production?

How can any trade unionist be satisfied with the conflict going on, for example, in the building industry in regard to payment by results, the lack of lead, either from trade union Executive Committees or the Trades Union Congress? Yet everybody knows that in those unions where the leaders are the most strongly opposed to any form of payment by results, it is going on, and doing so on an ever-increasing scale, to the danger of both union and member unless it is placed on a basis which all understand because they have helped to formulate it.

Take another aspect of the wages issue. On the agenda of the Margate Labour Party Conference was a resolution from the National Union of Mineworkers:

"This Conference having regard to the critical economic situation which prevails, and which can only be satisfactorily resolved by a realisation of Labour's policy of 'Full Employment,' calls upon the Government to institute such measures as are deemed necessary to ensure that the 'undermanned' industries shall be provided with an adequate labour force.

"It declares that the only permanent and satisfactory solution of the manpower problem in the coalmining industry and other such industries is to raise the status and standard of living of the workmen employed therein to such a level as will attract sufficient British workers.

"This Conference considers that further delay in the adoption of satisfactory wage standards and conditions of employment within such industries constitutes a threat to the whole economic policy of the Government and it therefore urges that immediate and urgent consideration be given to the whole matter."

Now that resolution places before the whole Labour movement an entirely new issue. It is a resolution born out of the

bitter experience of Britain's economic crisis, when extreme difficulty is being experienced in getting manpower for the essential industries of the country. It is these industries which are in the best position to wipe out the present adverse trade balance, end the position where we are living on tick, ensure an adequate supply of consumer goods, help to repair all the damage of the blitzes, build the houses, and enable Britain to make a contribution towards the restoration of devastated Europe—in short, allow Britain to retain its independence and build up that economic basis upon which the full programme of the Labour movement can be operated and the advance towards Socialism speeded up.

That is the issue. There are only two ways of obtaining the necessary manpower for these key trades, either by attracting manpower to them because of the conditions which obtain in these industries, or by the direction of labour. The Trades Union Congress rejects the latter method, and yet two of its principal leaders speak at Margate against the miners' resolutions.

It's all very well to make speeches that "my members are not prepared to stand at the end of the queue for wage advances," but it's time some of this type of Union leader thought about how long their own members' wives have been standing in queues for the very goods that fully-manned essential industries could supply. It may be said that the trade unionists in other industries are not ready for such proposals, but surely the right kind of leadership can convince them that the policy outlined in the miners' resolution is the correct one.

If the Trades Union Congress and General Council would concentrate their attention on the questions of an economic plan and the role of the Trade Unions in relation to it, together with the wages question, then it would make labour history. It would avoid any further clash between the Labour Party and the Trade Union Movement. This is no time for threats of "What my organisation will do" if certain necessary measures are agreed upon. That type of talk should be reserved for the employers.

Now let me come to another phase of the question. It is well known that the Trade Unions are the main financial backbone of the Labour Party. But what part do the Trade Unions play in the formulation of the policy of the Labour Party? They are denied the right to elect to represent them on the Local

and Divisional and Executive Committees of the Labour Party or at any Labour Party Conference many of the people they want, because they are members of the Communist Party. And what an absurd position is now being reached where the leaders of some of the most important Trade Unions which are called upon to play a key part in solving the country's economic crisis, like Arthur Horner, General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers, and Jim Gardner, of the National Union of Foundryworkers, or Joe Scott, member of the Executive Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, are not allowed to take part in a Labour Party Conference because they are Communists!

Now many of the things I have said about the methods of election to the General Council also apply to the Trade Union group of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party. Here again an important test is to ask the average trade unionist what member of his union is on the Labour Party Executive Committee. They will have difficulty in telling you. Watch a Labour Party Conference and observe how small is the part played by the Trade Union members of the Labour Party Executive Committee in its proceedings. Without wishing to be offensive, in the main these people are dead wood as far as actively helping to formulate or state policy is concerned. Their chief and only role in most cases is to intrigue and ensure that the bloc vote of their particular union goes in support of anything the Executive Committee desires to put across. It is an impossible position for the great Trade Union movement to allow to continue, and the sooner the same care is given to electing representatives on to this important policy-making body as a Trade Union Branch gives to electing its Secretary or Chairman, the better it will be for the whole Labour movement.

