

The British Road to Socialism

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[This new edition of *The British Road to Socialism* was printed in February 1958, after long, widespread discussion throughout the Communist Party.

The programme was first issued in 1951, and adopted at the Communist Party Congress in 1952.

A Commission to prepare a revised draft was set up in 1956. This revised draft was submitted to the Party Congress in 1957, together with over 1,500 amendments from Party organisations; after the

main principles had been decided by the Congress, the draft was remitted to the Executive Committee for a new text to be prepared and finalised after again consulting Party organisations.

This new text was prepared and circulated to Party organisations, and 159 suggestions (out of 257 sent in) were incorporated in the final text now published. This was adopted by the Executive Committee of the Communist Party in January 1958.]

THE BRITISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM

Introduction

THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S aim is socialism, because socialism is the only way to solve the problems of the British people and end the class divisions in society.

This has been the goal of the pioneers of the Labour movement since its earliest days. In the trade unions and Co-operative organisations, in the Labour Party and in the Communist Party, generations of working people have fought for better conditions. Many important advances have been won. But we have not yet made the decisive step forward from a capitalist to a socialist order of society.

In our lifetime great scientific advances have opened up entirely new perspectives for mankind. Nuclear energy applied to peaceful purposes, automation and other technological discoveries make possible immense improvements in the life of the people. The possibilities of human progress which a socialist society could now realise far surpass the dreams of the socialist pioneers.

The capitalist society in which we live cannot realise these possibilities. The achievements of science are turned to preparations for war. Nuclear weapons are being made and tested; a colossal armaments programme drains away the country's wealth, and the menace of a third world war fought with nuclear weapons hangs over us. Automation, which could ease labour and bring great increases in production, leads to greater exploitation and unemployment so long as industry is in private hands. There is a constant struggle to maintain real wages, and old age pensioners live in dire poverty. The housing problem grows worse, and hundreds of thousands of families are haunted by the fear of impossibly high rents or losing their homes. Social services are being cut instead of expanded. Instead of confidence in the future, there is a growing feeling of insecurity.

Talk of doubling the standard of living in twenty-five years is only deception in capitalist Britain. So long as a small class of rich propertyowners control Britain's economic and political life, the skill of our working people, the knowledge of our scientists and all the resources of our country will be used in the interests of the rich instead of in the interests of the people. Capitalism is a barrier to social advance, and a constant menace to peace. It is time for the working people to take things into their own hands and build a just society in Britain.

A Socialist Britain, with planned production to meet the people's needs, would make it possible to realise the practical things that people want—such as a shorter working day with increased wages, retirement at 60 with a pension giving a decent standard of living, and a radical solution of the housing problem. It would bring the British people into the great world movement of advancing socialism.

Already countries with a third of the world's population—950 million people—have taken the socialist road. Another 700 million of what were once colonial and dependent peoples have thrown off their imperialist masters and are building their own future.

Capitalism cannot put the clock back, however much it tries to resist the advance of the people.

Attempts to maintain it only bring conflict and war. The people, led by the working class, must go forward to win power and build a new social order.

We can do this if we understand the real causes of our present position, if we see the contrast between conditions in Britain today and the life that a socialist society would make possible, and if we are clear about the aim for which we work. Then we can plan the way forward, and overcome all obstacles by united action for a common purpose. *The British Road to Socialism* is a contribution to this end.

I. Our Aim is Socialism

Most of Britain's productive resources—the land, factories and ships—are now owned by a small class of rich people. Even nationalised industries still pay tribute to their former owners.

These rich capitalists draw their incomes, not from their own labour, but from the labour of working people. The workers produce wealth far in excess of the wages they are paid, whether these wages are high or low. The surplus they produce above their wages is not paid for, but is taken as profit by the capitalists. This is exploitation, the source of all capitalist wealth.

The capitalists use their profits not merely to live in luxury, but to pile up new capital, to build great monopolies, and to exploit the peoples of backward countries. In spite of all taxation they grow richer year by year.

Britain is dragged into military commitments and wars to safeguard their interests, and vast armaments expenditure adds to their profits.

The constant aim of the rich owners of capital is to increase their profits at the expense of the working people. They keep down wages, salaries and pensions, while they raise prices. They restrict the social services and raise the workers' contributions. They instal new machinery that displaces labour, in order to reduce their wages bill and make still larger profits.

Even when there is relative prosperity, short time and redundancy undermine the security of the workers in one industry or another; in the background is the threat of widespread economic crisis, poverty in the midst of plenty, and the waste of human labour and skill that unemployment brings.

Britain has been described as a welfare state, a property-owning democracy, or an opportunity state. These descriptions are contrary to the facts in capitalist Britain.

It is true that, because of the strength and organised struggle of the Labour movement, we have far better social services than before the war. But over 4 million old age pensioners are compelled to live on a pittance; our hospital services are inadequate to meet actual needs; large numbers of our children have little opportunity of an adequate all-round education; and the housing situation—aggravated by the Tory rent-raising policy—makes life and the maintenance of good health difficult for millions of our people.

Many advances have been won, but the social services in the so-called welfare state are far below the level that is possible today.

Nor is Britain a property-owning democracy. On the contrary, the inequalities of wealth are extreme. Nearly half the total wealth belongs to only 1 per cent of the population. At the other end of the scale, three-quarters of the people own between them only one-twentieth. Nine out of ten adults leave nothing or next to nothing when they die.

This distribution of wealth has not been altered by taxation of the rich or by any of the measures taken by the post-war Labour Governments. It by itself gives the lie to the argument that Britain is a land of equal opportunity. Wealth brings with it not only economic power, but political power and social privilege. The rich and their families fill the controlling positions in industry, in finance and

trade, in the armed forces and the civil service. The children of the rich have their own privileged education which opens the way to jobs with higher pay and greater prestige. The great houses of the rich, their comfort and luxury, their security and opportunities, stand in vivid contrast to the conditions of life for the overwhelming majority of the people.

It is the private ownership of Britain's productive resources, and the exploitation of the workers for profit, that enables a small group of very rich capitalists to pile up immense fortunes and control the economic, political and social life of our 50 million people.

The socialist movement has therefore always aimed to take the means of production and distribution out of the hands of individuals, and to transfer them to the ownership of the people as a whole, so that they can be used for the common good.

The social ownership of Britain's resources—socialism—is the foundation on which the British people can build a new life.

Social ownership, production to meet the people's needs instead of production for private profit, opens the way to higher wages, shorter hours and a better life for the people. The surplus which under capitalism is taken from working people by capitalists, landlords and bankers, in the form of rent, interest and profit, under socialism is available for social use—to raise pensions and benefits, improve education and health services, build houses and equip new factories to supply the rising needs of the people.

Social ownership means an end to the chaos and wasteful competition of production for profit. Planned production and distribution ensures economy and lower prices, and the development of new productive resources to provide what people really want.

With planned production and distribution on a socialist basis, industry is always expanding, and with increased production the purchasing power of the people also expands. Increased production is balanced by higher wages, shorter hours and improved social services, so that there are never any surplus goods that people are unable to buy. This means that there is no longer any danger of unemployment.