It is not enough, however, only to call for changes at the top. Right throughout the Trade Union movement there is need for a great revival of every form of trade union activity. The need for 100 per cent trade unionism is more important than ever. We should all aim to ensure the constant and steady growth of trade unionism. There is sometimes a fatalistic attitude towards membership of the Trade Unions in the sense that too often we hear the remark, "Oh, it's all right in wartime, but we cannot expect to keep the same number in peacetime." This is defeatism at its worst. The members can be kept and new

ones won if the methods of policy, leadership and organisation are changed.

The constant complaint that you cannot get the members to attend the Branch meetings is not a reflection on these members, but on so many of the out-of-date methods of conducting Branch meetings. Questions that are so keenly discussed in the lavatory, the canteen, across the bench and lathe, can also be made the subject of keen discussion in the Branches, and there will not be that driving force exerted for the urgent changes at the top until the bottom is also better organised than at present.

There are so many new questions to be discussed. It ought not to be now a case where so much of the time is spent in reading stereotyped circulars from the Head Office, but that Office should be aiming to develop interest in the new problems—The Role of the Trade Unions and Nationalisation, the Trade Unions and Production, the Trade Unions and Wages Structure, the part the Trade Unions can play in Economic Planning, the Organisation of the Trade Union Movement, the Fight for Trade Union Unity, the Trade Unions and the Labour Party, the Trade Unions and Social Security Plans, the Trade Unions and Nationalisation Boards, the Trade Unions and Technical Efficiency, the Trade Unions and Education. These are only a few of the thoughts that come to mind when you begin to consider some of the new issues the workers have to face.

It is desirable to create a conscious understanding both of the new status that the Trade Unions now occupy, and the necessity for those forms of training and education, alongside the practical experience on the job, that can make people like Cripps feel ashamed they ever hurled such slanders against our class as that they are not fit to manage industry.

Organisation needs to be strengthened where the mass of the workers are—in the workshops—where they feel the value of their Trade Unions in dealing firmly with the hundred and one everyday problems that seem little things to outsiders, yet mean a great deal to those who have to put up with them—problems on the solution of which loyalty and understanding of Trade Unionism can be built. And at the same time, the Shop Stewards and the workshop representatives must be linked up closely with the Unions and given their rightful voice in all discussions.

This would do a great deal to blow away some of the narrow sectional prejudice that still looms large in many Trade Union

Branch meetings, but has become a serious obstacle to the workers in their struggles with the employers. The Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Unions, for example, by recognising Shop Stewards Committees as part of its official machinery, has taken a great step towards increasing the unity and powers of the Trade Union movement in that industry, and its ability to fight the wider battle on production. There are still too many unions where there is no effective organisation on the job, as for example, in the Textile industry, and the lack of it is self-evident in the role such an organisation plays in solving the problems either of its own industry, or of the Labour movement as a whole.

Along such lines a new and greater future opens out before the whole Trade Union movement, one in which it will exert a greater constructive influence and power than ever before. One that consciously fits it for the greater duties and responsibilities that will inevitably fall upon it as the working class steadily advances towards the full conquest of power, when in the building up of Socialism, the Trade Unionists of the nation will be its chief architects.

It is to help forward such developments that I have allowed myself to make these few observations on some of the immediate new approaches that the Trade Union movement needs to make, in regard to its present structure and function, and its present lack of policy and leadership. I have done so in the hope they will provoke that kind of discussion out of which no doubt much more important and far-reaching proposals may be made, and also because they are important as a contribution towards strengthening the unity of the people in the fight against capitalism.

The Communist Party

I do not think anyone who has read so far will now be surprised when I declare that in forging the unity of all that is best in the British people, so that together we may help share and solve all the nation's present difficulties, the Communist Party has a very important part to play, policy to suggest, and leadership to contribute.

I know it is the current fashion to write as "Phineas" did in a recent issue of the *New Statesman*:

"On the other hand, the dislike of the Communists, as last

Monday's skirmishes showed, is stronger than ever. But it is now mixed with a new contempt which permitted the issue to be dismissed after a few minutes by a show of hands. This must be the only country in Europe where Democratic Socialism can afford to be contemptuous of the Communist Party."

This type of nonsense is answered every day in the workshops of the country, and may I add, it is surprising how many of the traducers of the Communist Party suddenly discover it is not quite so weak as is imagined when they want some help.

Now just let us look squarely at the character of the contribution the Communist Party has made towards helping the Labour movement to solve the problems of winning the peace. We were the first political party in the land to outline the character of the problems the nation would be confronted with at the end of the war, and what should be done to guarantee the same kind of victory for the common people in peace as they had won in the war. That was in 1944, and so much of what was said then still stands that we may be excused for saying it is a great pity the slanderers of Communism did not put that policy into effect—they would have saved millions of hard-working folk a lot of bother and trouble in these last two years. We were the first to fight for the real unity of the people to win the peace and for the strengthened unity of the Big Three Powers. We demanded new forms of international co-operation that could have avoided so many of the world's present problems. We advanced our conception of an economic plan, of the necessity of nationalising the key trades and improving the conditions of the workers in them. We showed the way towards effecting a new kind of unity between the Dominions, freed colonial peoples and the Motherland. We fought for the effective co-operation and extension of the work of Joint Production Committees in peace time, and we did all this before the war ended.

We are proud of the contribution we made towards strengthening the position in Britain's key industry—Coal. Our work is on the record. We were the first to be out with the attack on the Reid Plan and our alternative policy of nationalisation, and how it should be organised and carried through. During the whole fight from the day war ended to the day nationalisation of the mines became a fact, our comrades set the personal example in the pits in increasing output, in eliminating absenteeism, in trying to make Pit Production Committees

work. Did our comrades get any bouquets for this activity? They did not. They were called "pace makers" and "speeders up" by their own colleagues.

We gave our full support to the National Union of Mine-workers in its own untiring efforts to increase production and make the miners feel and acquit their heavy responsibilities to a nation that in the past had treated them so shamefully, and we can assure you this was a job of work that took some doing.

It was the Communist Party in July 1946 that warned the nation of the inevitability of the coal crisis of the winter of 1947, and all the thanks we got was to be called "scaremongers and trouble makers". We rejoice and are justly proud that when that crisis did hit the people with full force, it was the Communist Party miners in South Wales who gave the lead to work special Sunday shifts so that the maximum coal could be got, and we know the thoughts of some of our comrades about their slanderers and traducers as they hewed their way through great snow drifts in order to get to the coal face to hew the coal.

It was the Communist Party who first put the issue squarely to the Trade Union movement; you have either got to support special inducements to attract new manpower to the key industries or face the issue of the direction of labour. It was not a popular thing to do, but at the Margate Labour Party Conference, the logical outcome of a situation which we had foreseen at last compelled the movement to recognise the correctness of our case.

Our policy statement which Arthur Horner made on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party on the eve of the Margate Labour Party Conference, obtained a national publicity on the B.B.C. and in the press that is unique, simply because it was a statement of policy that met current needs and tackled problems in a new and drastic fashion. There were many voices at the Margate Conference saying "This is the lead our own platform should give."

We recall such facts not for the purpose of swank or "I told you so", but because they are the living refutation of those cheap sneers about the ineffectiveness of the Communist Party, made in many cases by people who have come new to the Labour movement, have never shared in its fights, sacrifices and defeats, but happened to come out on top as Members of Parliament at the last General Election.

But we rejoice also in one other achievement on which we simply will not remain silent. That is the *Daily Worker*. This paper will never be sold to a millionaire combine; this paper will never trim its sails to fit a prevailing wind; this paper will never water down its fight for the interests of the working class; this paper will never lower the flag or give way to cheap sensationalism to win circulation on the basis of insulting the intelligence of workers by hand and brain.

I know that there are many who would agree with my claim that the Communists are outstanding in their day to day work but think that just as good a job can be done inside the Labour Party.

Arguments like this miss the essential point—namely the working class cannot achieve Socialism without a scientifically-based working class political party. The Communist Party is such a party, part and parcel of the Labour movement, based on and inspired by the teachings of Marxism. The Labour movement and the nation needs the Communist Party with its unceasing activity, its capacity for self sacrifice, its Marxist understanding, and its ability to analyse a given situation and bring forward the correct policies to meet it. The question of the relationship of the Communist Party to the Labour Party, therefore, is a vital issue for the entire future of the British working class.

The greatest vindication of Communism and the indispensable role of the Communist Party arises out of our own experience in Britain. The Labour Party was formed in 1900 to facilitate the alliance of the Socialist vanguard with the mass of the organised workers. Precisely because of its character, from its very beginning the movement has been the scene of innumerable political conflicts between those in its ranks who reflected the ideas of their capitalist surroundings and those who put forward a real Socialist working-class policy. As is well known the best of the Socialist elements from the B.S.P., the S.L.P. and the Clyde Workers Committee movement combined in 1920 to form the Communist Party, the B.S.P. with ten thousand members at the time still being affiliated to the Labour Party.