Social ownership ends the system in which so many of the rich capitalists draw high profits from Government contracts for war supplies. In a Socialist Britain, there can be no one who benefits from war preparations or war itself, no one who is interested in crushing competitors by force or exploiting cheap labour in backward countries. Socialism ends colonial oppression and racial discrimination. The policy of a Socialist Britain is therefore a policy of peace, independence for all countries, and friendship and trade with all peoples. Such a policy puts an end to the crushing burden of armaments we now bear.

Socialism therefore means for the people of Britain security at home and abroad, and the opportunity to live our own lives free from the fear of poverty and war.

Socialism does not mean the levelling down of living standards. Nor does it bring bureaucracy and tyranny. On the contrary, socialism draws more and more people into planning and making their own future, and frees their creative energies for great economic, social and cultural advances.

Women have equal rights with men in the social, economic and political life of the nation, including equal pay in all spheres of work. Every facility is provided to enable them to exercise these rights, and to go out to work so as to end their economic dependence; social benefits will enable mothers to decide for themselves whether to go out to work or to stay at home. The extension of social services not only benefits the children, but gives women more leisure and a better chance to exercise their rights as mothers, workers and citizens. For the family, therefore, socialism means a real home life, fuller interests and closer ties based on security and a new respect for the individual.

A socialist society means above all a better future for young people. The best education and training are freely available to all, the best opportunities for a fuller and happier life. They are the first charge on the nation's resources, and they have most to gain from the new social order.

A Socialist Britain means, in short, a Britain of security and real opportunity for everyone, a Britain in which there are neither masters nor servants, but only people working together for a happy, prosperous life.

Our country has great resources: the skill and discipline of our working people, and our long experience in technology and science; our great industrial enterprises, our transport and shipping, and the natural resources of our mines, fields and seas. The scientific and technical knowledge we already possess, when given free rein for the benefit of all, can bring a far higher standard of living than we have today. The building of a Socialist Britain does not require the long years of construction, training and sacrifice that were inevitable in building socialism in less developed countries.

But in order to build socialism, the dominant position of the rich must be ended. Political power must be taken from the hands of the capitalist minority, and firmly grasped by the majority of the people, led by the working class.

The political power of the rich is founded on their economic power. The change to socialism, therefore, means that the industrial and financial enterprises of the millionaire monopoly capitalists must be taken over for the people, and production organised and planned not for profit but for use. The political power of the working class needs to be safeguarded and strengthened by the establishment of working-class control of the armed forces, the police, the civil service and diplomatic service. In industry, the workers must participate in management at every level. Democratic rights must be strengthened and extended, the right of self-determination realised in practice for all hitherto subject peoples, and a strong, free and independent Britain built up.

These measures are the essential basis of the change to socialism. Many serious problems will arise in carrying them through. But Britain is a country whose working class in industry makes up the great majority of the population. It is also a highly organised working class; with a long tradition of struggle. It has the possibility of winning to its side other sections of the population, people whose interests have nothing in common with those of the handful of monopolists who now dominate our political and economic life. With the help of the working people and their organisations, all difficulties can be overcome, and a new, just society built up on socialist principles.

II. How to Achieve Socialism

The key issue before the British working class is how to achieve socialism—how to advance from our present political, economic and social situation to the achievement of our socialist aims.

One thing is clear: socialism can only be built with power in the hands of the people, led by the working class.

This was the significance of the taking of power by the Russian working class in November 1917, by the Chinese workers and by the workers of other countries in the years following the Second World War.

The people of different countries, led by the working class, have taken power into their own hands in different ways, according to the conditions in their country and in the world as a whole. So also the people of our country will take power in their own way, on the basis of their historical conditions and traditions.

But whatever the conditions in any country, there are certain essential requirements for the advance to socialism in every country, including Britain. These are: that power, must be taken the working class, supported by other progressive sections of the people; that there must be a Party based on Marxism and the principles of democratic centralism, capable of giving leadership in the struggle against capitalism and in the building of socialism. A Socialist government, backed up by the working class and the people, must take over the basic means of production, carry through the

measures necessary to end exploitation, develop a planned socialist economy raise living standards, prevent obstruction and sabotage by the capitalists and landlords, abolish national oppression, and consistently apply the principles of working class internationalism.

More than a third of the world's population has already taken the socialist road. Former colonial and dependent peoples have won independence. Countries that now take the socialist road have powerful allies and do not need to face single-handed a hostile capitalist encirclement. On this background, and with the increasing strength of the working class and progressive movement throughout the world, a transition to socialism without armed conflict is possible today in many countries.

This is particularly true of our country, whose powerful Labour movement embodies the British workers' fighting ability and experience of struggle, and where there is a strong tradition of democratic institutions. At a time of mounting class struggle, when the entire working class is brought into action and is supported by other sections of the population, a general election fought on the issue of a socialist solution to Britain's problems could bring decisive results. It could return to Parliament a socialist Labour and Communist majority and establish a Socialist Government which, with the backing of the people, would begin to carry through a fundamental social change.

In this way, using our traditional institutions and rights, we can transform Parliament into the effective instrument of the people's will, through which the major legislative measures of the change to socialism will, be carried. Using the rights already won in the Labour movement's historic struggle for democracy, we can change capitalist democracy, dominated by wealth and privilege, into socialist democracy, where only the interests of the people count.

But this change can only be brought about through struggle. The British ruling class is experienced and ruthless in defence of its selfish interests. It is necessary for the Labour movement to understand this, and at the same time to realise that the working class has the strength, united in struggle for socialism, to overcome all resistance and reach its goal.

Working class power is the essential condition for far-reaching social change. The programme of a Socialist Government must therefore aim to consolidate that power, and put an end to the political, economic and social power of the capitalist class. Only a working class state, with the full support of working people, can carry through the measures that will open the way to socialism.

The principal features of this programme must be:

Socialist nationalisation of large-scale industry, banks, insurance companies, big distributive monopolies, and the land of the big landowners, in order to break the power of the millionaire monopolists; and control of foreign trade in the interests of the people.

A planned economy based on socialist principles and aimed at rapidly improving the people's living and working conditions, with workers by hand and brain, and their organisations, participating in planning and management at every level.

Consolidation of the political power of the working people by ensuring that those in commanding positions in the armed forces and police, the civil service and diplomatic services are loyal to the Socialist Government and increasingly representative of the people; and by democratic electoral reform, democratic ownership of the press, and control of broadcasting by the people.

The strengthening and extension of all democratic rights, and measures to ensure the just administration of the law.

Recognition of the right of all subject peoples to self-determination, and the necessary measures to guarantee this.

Making Britain strong, free and independent, with a foreign policy of peace and friendship with all nations.

But the capitalist class cannot be expected to surrender its wealth and power without a struggle. The big capitalists, whose interests are threatened by the advance to socialism, are likely to strive by every means in their power, constitutional and unconstitutional, to hold back the movement. At all stages in the struggle for progressive policies and for socialism, therefore, the working class and progressive movement needs to be vigilant, and if necessary to use its political and industrial strength to defeat any attempts by the big capitalists to restrict democratic rights or block the road to democratic advance.

This will be of particular importance when the Socialist Government is established and begins to carry through measures to break the economic and political power of the big capitalists. The extent to which the working class is alert and prepared to use its strength in support of the Government's measures will determine whether the big capitalists accept the democratic verdict of the people or attempt to resist it by force.

But headed by the working class, a Labour and progressive movement which has been built up in struggle and is inspired by the goal of socialism will have the strength and spirit to overcome all obstacles and ensure that the Socialist Government carries through its programme, opening up a new and glorious future for our country.

III. The Way Forward

For over a hundred years the idea of a Socialist Britain has stirred the thought and inspired the actions of the most progressive sections of the Labour movement. Since 1918, the public ownership of all the means of production, distribution and exchange has been the aim of the Labour Party proclaimed in its Constitution.

Yet Labour Governments have come and gone, and Britain is still a capitalist country. In spite of progressive and desirable measures taken by the post-war Labour Governments, the proportion of Britain's national income taken by the rich remains practically unchanged. Britain's policy at home and abroad serves the interests of the rich.

In the past, the British working class, supported by other progressive sections of the people, has waged a ceaseless fight against the rule of the rich property-owners. In over a century of struggle it has won the rights of free speech, press and organisation; the right to vote; the right to strike.

We have used these democratic rights to secure improvements in wages and working and living conditions, and to build up great trade union and Co-operative movements, and political parties aiming to end capitalism and build socialism in Britain.

In this way the Labour movement has been built up into a powerful force. But it has not been able to use its strength to achieve its socialist aim. Within the movement there have always been two conflicting tendencies—the right wing, influenced by capitalist ideas and seeking to maintain capitalism; and the left wing, inspired by a working class outlook that sees the fight for better conditions as part of the struggle for socialism.

Experience has shown socialists that so long as the influence of the rightwing and capitalist ideas control the policy of the movement, no serious inroads can be made into the wealth and power of the capitalist class. It is only when the Labour movement is won for a really working class socialist outlook and policy that it will be able to use its strength to bring about a complete social change.

But propaganda by socialists for socialism, although essential, is not enough. By struggling for immediate improvements in working and living conditions, by the fight for peace and liberation of the colonial peoples, the working people will strengthen their organisation and unity, and come to understand that it is capitalism and capitalist policies which stand in the way of progress.

The Labour movement needs to learn from its own experience that the policy of the right wing

weakens the movement and plays into the hands of the capitalists, and that real gains can only be made when the movement is so determined that it fights under the leadership of socialists who are united in their aims. It must also learn from its own experience that even its gains in the struggle are not secure; that so long as capitalism lasts, the working people will be robbed of the fruits of their labour and menaced with unemployment and war to protect the profits of the rich, and that lasting as well as far-reaching improvements in our economic, social and political conditions can only be won when the working class takes power and uses it to end capitalism and build socialism.

The working class, therefore, needs an organised party of socialists, to give the Labour movement a socialist consciousness, a scientific socialist theory and a perspective of advance to socialism. The Communist Party is such a Party. Basing its policy on the working class outlook of Marxism it can free the Labour movement from the right-wing ideas that now hold it back, and lead it through the struggles under capitalism to the struggle for political power and the building of socialism. No socialist advance is possible without a constant fight against capitalist ideas and for working class, socialist ideas.

The Communist Party will always work for a Labour Government as against the Tories. At the same time, it fights for Communist representation in Parliament and on the local councils, in order to strengthen the whole working class struggle.

Experience has shown, however, that reformist Labour Governments have not brought about any real social changes, because they have not aimed to carry out a socialist programme. A reformist Labour Government is not the same thing as a Socialist Government which draws its strength from the mass movement of the people, makes working class power secure, and carries through the change to socialism.

The development of the struggle on the immediate issues facing the people is the key to building up the united movement, and that movement needs to be inspired with the socialist outlook and the determination to carry through a fundamental social change.

For a Rising Standard of Living

In order to finance its imperialist policies and to increase its profits, the ruling class is always trying to put new burdens on working people, and to hold back the progressive improvement in the conditions of the British people which science has made possible.

Whether such measures are put forward as necessary to safeguard the position of the £, or to maintain Britain's competitive power in world markets, or for any other reason, nothing can alter the fact that their real effect is to increase the profits of the rich at the expense of working people.

For this reason, the trade union movement has vigorously resisted any attempt to hold wages down while prices and profits are rising and output per head is, steadily increasing. The fight for higher wages and salaries and shorter hours, the fight to protect the position of shop stewards and trade union organisation, is the daily form of struggle, because it arises out of the fundamental clash of interests between workers and capitalists in production.

The first essential is to develop this fight, bringing in and organising all working people and extending solidarity in every struggle. This is necessary if we are to secure improved standards of living and make it impossible for capitalism to drive down the conditions of the people in a vain attempt to find a way out of its increasing difficulties.

A similar fight needs to be made by the Labour movement to compel the raising of old age pensions and all state benefits.

A fight is necessary against all increases of rent, for more homes at low rents, for state housing subsidies and lower rates of interest on housing loans to local authorities.

A wide movement of struggle needs to be developed for more schools and against cuts in education

and the health services.

In the fight on these and other issues that arise, it is essential to show that Britain's economic position can only be decisively improved, and employment permanently safeguarded, by the defeat of war policies abroad and the use of Britain's resources to raise the working and living conditions of the people; and that this can only be fully achieved in a Socialist Britain.

For Peace

A third world war, waged with atomic and hydrogen weapons, would be an appalling disaster for humanity. Moreover, it could result in the annihilation of Britain as we know it today.

The constant development of nuclear weapons, including test explosions, is increasing the amount of harmful radioactivity in the world, and involves a danger to all living things.

The British imperialists and their associates, led by the United States, at present refuse to contemplate the renunciation of nuclear weapons "in any foreseeable period". Instead, their policy includes the stationing of nuclear weapons in numerous European countries under American control, and the adaptation of military organisations to the assumption that all war must be nuclear war. They propagate the theory that war can be feasible and acceptable if "restricted" to the use of weapons far more terrible than those which destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and they contend that humanity must be cured of its moral condemnation of such weapons. They even maintain planes in the air over Britain in a state of readiness for the use of nuclear weapons, so that not only does the world live on the brink of a catastrophe but the people of this country are under constant threat of grave accident.

The policy of Labour and Tory Governments has steadily sacrificed our national independence and sovereignty to the U.S.A. The Tory policy of "interdependence" means the further subordination of Britain to the United States. American nuclear bases in Britain not only underline this subjection but place the supreme issue of peace or war for Britain in the hands of America.

Britain's subordination to the military plans of the United States imperialists, together with the aims of British imperialism itself, therefore gravely increase the danger of war, and have brought the immense burden of military expenditure which undermines our economic life and stands in the way of social advance. The restoration of Britain's national independence is a supreme need for the British people; it will enable Britain to pursue an independent policy to preserve peace in the world.

A third world war is not inevitable. Capitalist and socialist countries can live in peace and settle any differences without war, if all countries observe the five principles of foreign policy originally agreed between India and China and supported by the Soviet Union, the other socialist states, and the Asian and African countries that took part in the Bandung Conference. These principles are: mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty; non-aggression and non-interference in one another's internal affairs; equality and mutual advantage; peaceful co-existence; and economic co-operation.