It was in trying to fulfil the aims of the original founders of the Labour Party as a unity of "all co-operative, Socialistic, trade union and other working-class organisations" that the young Communist Party in 1920 sought to affiliate to the Labour

Party. It sought to give the broad Labour Party that effective Socialist Marxist core, to unify, consolidate and guide the wide movement in a Socialist direction.

The defeat of Communist affiliation by Ramsay MacDonald and the dominant right wing leadership in 1922 and the subsequent exclusion in 1925 of individual Communist trade unionists from Labour Party conferences and D.L.P.'s and as candidates fatally weakened the Labour Party and materially contributed to the disaster of 1931. While presented in those days, as now, as the struggle between "peaceful" social democracy and "revolutionary" Communism it actually was the conflict between the class analysis of the Communist Party based on Marxism, and the demands of the struggle against capitalism it advanced, and the line of class collaboration advanced by MacDonald and the dominant leadership which received its ultimate expression in the betrayal of 1931.

Dalton could subsequently write :

"It is easy to put most of the blame for what was done or not done on the three men who occupied key positions in the Government . . . but all of us, I feel, must take some share of the responsibility . . . We should have kicked up more row, been less loyal to leaders and more loyal to principles."

Hasn't this some lessons for today when all the talk of "stabs in the back" is flying around? The dominant question today, as then, is that of basic class analysis of the situation and the tactics and lines of struggle to be pursued in the advance to Socialism. Today, as in 1931, the issue is not the struggle between Communism and Social democracy, but the issue of struggle against capitalism or co-operation with it. The electoral victory is two years old and we are now in the height of the critical testing time of policy. The root of our problems today is that the dominant right wing leadership of the Labour Party is seeking to apply the election programme in such a way as to leave the basic positions of capitalism untouched, to try to solve the crisis in "co-operation" with capitalism. All this merely encourages the Tories and the capitalist class to make further counter-attacks, which are met by still further concessions.

The result is that we are sinking still deeper into the crisis with the Tories keeping up an insistent chant of coalition. In foreign affairs the fundamental line is alliance with capitalist

America against the Socialist Soviet Union, a desperate attempt to hang on to the colonial positions in new ways and the straining of the entire economy by an army of $1\frac{1}{2}$ million men at the cost of £900 millions.

It is this which has produced the paralysis and frustration throughout the movement, the only exception to which is our Communist Party. But just as the exclusion of the Communist Party from its rightful place in the Labour movement in the 'twenties contributed to the crisis of 1931, so the continued exclusion by the Morrisons and the Bevins is contributing to the crisis within the movement today. The "left" is no substitute for the Communist Party—Margate showed that.

To solve this crisis within the Labour movement and tackle the problems before the country requires the radical change of policy and direction which the Communist Party, with its Marxist outlook and inspiration, is seeking to bring. To get the change not only is the Communist Party required, but a much larger and more influential Communist Party.

In building up and extending the Communist Party, we are building up the Party which is the essential vehicle for achieving Socialism.

The Labour Party, as I wrote above, was originally intended to facilitate the alliance of the Socialist vanguard and the mass of the organised workers. That Socialist vanguard today is the Communist Party, and as it is now excluded the original purpose of the Labour Party has been distorted and from this flows the consequent problems and frustration in the movement.

In fighting to build the Communist Party and in fighting for its rightful place in the Labour movement, we are fighting for something indispensable for the victory of Socialism in Britain. It is a political party based on the working class and scientific Socialism, which alone can fight and show the way forward for the victory of the whole Labour movement, including the Labour Party.

The relationship between the Communist Party and the Labour Party can take many forms with the development, growth and evolution of the Labour movement, but the kernel of the problem is the strengthening of the Communist Party, its Marxist understanding and influence and the contribution it can and must make in a united Labour movement.

We are going to increase the tempo of our fight, going to take

an ever-increasing part in every phase of working class activity, and if time is against those who dally and dilly with Britain's problems, time will work for us. We shall see the most profound changes in the role that the Communist Party will fill in the next few years. More and more the workers will see that what we stand for is correct, more and more they will insist on it being adopted, and they will also increasingly demand that all bans and prohibitions against working with us are ended, that the Communists shall have full democratic rights in all labour organisations. For the whole future trend of the Movement is in the direction of greater unity, not less, for coming together and not getting apart, for common contribution for the solving of common problems. It is our record that will form our main credential.

Just another word, although Attlee has stated there will be no General Election until 1950; it is not too early to prepare for this now. The people, in my judgment, will never again return a Tory Government, but our aim should be that at the next General Election the Tories are still more decisively defeated than in 1945. It can be done. The unity of the working class can ensure that this will be the case. The Communist Party is ready to make its contribution towards electoral unity, but I make it plain, it is not going to be content with a position where it is welcomed in to the Committee Rooms of Labour candidates to address envelopes, sell literature, do the chalking and canvassing. Oh, no, that time has gone. Naturally we will do our share of this kind of donkey work, but we shall fight for increased representation in the new Parliament and the ways and means exist through which this can be done without any splitting of the working class vote in a single constituency if the Labour Party is prepared to discuss the matter with us.

If the Communists can play a great part in the Trade Union movement, as Horner, Moffatt and Davies, Gardner, Papworth, Scott, Hannington, and hundreds of other comrades are doing at the present time, the Communist Party can play the same kind of part in Parliament, and it is going to do it.

But the times are too serious to permit any of the existing divisions inside the Labour movement to continue for another day. That is, if the interests of the movement are placed before those of individuals. The political struggle is not between Labour and Communism. It is between the Labour movement

and Capitalism; between the working class and reaction, on the vital issues of today—the economic crisis and the drastic policies which will yet have to be adopted to solve it; a correct Socialist foreign policy upon which our jobs, food, social security and our whole future depend. The reduction of prices, the control of profits; speedier demobilisation, and the reduction of the present size of the armed forces. The housing problem; the fight against the Tories and Fascists who believe Britain's difficulties are their opportunities.

The fight against anti-Semitism. The care of the aged, crippled, sick and injured; the winning of the next General Election by an even greater majority than the present one. Curbing the power of the Trusts and employers; making it possible for Joint Production Committees to function effectively. Making nationalisation a success, extending its scope, increasing production to the maximum possible.

These are surely the common aims of every section of the Labour, Trade union and Co-operative movement. These are the things upon which unity in the factories, the places where we live, the organisations in which we are active, can surely be achieved by all who really care for the Movement and for Britain.

For such aims there is need to abolish bans and prohibitions that at present divide one set of workers from another, that hinder the full united force of the movement from being exercised.

We Communists are eager, ready and willing to make our full contribution in any such common endeavour.

Do not let any of us in the movement underestimate either the gravity or urgency of the problem that confronts us all. Do not let us underestimate the tricks that the Tories and their Fascist allies and secret column, the Mosley Fascists, will get up to. We can solve all problems. We can defeat reaction. But only if we unite all our forces, energy, leadership and singleness of purpose, and we emphasise again that time is not on our side in the fight against capitalism.

The policy of refusing such unity, of carrying on the old and present hostility to any association with the Communist Party, does not hurt that Party; it does help to strengthen the forces of reaction inside and outside the Labour movement. It repeats the fatal policy carried out by Social Democracy between the

two wars with such terribly fatal results for world humanity. A close recognition of one's duty to our great working-class movement should inspire all those within the Labour Party who wish to avoid a repetition of such events, and who really want to face the future, to fight alongside the Communists for such common aims as we have described, and to take a firm stand against those reactionary Right Wing leaders who in present conditions are simply heading for repeating the tactics of MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas in 1931.

CONCLUSION

I hope that what I have tried to get across in this book will at least cause some comment and discussion, but I hope still more that it will encourage every member of the Communist Party—those indefatigable and self-sacrificing members of the Labour movement (and how proud I am to represent them, they little know)—to go forward into the new struggles for the victory of the common people with renewed energy and confidence.

At the same time I also express the hope that there will be many other workers in the Labour movement too, who will respond to what has been suggested. There is so much to do, and, if we find the right approach, so many who are anxious to know and understand what the actual problems are, how they can be solved and what they can personally and collectively do to get the nation out of its present crisis, so that they may all enjoy what modern technique and our productive possibilities can give towards a fuller and happier life. The younger men and women of the nation, especially those in the ranks of the working class who were foremost in the fight for production to make possible the defeat of fascism, and those who were in the armed forces during the war; those who know nothing and care less about past conflicts between the Labour and Communist Parties, but want to get a move on. These are the new generation that want to make certain their babies and youngsters are never going to face either another war or the kind of conditions which exist at present.