Adherence to this policy would range Britain among those powerful forces in the world which aim to prevent war and safeguard peaceful coexistence—the socialist countries, India and other former colonial countries, the liberation movement in colonies still struggling for their independence, and the working class and peace movements in capitalist countries.

Peaceful co-existence can only be ensured by the joint efforts of all the peace forces. For the danger of war is kept alive by the aggressive aims of the imperialists against the socialist countries, by the huge armaments programme and especially the continued development of nuclear weapons; by military blocs such as the North Atlantic and South East Asia Treaty Organisations and the Baghdad Pact. It is kept alive by the efforts of the imperialists to control the economic life of nominally sovereign countries for their own profit and to maintain their grip on colonial peoples and crush the liberation movements; and by the conflict of interests between the imperialist powers

themselves.

A policy of peace must be based on the settlement of all international problems by negotiation, in accordance with the United Nations Charter; support for collective action to prevent or halt aggression; and the ending of colonial wars and all attempts to dominate other countries.

The most urgent measure to maintain peace is to end nuclear tests and ban the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons, and destroy existing stocks.

We must end Britain's association with military alliances such as the North Atlantic and South East Asia Treaty Organisations and the Baghdad Pact. We must ensure the removal of United States forces from Britain. There must be an end to every form of Britain's subordination to the United States.

Britain, freed from American influence, can play an independent part in securing an agreed settlement of outstanding international problems. The aims of such a settlement, in addition to the elimination of nuclear weapons, include an all-round reduction of armaments; a European collective security system coupled with the re-uniting of Germany and the withdrawal of all foreign troops from European countries; the lifting of restrictions on EastWest trade; the admission of the People's Republic of China to its rightful place at the United Nations; and support for the United Nations Charter.

These are the general lines of a peace policy which can be won by a joint struggle of the Labour movement, peace organisations and individuals and bodies of the most varying views who are willing to ensure that Britain's strength in the world is used on the side of peace. The Communist Party, for its part, is ready to work with all organisations and individuals who are fighting for peace, whatever differences may exist on other questions.

It is only narrow and selfish interests that benefit from war. It is only imperialism with its drive to maintain, restore or extend exploitation over other peoples which gives rise to the danger of war. Peace is in the interests of the whole people, and of all peoples. A Socialist Britain would not only pursue an independent policy of peace but would add decisive strength to the countries and the peoples now striving to avert war.

For Colonial Freedom

The wealth and power of the British capitalist class has been built up on the exploitation not only of the British people but of one-quarter of the world. Armed aggression and conquest, the plunder of their resources, unequal trade and ruthless exploitation of colonial workers and peasants have for centuries provided tribute from the colonial system to enrich the British capitalists.

The fight for independence has been won by India and other former colonies, but some 80 million people are still in colonial subjection, and British imperialism constantly strives, as in the Middle East, to keep independent countries under its control. Savage colonial wars are waged against the peoples, as in Malaya, Kenya and Cyprus.

A colour bar like that of South Africa is maintained in Central Africa, and in varying degrees exists in other territories. In many parts of

the colonial empire the people are denied the most elementary forms of democracy, and repressive measures are constantly enforced. Economic and social conditions of extreme poverty, starvation wages and the lack or niggardly provision of elementary social services, are the counterpart of the gigantic profits drawn from these countries by British monopolies.

The interests of the British people are wholly opposed to these imperialist policies. The profits of the Empire go to the big monopolists; the people of Britain pay the costs, in heavy taxation to meet overseas military expenditure and the sacrifice of Britain's youth in colonial wars.

The ending of imperialist robbery of the colonial peoples is the first essential for independent economic development and the conquest of poverty in those countries. This economic development and higher standard of living will be the basis for more trade between Britain and what are now backward countries, to our mutual benefit.

It is therefore in the common interests equally of the British people, the subject colonial peoples and all the peoples of the present Empire to build a firm alliance in the struggle against all imperialist aggression and robbery, and for the national independence of all subject peoples of the Empire.

This alliance needs to be built in the common struggle on every issue that affects the colonial peoples. The British Labour movement needs increasingly to act to stop colonial wars and acts of repression. It needs to fight against the colour bar and racial discrimination, and for the full social, economic and political equality of colonial people in Britain. The British Labour movement can help the fight of the colonial peoples for the extension of democratic and trade union rights and for the development of genuine Co-operative organisations. Through trade union solidarity it can help the industrial struggles of colonial workers, and it can co-operate with the movements for national liberation in their struggles.

Every victory of the colonial peoples in their fight for democratic rights, a higher standard of living and independence from British imperialist rule strengthens the British working class in its fight against the same monopoly capitalists in Britain. Every victory of the British workers against the British capitalists strengthens the colonial and dependent peoples of the Empire in their fight for better conditions and for national independence.

Unity in Action

In the struggle for higher standards of living, for peace and colonial liberation, the Labour movement can only develop its full strength through the united action of all its sections—Labour, Communist, trade union, Co-operative.

Because the Communist Party has always fought against the influence of capitalist ideas and has worked to strengthen the militant and socialist outlook of the movement, some Labour leaders have opposed its association with the Labour Party. Bans and proscriptions have been enforced, aiming to prevent Labour Party organisations and members from taking part in political activity alongside Communists, even where there is complete unity of purpose. Members of the Communist Party, whatever their record of service to the movement, are not accepted as delegates from their trade unions to Labour parties and Labour Party conferences. In some trade unions and Co-operative organisations, Communists are banned from holding office.

The removal of these bans and proscriptions is therefore an urgent need for the development of Labour's full strength in the fight against the employing class and their Tory Party.

In addition to removing the barriers that now prevent the Communist Party and its members from playing their full part in the Labour movement, far greater co-operation and solidarity needs to be developed between all sections of the movement in every industrial, political and social struggle.

The forces exist which, if united and determined, can guarantee victory. The workers in industry and agriculture, with their families, constitute fully two-thirds of Britain's population. The security and future prospects also of other sections of the people are closely bound up with those of the industrial workers. The great majority of clerical and professional workers, teachers, technicians and scientists, working farmers, shopkeepers, selfemployed, and small business men, are victims of the reactionary policies of Tory big business at home and abroad.

A working class united in action for progressive aims will win the support of many of these professional workers, small business people and working farmers. Like the industrial workers, they too suffer from high prices and rents and heavy taxation; they and their families are affected by the restriction of education, health and housing services. They suffer from the effects of aggressive

imperialist policies and colonial wars. They fear the H-bomb; they want peace and social and economic progress, because only such a policy will give security to them and to their children. On all these issues the middle sections of the people can be drawn into the fight alongside the Labour movement.

An alliance must be built up between the working class and these sections of the population, in the fight for peace and social progress, and against all attempts to maintain capitalism at the expense of the national interests. Such an alliance, headed by the working class, is an essential condition for the establishment of a real Socialist Government to build a Socialist Britain.