These workers have such modest requirements and desires. They want security in their jobs. Wages that are sufficient to live on, without any wondering about "what will happen if I am sick or injured?" They want houses that are homes. To be able to smoke a Woodbine or a Players without wondering whether it will stop Dalton from going to sleep. They are tired of being pushed around and taken for misguided infants who cannot be told the facts of life. They are rightly resentful of the everlasting swank and patronage of the American profiteers, and they want to work in harmony and live in peace with the common peoples of the world.

These are the new reserves of the working class who await being organised and brought into the fight. Let us make a new effort to bring them into some new form of activity which they feel and know they can do. Let the older and more experienced working class fighters show the way.

The organised workers need to take the initiative now, begin to clear up their own industry and show the Government the way to set about it. It is up to the lads on the job to make the pace. They know where the hold-ups are; they need to smash through them as they did during the Second World War.

But I know good trade unionists who argue: "That's all very well, Harry, but what good is it if we produce more when there isn't a plan? What good is it having a production drive if we have a wrong foreign policy which is going to land us in the soup, no matter how much we produce?" And it is also argued: "If we fight for more efficient production now, won't we be strengthening the Labour leaders in carrying out their reactionary policy abroad and giving in to the capitalists at home? Won't we just be making more profits for the capitalists?"

I would like to remind these comrades that just the same arguments were used when the Communist Party launched its great wartime drive for increased production and the opening of the Second Front. Many prophesied that it would lead to disarming the workers, the employers would take advantage of every concession and use it against the trade unions, and the Government would never open the Second Front anyway. The real result, however, was to strengthen the trade unions industrially and politically, to give the workers more say than before in the running of the factories and industries, and to help forward the fight for the arms that were produced to be used in the right way.

I believe that if the militant trade unionists in building, for instance, set the example in recruiting labour for the housing jobs and away from luxury work, if they led the exposure of the black market in materials that every building worker knows about, then they would greatly strengthen their public political fight for a reorganisation of the industry which will improve their conditions and get the houses up quicker. They will establish their right to be consulted as organised workers by the local authority at every stage of the housing plan, instead of

this great task being left to the contractors as the only experts.

The miners' production efforts have shown the way. If it was right for this section of workers to do their damndest to get the coal—and nobody thought otherwise when the miners were hacking their way through the snowdrifts to get to work—then it is right for others. It has put the miners in a very strong position politically and industrially, and it has put Britain in a better position to be independent than it would otherwise be.

It is a fine thing that in so many parts of the country Trades Councils are holding conferences on what can be done locally to help solve the crisis. For once the workers take the responsibility for finding the way out, instead of leaving it to the governor or the Government, they will soon make short work of the arguments that "you can't control the capitalists," or "the miners are being pampered." Above all, they will demonstrate both to the Labour movement and to the whole people that it is the active interest and support of the workers that can save Britain, and we shall hear less of the argument that the workers are not fit to run an industry they have spent their lives in, whereas the sons of managing directors are fitted for it by instinct.

It is very significant that from so many of these local gatherings, where the best in the Labour movement comes together to tackle the problems, the demand is coming to the Government for a National Plan, for cutting down the size of the Armed Forces, for a new policy of friendship and trade with democratic Europe, and breaking our dependence on the U.S.A.

The militant working class will not be content with the role of either an indulgent or a carping critic of a Labour Government. It is determined to increase its power and control in practical life, in production and administration, in winning what it voted for. On the job, this means stronger Joint Production Committees, it means linking up their work through the District and National organisations of the union. If important work is being held up because the materials aren't coming through, or because the management isn't doing its job, then let the workers sit on the doorstep of Cripps or Bevan till they get satisfaction. During the Second World War we saw a number of deputations from the job to expose sabotage and muddle; Press conferences were called, Members of Parliament lobbied, managements

removed. We have to get even greater determination and publicity now.

The Shop Stewards in particular have now a more responsible task than ever before. They are the guardians and leaders of the workers on the job. They can set an example by trying to explain the character of the job the whole nation must tackle. Wipe out defeatism, cynicism and doubt, so that, for example, the Joint Production Committees can really be organised and got going in a manner we have never seen before, just because *all* the workers understand the gravity of the nation's position, its need for increased production, and are determined to make a bid for it. To aim at getting the best workers elected to such Committees, not Bosses' men or those who think if they show off they will soon be promoted to become charge hands or foremen; but those whose heart is in the task for its own sake, those who know the factory, are the most capable workers, know what the factory is capable of producing, how to stand up to the sabotage of the boss, those who know what the workers in their factory will do once they are convinced about what has to be done and feel they have had a say in the planning of it.