IV. The Programme of a Socialist Government

ECONOMIC MEASURES

Socialist Nationalisation

The purpose of socialist nationalisation is to break the economic power of the rich, by extending democratic forms of ownership and control over the industrial and financial centres of power in this country, which are now held by the big monopolies; to free the working class from capitalist exploitation and to release its energies and initiative for the building of a better, socialist society; to make economic planning a reality and use Britain's resources for a great advance in the living conditions of the people.

With these aims, all large-scale enterprises need to be taken over and brought into social ownership, together with the banks, insurance companies, the giant building societies, and wholesale and retail concerns owned by big business. The 500 great monopolies, which with their subsidiaries control more than half the country's economic activity, have to be brought into the hands of the nation. Agricultural land owned by large landowners, companies and institutions, and urban land, except that belonging to owner-occupiers, must become public property.

But the owners of smaller enterprises, small shopkeepers and traders, as well as Co-operative concerns, should go on as before; they will be freed from restrictions imposed on them by the monopolists and they will benefit from the rising turnover resulting from the new conditions.

Socialist nationalisation is very different from the measures of nationalisation carried out within capitalism by past Governments, including Labour Governments.

First it is much more far-reaching, covering all large scale privately owned industry and trade. Former measures of nationalisation covered only a few industries; the rest have been left in private hands, and have benefited from the transport and power supplied to them by the nationalised industries at specially low rates.

Former owners of nationalised industries have been given heavy compensation, which remains as a burden on the industry, depressing wages and hampering development. New plant and equipment has been provided by raising funds from private financiers, so that the burden of interest is always rising.

In socialist nationalisation, funds to modernise and expand industries come from public sources; compensation to former owners is not a burden on the industry but is paid by the state.

A reasonable method of compensation to former landowners and shareholders in nationalised industries is the payment of annuities for the lifetime of the persons concerned and of their wives, and until their children reach school-leaving age; the payments being based on a fair valuation of the property taken over, but with a maximum equal to the average national wage.

When industries have been nationalised, former owners and other capitalist interests formed the majority on the governing boards, and trade union influence on the administration could not alter this position. Socialist nationalisation, on the contrary, will get rid of the capitalists and their representatives, and the governing boards will be composed of workers and technicians. The workers and their trade unions have their say in management from top to bottom, and their initiative will be encouraged. Proposals, development plans and output targets will be put before the workers in every enterprise for discussion and joint agreement.

Under socialist nationalisation, our highly developed trade union movement, with its independence and rights guaranteed by law, will have as its first responsibility the protection of the interests of the workers. The vigilance of trade union and shop steward organisations is the best safeguard against bureaucratic administration or injustice, and ensures that the workers' views and suggestions are fully considered. Control by Parliament, with the regular consideration of reports and plans, and questions by M.P.s on issues when they arise, can also help to guard against bureaucracy in state-owned industries.

Over-centralisation in the administration of nationalised industries must be avoided by the transfer of suitable enterprises to local or regional authorities or to Co-operative organisations.

Within the plan for each industry, drawn up by a National Planning Commission in consultation with the unions from top to bottom, there will be wide scope for initiative and experiment by particular enterprises and groups, and managers will be encouraged to take responsibility.

Under socialist nationalisation, therefore, the workers and their organisations help in running their industry, and have a real interest in ensuring efficient and rising production, since every advance will mean increased earnings and a better standard of life.

The Planned Use of Britain's Resources

The primary aim of a Socialist Britain is to provide a full and happy life for all its citizens. National ownership of the principal means of production makes it possible to plan not only a fairer distribution of the wealth already being produced but the use of all resources and technical advances to bring about an enormous increase in production.

The exploitation of man is ended in nationalised industries, and every worker gets the full benefit of his labour directly through his rising wages and indirectly through the social services provided by the state.

When production and distribution are planned for the benefit of the people, full employment and security are guaranteed, with a rising standard of living, because every advance in production is reflected in lower prices and higher wages and social benefits.

For these reasons, a Socialist Britain will be able to use for the first time all our human and material resources.

Atomic energy, automation, and scientific research on an altogether new scale—these are the three major new factors in the scientific leap forward of our time. Fully developed as they can be only in a Socialist Britain, they can make an immense new contribution to our welfare.

The national plan for British industry and agriculture in the early years of socialism therefore has three great aims:

To increase the productive capacity of our industry and agriculture on the basis of the most modern technique.

To raise rapidly the standard of life of the British people in all its aspects.

To maintain and extend the export of the high-quality capital and consumption goods for which Britain is already famous, in exchange mainly for raw materials and food, and to

supply the former colonial countries with the productive equipment they need for industrialisation.

With a socialist foreign policy founded on peace and friendship with all peoples and the end of colonialism, a Socialist Government can make a very substantial reduction in armaments expenditure and release considerable resources of manpower and material now locked up in the forces and in armaments production.

Atomic energy can then be developed for peaceful purposes, bringing into being immense new productive forces, making substantial economies in labour and transport, and paving the way for abundance and more leisure for the people.

The widespread application of automation can further increase our power to produce. Automation brings with it in capitalist society redundancy and frustration for large numbers of workers. In socialist society, it means an increase in the wealth available to the people, with lower prices, higher wages and shorter hours. The change-over of British industry to increasingly automatic production can therefore be carried through rapidly and smoothly only in a Socialist Britain.

The national plan will also provide for the proper use of the land in the best interests of the people for both industry and agriculture, as well as for homes and recreation. It will be of the first importance to plan the location of industry and population, the reconstruction of towns and villages, and the development of a road system adequate to modern needs.

The planned use and development of Britain's resources on a socialist basis goes hand in hand with the advance of scientific research and the application of its results in all sections of industry, in contrast with its present use mainly for military purposes and to increase the profits of the big monopolies.

The smaller enterprises in industry and trade that are not included in the nationalisation of large-scale concerns are of great importance for meeting the people's needs. They therefore would be provided for in the national plan of production and distribution, and encouraged to work in close contact with the nationally owned and Co-operative enterprises directly serving the people. In some cases co-operation between the smaller enterprises may be the further road forward they prefer; in other cases they may ultimately be absorbed in nationally owned enterprises. While socialism eventually means the complete elimination of production for private profit, the aim at all stages must be to ensure the fullest possible use of these enterprises and of their owners' experience in the interests of the people.

Agriculture

This policy of ensuring the fullest possible use of all enterprises and of their owners' experience is of the greatest importance in agriculture. Freed from exploitation by the monopolies which now supply the farmers' needs and buy farm produce from them, agriculture can develop on a secure basis to meet the growing needs of the people, without fear of gluts and slumps.

This can be made easier by financial help for working farmers, including adequate guaranteed prices, and the encouragement of all forms of cooperation, including buying and marketing, joint use of machinery, joint cultivation of the land, and provision of machinery and equipment for Co-operative groups, to enable small farmers to benefit from large-scale methods in a way fully acceptable to themselves. Model state-owned farms can demonstrate the advantages of large-scale farming.

While socialism implies the eventual public ownership of all land, the first step—taking over the large landed estates—can improve conditions for a large number of tenants and serve as an example to the others.

Increased agricultural production requires not only help to farmers but measures to bring more land

into use; it is linked with, and indeed depends upon, making farm wages and conditions of work comparable with those in other skilled industries, and the improvement of amenities in the villages.