Let us all aim to make the trade union branches new centres of activity, where the issues of the place where we work are discussed; where the state of trade union organisation in the factory is constantly dealt with; and where the branch is not looked upon as a place "for the old 'uns," but that meeting place to which we must all go to protect our own interests. It is time we ended a position where our trade union branch feels it has done its duty if it has passed a resolution on some topic or other—we must get the feeling that what our branch expresses is going to make our District Committee, our Executive Council, our local County Councillor and Member of Parliament sit up and take notice.

It is always necessary to exert well-informed pressure on the Executive Committees of our trade unions, so that they can be kept from going stale, be kept up to scratch, and reminded of the fine promises they made when they were standing for election to such responsible positions. This is a sure means through which the Executive Committees will then understand the part they also have to play in helping to solve the problems of the union, the industry they cater for, and the nation as a whole.

We must ensure not only that each factory has 100 per cent

membership, but that all trade union branches play their part in strengthening the local Trades Council, Labour Party, Communist Party and Co-operative movement. Appointing their representatives to delegate bodies, and demanding the right to elect by democratic vote those whom they believe and know from practical experience are the most capable of representing what the branch stands for.

Let them exercise vigilance over their local and County Councillors and Members of Parliament for their area, so many of whom only look to the trade union branches as a source of financial support, and only come to them at election periods to give a pep talk about the importance of voting. It is high time such representatives of Labour were made to realise that the trade union branches are precisely the key organisations of the workers, more closely in touch with the thoughts, moods and demands of the workers in the factories than any other in the areas.

Let the workers in the factories and trade union branches become the champions of working class unity, because they know whom they can trust, they know who fights the boss, who is most active in defending the daily interests of the workers in their struggle against capitalism and for Socialism.

We can all also help to make the Trades Councils far more representative and responsible organisations than they are at the moment.

What a great latent power the Trades Council has for strengthening everything associated with the development of the Labour movement and its policy; how decisive the part it has to perform in placing Britain's economy on a really sound basis. In bringing "politics" home to the workers in a far more realistic manner than at present is the case, and in evoking from them an entirely new conception of work, service and sacrifice that can enormously help forward the solution of all present problems, and also hasten the mass developments towards Socialism.

What a drive the Trades Councils could make for the fulfilment of a national economic plan; in the explanation of its necessity and the importance of the industries in its particular locality. What magnificent work they could do in keeping all the workers they organise informed of the progress of the national plan in each factory and industry within their area;

in organising production competitions as between one factory and another, one industry and another. In making their factories, industries and towns known from Land's End to John o'Groats as representing the champions in establishing new targets, new records in productive activity, and unifying the workers' fight for a greater and greater share in the productivity of their labour. Getting the whole organised movement into its stride in each area for a national plan and national effort to show the world—not the flag of British imperialism—but the new Britain which we intend to build.

What an influence the Trades Councils could exert, not only at election times, but every day in all aspects of local, county and parliamentary politics. And let me say here, for example, if the Trades Councils in the former depressed areas were to get together and really fight for those they represent, then the Government would certainly be compelled to make a real start towards their becoming the new Development Areas of Britain.

Then think of the new types of recruiting campaigns that the Trades Councils could carry out, and especially the ceaseless propaganda for trade union unity, federation and amalgamation they could undertake just because they represent forms of working-class organisation where, in such a marked degree, local working-class unity already exists. Where trade unionists, whether Labour or Communist, Protestant or Catholic, agnostic or atheist, already work together. The extension of such unity is one of the indispensable keys to the future progress of Britain.

All of us have much more to do in recruiting new members for some section of the Labour movement. It is time to wage a relentless war on the current conception—and it is not confined to Labour Party circles—that expresses itself something like this: "If he joins, he won't stick it. He'll pay his dues for a week or two, then drop out. He's been in before, but he soon gets tired." If any of these things are true, the responsibility is ours and not the other fellow's. It's our methods that are wrong, not his.

A great appeal now needs to be made to young people, whether in the factories, offices or universities. We needed them in war, and goodness knows we need them now in peace-time conditions. The Labour movement is riddled with defeatism, with people who say, "Do not press us too hard, we are willing, but the situation is too difficult," and those other people (and

how I hate their guts) who so patronisingly say with their hands in the wrong place, "You young people do not understand, you want to run before you have learned to walk; we have grown up in the movement."

You will never convince me that the youngsters who flew in planes, manned our Armoured Corps, formed our Commando brigades, sailed in our convoys and battleships, are not people to whom new and equally serious responsibilities can be trusted.

It is a great weakness of the Labour movement that we have no mass youth organisation. The movement needs a great united organisation of Socialist Youth, and the building up of this must be one of the objectives of all who want a Socialist Britain. Our organisation, the Young Communist League, must be strengthened and helped to carry on its work to make youth conscious of the Socialist goal, and the need for a joint struggle for the interests of all young people.

It is time to get rid of the idea once and for all, that to join a working-class organisation is all right for those who have had their day, but not for young people with life before them. We need the drive, energy, enthusiasm and confidence which young people can bring to any movement they are identified with. They are our future craftsmen, technicians, teachers and leaders. We must give them all the assistance and encouragement we can; give freely of our knowledge, skill and experience so that they can surpass all present achievements. We must support their demands whether they are for better educational and training facilities, wage for age scales, shorter hours, sports and cultural opportunities, grants for the possibilities of obtaining the best education possible, and improving conditions in the workshops. We must help organise them into the Trade Unions and working-class political organisations, and not let it stop at this, but see that they are given the fullest opportunities in all such organisations, to take part in discussion and advance their proposals, and that they are encouraged in every way to accept responsibility and thus help unite and strengthen the whole Labour movement.

Youth must have its place in the sun. The organisation of young people in Britain as a positive force making for swift advance towards Socialism has been shamefully neglected, and it is time to end this. In this struggle the young people will soon prove themselves to be the most outstanding architects and leaders.

It is true that we are living in one of the most difficult and complicated periods in world history, but it can also be one of the most formative and constructive periods; one in which we can accomplish deeds that will live as long as time endures. We are privileged to live when one of the most exciting and constructive dramas in world history is on the stage, and we should be proud to participate in it.

But while we are doing everything in our power to unite all the various sections of the organised British workers, let us never forget the necessity of closer unity and understanding between the workers of all lands. This will help to create a new interest in what is going on in other countries where the common people also experience the same difficulties as ourselves, but are proceeding to their solution at a much quicker pace—even if they are, at the moment, denied the “benefits” of American dollars.

How I wish far more rank and file workers direct from the workshops could see what is taking place in such countries as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria and Rumania, not to mention the Soviet Union.

They would be greatly surprised, not only at the enthusiasm and honour felt in work to place their country on a firm and lasting foundation, but at the opportunities for the workers on the job to exercise a leading role at every stage in the battle for production and for the new life for the common people they are so rapidly organising; and at the extent to which a real democracy is in operation, one which rests upon the workers, one they are so conscientiously moulding in a direction which is to the mutual advantage of their own peoples and those of the whole world.

I close on this note. I am convinced that this nation is far from down and out. Let the Yankee millionaires gloat and shout about our difficulties and problems. Let them keep on with their prophecies about “Britain’s day being done.” They have a great surprise coming to them. Our great nation and people are going to write the brightest pages in their long history. We are again going to influence the whole world with our new efforts and deeds.

We have eager allies all over the world, only waiting for the call to be made and to be allowed to work in co-operation with us: for we are bound by common thoughts and the desire to accomplish common deeds that will be reflected in the improve-

ment of the conditions of the toilers at home and abroad, allies who only desire to exchange with us what we all help to produce—the fruits of our labour, one with the other. Our monuments shall not be war memorials, but new cities, new factories, the fullest use of the land, great new schools and universities, a mighty extension of every cultural facility that is open to the use and advancement of the people. Allies who only desire to live in peace with each other, and to serve these great ends are prepared to unite their forces against reaction wherever it rears its ugly head, so that economic prosperity shall take the place of fear and poverty and slumps, friendly co-operation replace cut-throat competition, and on this basis the peoples of the world can enjoy the blessings and achievements of a lasting and fruitful peace.

On behalf of the Communist Party, I call on all who read this to help carry through such a policy to the quickest possible success, and to begin now to make this possible by joining the Communist Party, so that together we can all help to make Britain strong to conquer all its present and future difficulties and go forward to the glorious future of Socialism.

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