The Co-operative Movement

The Co-operative movement, like the trade unions, has a vital part to play in building a Socialist Britain. It can be an important means, within the national production plan, for organising the supply and distribution of consumer goods to meet rising standards of living.

In many branches of production, too, Co-operative forms of organisation need to be developed. This applies particularly to small-scale farming and fishing, and to industries in which Co-operative production is already well established.

Co-operation is a form of social ownership, and Co-operative enterprises, with member and employee participation in their management, can provide valuable safeguards against bureaucracy and ensure quick response to consumer needs. Side by side with Co-operative enterprise, state and municipal trading, as well as private trading in the early stages, can provide friendly competition and a mutual check on efficiency.

Foreign Trade

Trade with other countries, both within and outside the present Empire, is of special importance to Britain. We need to maintain and extend trade with all countries, though our dependence on food imports can be reduced by increasing our own farm output. The products of Britain's engineering skill and experience are needed by the whole world. In equal exchange for food, raw materials and semi-finished goods, British engineering exports can be greatly expanded, especially to supply former colonial countries and other under-developed countries with the productive equipment they need for industrialisation.

The fear is sometimes expressed, even within the Labour movement, that a Britain without imperial possessions would be unable to pay its way in the world and that it would mean starvation and unemployment for British workers. But the danger to our supplies comes from the robbery of colonial peoples and imperialist aggression. When friendly relations are established on the basis of national independence and equal rights, it is in the interests of former colonial peoples to supply us with the materials we need, in equal exchange for what they require from us.

Nor is there any need to fear that by helping under-developed countries to industrialise Britain is "cutting its own throat". The greatest volume of foreign trade flows between the most industrialised countries. Countries developing their own industries provide expanding markets for machinery exports; and as every advance towards industrialisation raises the standard of living, the demand for the consumption goods we make will also rise. Increased industrialisation and rising standards of living abroad are the guarantee of rising levels of British trade, which can never thrive on the poverty of other countries.

HOW CAN THE PROGRAMME BE FINANCED?

The industrial development described above and the social programme outlined later will cost a great deal. How will a Socialist Government find the money to carry out these plans?

In a Socialist Britain, we must ensure the proper use of our resources—human labour, factories and land. We live on real things, created by labour out of natural resources. If we use our resources rightly, we create more material things and our standard of living rises. In a socialist society finance is secondary to production; it is a method of allocating what we produce to the most socially useful ends.

The peace policy of a Socialist Britain, together with the final ending of colonialism, means a very

considerable reduction in the £1,500 million which the imperialists now squander annually on wars and preparations for war. These resources can then be released for civilian needs. The tribute now paid to the rich financiers as interest on the National Debt, over £700 million a year, can be ended by the cancellation of the debt, with reasonable compensation for small investors. In these ways substantial burdens can be removed from the Budget, and the money made available for better purposes.

The Budget of a Socialist Britain will be of a different kind from the Budget of capitalist days. Its main source of revenue will be nationalised industry, and its expenditure will include the development of industry. The Budget will be part of the plan for the expansion of industrial production, which is the real source of new wealth. The rapid and continuous increase in productivity resulting from planned production and the use of the most modern techniques, as well as from the workers' knowledge that they are working for themselves, would be the guarantee of continuously rising standards of living.

The immense savings on present Budget expenditure, combined with the new revenue from nationalised concerns and the greater productivity of planned and expanding production, can solve the financial problems. Substantial sums can then be made available for housing and education and health and the raising of benefits and pensions, as well as to expand and modernise our productive resources, on which further improvements must depend.

These are the general principles of the reorganisation of production and distribution, which need to be applied by a Socialist Government in Britain. How these will be embodied in definite measures, and how they are to be operated, can only be decided by the people in the light of the political and economic situation at the time. But it is only through the application of these principles that a Socialist Britain can be built.

SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY

In order to carry out these economic measures, a socialist state must be built up to replace the existing capitalist state, and to ensure that the decisions of Parliament are carried into effect by men and women loyal to the aims of socialism.

In spite of the great advances won by the people in their struggle for a better life, real power in Britain is still in the hands of the small group of very rich families who own more than half the wealth of the country and draw immense sums from the exploitation of colonial peoples. They control the greater part of the land, large-scale industry, finance and trade. Their representatives, trained in the outlook of the ruling class, fill the leading positions in the state—in the armed forces and police, the judiciary, the civil service, the diplomatic and colonial services. They also control broadcasting, television, the cinemas, and practically all newspapers and periodicals.

Working class power means an end to this privileged position of the rich, which they use to protect and increase their profits and to maintain their power over the people.

The economic measures outlined above need therefore to go hand in hand with more directly political measures to end the supremacy of the rich, build up a socialist state, and establish working class control, that is, socialist democracy, in every aspect of social life.

This means ensuring that the leading posts in the forces and Government departments and in the nationalised industries are filled by men and women who are loyal to socialism and will carry through with energy the changes decided on by Parliament.

It means also that the millionaire-owned national press—the principal means by which the monopolists keep their hold over the minds of the people—will be taken out of the hands of its present owners and transferred to national and local democratic organisations. This is the only way to guarantee the real freedom of the press.

The House of Commons, the representative body elected by the people, will become the sole

national authority; the House of Lords and the Monarchy will be abolished.

The electoral system will be democratically transformed, with proportional representation and votes at 18.

These are some of the principal measures needed to end the privileged position of the rich and open the way to real government by the people. Our present form of democracy is largely passive. A Socialist Government will develop a much more active democracy in which the ordinary citizen directly controls and administers affairs.

Real government by the people means carrying forward and developing to the fullest possible extent our existing democratic rights, and extending them to the spheres which have hitherto been the preserves of the rich. The essence of socialist democracy is to replace the control of the rich by participation of the people in running the country, in the work of local government and in the management of industry.

The existing organisations of the people, built up to fight for their interests, are the chief instruments through which this principle can be applied. The Labour Party and the Communist Party, working together for their socialist aim, are the working class political organisations on which the success of the change to socialism primarily depends. At the same time the right of other political parties to maintain their organisations, party publications and propaganda, and to take part in elections, will be maintained provided that these parties conform to the law.

Trade unions will have new and added rights and responsibilities. Not only will they continue to protect and further the interests of workers at all levels but they will play a key role in the management of nationalised industries and planning economic development.

Co-operative organisations, with their accumulated experience and democratic forms of organisation, will also have growing importance in all spheres of social life.

In the field of local government, socialism means greater freedom and responsibility for local authorities, which are in the closest contact with the needs of the people. They can be invaluable in preventing over-centralisation, by taking responsibility for the running of local industries and services. There must be a radical reform in the method of raising their finance. Their representative character and efficiency can be strengthened by associating local organisations with their work—trades councils, Co-operative societies and guilds, youth organisations, tenants' committees, parent-teacher associations and old age pensioners' associations.

Scotland and Wales need to have their own Parliaments, with powers to ensure the balanced development of their economies within the general plan for Britain, as well as to satisfy the wider national aspirations of their peoples.

The withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland is necessary to end the enforced partition of Ireland, and leave the Irish people free to establish their united Republic.

Maximum freedom means trusting the people, having confidence in their wisdom and good sense. The institutions of a Socialist Britain need to be such as to encourage and keep alive the democratic spirit, encourage criticism from below, discourage bureaucracy and arbitrary decisions from above.

A Socialist Government will preserve and extend the great tradition of civil liberty built up by the British people in centuries of struggle.

Thus Habeas Corpus, which protects the citizen against arbitrary detention the right to be tried by a jury, and the right to strike are some of the democratic rights which must be preserved by a socialist state. It will also be necessary to strengthen all the legal rights which, together with the ending of class privilege, will ensure the right of all to enjoy freedom to think, work, travel, speak, dissent, act and believe, subject only to those limitations necessarily required in any ordered and just society to protect citizens from interference and exploitation by others, and to protect the state. All forms of discrimination on grounds of race or colour need to be made illegal. Freedom of religious worship

needs to be guaranteed, and all religions, creeds and beliefs respected.

Women will be guaranteed rights and opportunities equal to those of men.

The administration of justice needs to be made more democratic. Judges will no longer be drawn, as they are at present, from a small privileged section of the population. Once appointed, they must be independent and free from interference in their work by the executive government. Magistrates will be drawn from nominations by trade union, Co-operative and other representative organisations. The right to sit on a jury, at present restricted, will be extended by the removal of all property qualifications. The death penalty will be abolished and corporal punishment prohibited.

A free legal aid and advice service needs to be provided for all who require it. There will be a right of appeal to democratic tribunals against arbitrary actions by officials.

These are some of the measures through which a Socialist Government will secure to all both the right and the means to enjoy freedom and security to an extent never known before, and to encourage the development of a live socialist democracy that can make the transition to socialism in Britain easier and more rapid than in other countries. How soon and how fully they can be applied depends not only on the Socialist Government and the initiative of the people but also on whether the former ruling class forcibly resists the changes or submits to Parliament's democratic decisions.

FOREIGN POLICY

The people of Britain have nothing to gain, but everything to lose, from war and the preparations for war. Since a Socialist Government represents the interests of the people and not those of any capitalist monopolies, it necessarily pursues a policy of peace and international agreement in solving all problems that arise, and supports the principles and charter of the United Nations.

Rapid progress in building socialism in Britain depends on the maintenance of peace, friendship and trade with all other peoples, and such an easing of international tension that agreement can be reached to reduce defence forces to a very low level.

A Socialist Britain, therefore, will adhere to the five principles for peaceful co-existence and co-operate closely with all socialist and former colonial countries which share our interest in peace.

The consistent application of these principles requires the ending of any remaining associations with such military alliances as N.A.T.O., the withdrawal of all British forces from the territory of other peoples, and an independent British policy, serving the interests of our people, in relation to all external affairs.

A free, strong and independent Britain pursuing such a policy can make a vital contribution to the preservation of world peace, and to the building up of co-operation between all peoples for the progress of mankind.

INDEPENDENCE FOR COLONIAL PEOPLES

An essential part of a Socialist Government's policy would be the ending of all relations with colonial peoples which are based on British economic, political and military domination. This involves in the first place the withdrawal of all armed forces from colonial and dependent territories or occupied spheres of influence and the handing over of sovereignty to governments freely chosen by their peoples. All natural resources and assets owned by the Crown or British capital in the former colonies must be handed over to their peoples.

In the gigantic tasks of reconstruction on which the former colonial peoples will be engaged to end the heritage of colonial economy—to industrialise their countries, modernise agriculture and raise living standards—British industry can play a valuable part through technical and economic aid and the supply of machinery and technicians.

The carrying out of this policy will be the effective recognition of the complete independence and right of self-determination of all countries in the Empire. A Socialist Government in Britain can seek to promote close voluntary fraternal relations for economic, political and cultural cooperation of mutual benefit, on the basis of national independence, equal rights and non-interference in internal affairs, between Britain and the former colonial countries and existing Commonwealth countries willing to develop such relations.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ADVANCE

The social purpose of the change to a new and higher order of society is not only to put an end to the evils of the past but to open up for all our people a life of economic security and prosperity as the basis for the full development of all their capabilities.

In capitalist society, the people have won social services of all kinds only after long struggles which have broken through opposition- from the ruling class. But even these services have been grudgingly granted; they are the first victims of capitalist economies; and their administration is often bound up with red tape and inhumanity.

Ownership and control by the people of our main productive resources provides the means for extending and improving the social services in a new spirit with a positive aim.

The basic principle of the social services under a Socialist Government is that they will be entirely free, non-contributory, available to all, and administered with the participation of the people themselves.

Education and Opportunity

One of the vital aims of socialist society is the education and training of young people in harmony with the ideals of that society, so that they can give creative service to the community, and at the same time develop their own capacities and interests to the full.

A Socialist Government, therefore, will replace the present educational structure, which in essence reflects the class structure of capitalist society, by an all-inclusive system giving every child equal access to the best facilities available.

Fundamental reforms are necessary to ensure genuine equality of opportunity; a system of nursery education; primary schools through which all children pass, without selective tests, into comprehensive secondary schools; a reduction in the size of classes to a maximum of thirty, to enable adequate attention to be given to each child. The comprehensive schools would give the all-round general education which citizens of a progressive, modern society need.

A very important step to end class privilege in education will be the ending of the system of privately owned and so-called public schools which train the ruling class of capitalist society. All such schools without exception will be taken over by the local authorities in whose areas they are situated. They will become part of the local provision for education under full democratic control, in just the same way as other schools.

Handicapped children would be specially cared for, to enable them, as far as is possible, to overcome their disabilities and lead happy, useful lives. A Socialist Government would provide the necessary resources for these reforms, for the training of teachers and the provision of buildings required, and for raising the school-leaving age, by stages, but as rapidly as possible, to eighteen.

These educational changes, together with improvements in housing and other social services, will substantially raise educational standards.

In the running of the education system, generous financial provision and over-all planning by the Socialist Government would go hand in hand with local democratic administration of the schools. At all levels teachers and parents would participate in this administration.

The modernisation and planned expansion of industry and agriculture in a Socialist Britain, together with the extension of all social services and the widening of interests of the people, will require both a vastly increased number of scientists and technologists, and of highly educated and trained people and specialists in every sphere. Universities, technical colleges and other specialist institutions would be greatly expanded within a unified Higher Education system. Entry would be based on ability alone and grants provided on a scale to make students independent.

Facilities for adult education would be considerably extended.

Our great cultural heritage has to become the property of the people. This means that every encouragement and material assistance needed is given to science, art, literature, music, drama, the cinema, sport, and all other social activities that can help the all-round development of people and enrich their lives and leisure.

The aim must be to give everyone access to humanity's rich store of learning and the arts, to help them to carry forward all that is best in our human and cultural traditions, to encourage them in the spirit of democracy and international brotherhood, and to enable them to go forward, swiftly and with certainty, to the building and enjoyment of a new life.

The new purpose of society will make increasing demands on the workers in the professions, giving their work a new social importance and opening up for them unlimited opportunities to use their creative abilities in the service of the people.

With improved living standards and shorter hours of work there will be more leisure time for everyone. Facilities for the enjoyment of leisure, so many of which are now reserved for the wealthy, will be made available for all. Many large country houses could be used as convalescent homes and holiday centres, and the national parks could be extended and made more accessible to the people.

With the encouragement and help of the Government, local authorities will be able to develop many recreational facilities—municipal theatres and cinemas, music, dancing, libraries and sports facilities of all kinds, so that in particular our young people can enjoy the advantages which the new society will bring.

Housing

In a socialist society, the housing of the people will be no longer a source of profit to builders, building materials monopolies, landlords and financiers.

When the monopolies controlling building materials and the large building firms are taken over, new houses can be built rapidly and cheaply. The costs of new housing will be borne by the state. Councils will be freed from the burden of interest on housing loans, and can therefore let houses at low rents.

All rented houses will pass to the local authorities, and the position of owner-occupiers is eased by the reduction of mortgage interest charges and the lower cost of repairs. Security of tenure is guaranteed to all tenants.

These changes will make it possible to satisfy the most pressing need—to provide every family with a separate home let at a low rent.

In addition to these measures, a Socialist Government will plan and carry through as rapidly as possible the rebuilding of our congested cities, with planned location of industry, open spaces and all facilities for a full community life; and it will bring modern amenities to the villages.

Health

The National Health Service will be redirected, so that its prime task will be preventing disease. For this, the improved living and housing conditions of a Socialist Britain will provide a good basis; it will also be aided by the proposed provision of more sports grounds and indoor clubs, holiday resorts and rest homes.

The best treatment that science can devise will be freely available to all who need it without distinction. Health centres and new hospitals, the extension of maternity services, continuous care for old people, an occupational health service covering the whole working population, and the modernisation of the mental health service in its methods and outlook, are some of the measures that can help not only in the treatment but in the more effective avoidance and prevention of disease.

Pensions and Benefits

A Socialist Government will raise pensions and benefits for the old, the widows, the disabled and the chronic sick to a level which removes the fear of insecurity and provides a decent standard of living for those who are permanently or temporarily unable to work.

These payments are made as a right. There will be no means test or “contribution conditions” because the funds are provided by industry and the Government and there are no workers’ contributions.

Conditions for old people will also be improved, in addition to higher pensions, by the provision of residential homes and suitable homes in modern housing estates at low rents, laundry services, home helps and good food.

Such are the general lines on which the social services will be developed in a socialist society, with the aim of providing equal opportunities for all to enjoy a more secure and a fuller life from birth to old age.

V. The Communist Party and the Labour Movement

We have seen that the advance to socialism requires the building up of the movement in struggle for the interests of the people, and the spread of socialist consciousness through the working class. This is why the British working class needs the Communist Party, as an organised party of Socialists. With its class outlook and policies based on the scientific theory of socialism developed by Marx and Lenin, which embodies the experience of the working class in all countries, the Communist Party is able to strengthen the socialist consciousness of the whole movement, and to show the way forward in the struggles of today and in the fight for socialism.

With its independent organisation based on democratic centralism—democracy combined with discipline in carrying out the policy decided upon—its active membership, its political mass work in the factories, and the *Daily Worker*, it is able to serve the movement in a way that only an organised body of Socialists can do.

There is no conflict between the Communist Party and the Socialist members of the Labour Party, trade unions or Co-operative movement. We all are working to end capitalism and win socialism. We all realise that it can only be achieved by the industrial, social and political struggles of the working class. Up and down the country, we work together in factories, streets, villages, in offices and at universities, fighting against policies we consider wrong, and for policies that will strengthen the movement and help the advance to socialism.

The Labour Party was founded as an alliance of all working class organisations, political, trade union and Co-operative, to fight for the common interests of the working class.

But when in 1920 a number of Left organisations, including the British Socialist Party which was affiliated to the Labour Party, merged to form the Communist Party, the new Party was refused affiliation to the Labour Party. By this step, and further bans and exclusions since, the right-wing leaders have sought to eliminate the influence of the organised Left in the movement, and to pursue policies which in practice have served the interests of British capitalism rather than the interests of the working class.

In spite of these measures, and of similar measures directed against Left opinion in the Labour Party itself, the influence of the working class policies put forward by the Communist Party has grown within the Labour movement. There is a widespread feeling of the need for a new militant and socialist Labour policy that will rally the movement against the class enemy. This is shown among both the trade unions and the Labour Parties locally, and their joint efforts have already succeeded in changing some aspects of Labour policy. The trade unions are the decisive force in the Labour Party, and every progressive step in the trade union movement strengthens the Left and progressive tendencies in the Labour Party.

But the Left in the Labour movement is still divided, and therefore unable to exert its full strength. It is in the interests of the whole movement to end this division.

In seeking to overcome the present divisions in the Labour movement, the Communist Party has only one motive—to strengthen the organisation and class outlook of the movement, so that it uses its power as its founders intended.

The removal of the bans and proscriptions directed against the Communist Party is the first step in restoring unity to the movement. This could lead to further steps towards unity, including the possibilities of affiliation, and eventually of a single working class party based on Marxism when the majority of the movement has been won for the Marxist outlook.

The ending of all bans and the development of united action between the Communist Party and the Labour Party is also a step towards electoral unity against the Tories, which would overcome many existing difficulties.

Every step towards establishing in practice the unity of the Labour movement strengthens the fight against Tory policies and the Tory Party, and brings nearer the final victory over capitalism.

A united Labour movement fighting for a policy of peace, social and economic progress, and self-determination for the colonial peoples, would rally round it all the progressive forces of the nation. It would win the support of men and women and young people who are at present not associated with Labour but who are striving for progressive social aims and a better life through tenants' and residents' associations, youth organisations, women's institutes, British Legion sections, church organisations and many other national and local bodies of this kind. It would win the support of many professional workers, small farmers and business people who now support the Tories. This would lead to such a strengthening and consolidation of the progressive movement as would open up the way for the advance to socialism.

Such a development will not take place automatically. It involves a long struggle against the capitalist class, and against capitalist influences in the Labour movement. At every stage in this struggle a strong Communist Party, working in full association with the Labour Party, trade unions and Co-operative movement, is essential. The Communist Party therefore calls for the support and enrolment in its ranks of all workers, trade unionists, Co-operators, men and women, Socialists and progressive people, who recognise the need for complete social change and are prepared to play their part in winning it.

The Communist Party puts this programme before the Labour movement and all working people as the way to win socialism by the way that accords with the historic possibilities in Britain, the strength of the working class movement, and the democratic traditions of our country. In doing so, we reaffirm that only the unity, strength and socialist consciousness of the movement will make

socialism possible in Britain. To this end the Communist Party devotes all its efforts.

The message of our programme is one of hope and confidence. The working people, acting together, can take political power into their own hands, end the exploitation of man by man, and use Britain's resources to meet the increasing needs of the people. They can build a Socialist Britain which will be truly great, independent and free—a bastion of peace—a country in which all work together for a fuller, happier life, and society is organised on the principle that “the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all”.

Twenty-Fifth Congress

Communist Party of Great Britain Archive