TIME TO CHANGE COURSE

What Britain's Communists Stand For



JACK WODDIS

30p

published by the Communist Party

Jack Woddis is a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party and Head Of its International Department. He is the author of a number of books dealing with problems of national liberation and imperialism. His last book, *New Theories of Revolution*, examined political developments in Africa, Latin America and Western Europe.

In his new book, *Time to Change Course*, he Turns his attention to recent developments in Britain, especially the major class conflicts of 1971-2, and expounds the viewpoint of the British Communist Party on the significance of these struggles and the necessity and possibility of the British people making a decisive break with the present system and opening up the road to socialism.

Cover design by Chippenham Posters – the design service for the Left.

TIME TO CHANGE COURSE

What Britain's Communists Stand For

by

Jack Woddis

Published by the Communist Party
16 King Street, London, WC2
March 1973

SBN 90030 233X

Published by the Communist Party, 16 King Street, London, WC2E 8HY, and printed by Farleigh Press Ltd. (T.U.), Watford, Herts.—CP/D/7/2/73B—24913

CHAPTER I

WHAT'S WRONG WITH BRITAIN 5

The Main Problem Facing Britain—Where's It All Going to End?—Why Inflation?—Two Nations—At the Bottom of the Rung—Where There's Muck, There's Brass—Defying Reality—Economic Stagnation—Milking Public Property—The Menace of the Common Market—Britain and the National Question—Democracy Under Attack—Whose Law and Order?—The Brain Washers—Monopolies Against the Students—Not Only Better but Different—Time to Change Course.

CHAPTER II

WHAT A SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT WOULD DO 50

Capitalism and Socialism—Power for the People—More and More Democracy—Democratic Participation—Socialist Nationalisation—Socialist Planning—The Unions and Industrial Democracy—Socialist Agriculture—An Important Role for the Small Man—A Better, Different Life—Health and Welfare—Education—Environment—Where Will the Money Come From—Britain and the World—The Creators of History.

CHAPTER III

HOW TO CHANGE COURSE 86

The Bases of Ruling Class Power—Why a Change of Power is Needed—A Strategy for Socialist Revolution—Transform Parliament—New Forms of Struggle—Kill the Industrial Relations Act—The Lessons of the Pentonville Five—The Nature of the Political Crisis—The Next Round of Battle—The Tories Must Go—The Right-Wing Must Be Defeated—Labour's New Programme, No Challenge to Capitalism—An Alternative Programme—The Labour Party—The Communist Party—Left Unity—End Bans and Proscriptions—A Democratic Alliance.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT'S WRONG WITH BRITAIN

The Main Problem Facing Britain—Where's It All Going to End?—Why Inflation?—Two Nations—At the Bottom of the Rung—Where There's Muck, There's Brass—Defying Reality—Economic Stagnation—Milking Public Property—The Menace of the Common Market—Britain and the National Question—Democracy Under Attack—Whose Law and Order?—The Brain Washers—Monopolies Against the Students—Not Only Better but Different—Time to Change Course.

The main problem facing Britain

Britain faces a deep seated crisis, a crisis which has been going on for a number of years. It is not just an economic crisis, manifested in balance of payments problems, inflation, unemployment, monetary difficulties, trade decline and a slow growth of our economy.

It is a political crisis, too, reflected both in the incapacity of the ruling class to solve Britain's economic problems and in the people's growing lack of confidence in the traditional political institutions in Britain and in the major political parties.

Over the past two decades succeeding Governments, whether Tory or Labour, have attempted what are the same basic solutions to the difficulties. All have failed. The old cures effect no remedies. The problems stubbornly remain; and new ones arise.

It is the view of the Communist Party, and the case presented in this book, that the fundamental problem facing the British working people is how to change the system, how to end capitalism and start constructing socialism.

This does not, of course, preclude the vital necessity to continue struggling for immediate improvements in conditions, even under the existing system. We certainly do not believe that old age pensioners, for example, who are desperately in need of food and warmth, have to wait for a change of system before something is done to improve their lives. The

Communist Party has the proudest record in the struggle for democratic gains, social improvements, higher wages and other benefits for the people, and we will continue, along with others, to fight to secure such advances even under the present system.

But it is our contention that the continuation of British capitalism will only aggravate the crisis and bring fresh burdens to the people. The real question, and one that has been posed before the working class throughout this century, is not just to win gains from the present system which are always insecure and under threat from big business and its State, but how to shift the whole weight of political and economic power in Britain. How, in short, to clip the wings of the big monopolies that dominate our economy and our political system, and to move rapidly towards ending their power completely.

Capitalism in Britain, has far outlived its day. It is time to change course, to take the road to socialism.

Where's it all going to end?

Millions are asking this question today.

The cost of living goes up and up and up. Devaluation, decimalisation, and then entry into the Common Market, have sent prices into orbit.

Heath's election promise to stop increases "at a stroke" has turned out to be a sick joke. Prices, in fact, are leaping up higher than ever.

In the two years following the Tory election victory of June 1970 prices rose by 17.3 per cent. The introduction of the "freeze" at the end of 1972 was followed by a fresh upward swing, especially of food prices.

The burden of the higher costs on the majority of people is borne out by the changing pattern of consumption. 1971 saw a decrease in the overall expenditure on food and clothing while unemployment reached a 25-year record.

House prices and rents are soaring out of reach. What chance has a young married couple these days of buying a house of reasonable quality at a reasonable price? And those who thought they were more secure in a council flat now find themselves facing the prospect of regular large rent increases and a twice yearly means test.

Gas charges are up again. So is electricity. And now the Government is threatening to introduce water meters into houses, which would mean that millions of people would have to pay at least twice as much for water.

One is reminded of Jack London's comment that if the capitalists could find a way to do it they would bottle the atmosphere and make us pay for the privilege of breathing.

Fares continue to rise, while train and bus services become worse. A Government department is now considering cutting railway lines by a half. Operations under the new plan would be cut from nearly 12,000 miles to about 7,000, possibly to as low as 3,800. Large areas of the country would be left almost without rail services.

The proposals envisage the abolition of some 120 passenger services outside London, and the switching of 62 million tons of British Rail's 196 million ton freight business on to the roads. This means worse services for the public; more heavy lorries, noise, dirt, danger, destruction on the roads; and more revenue diverted away from the public railway system into the private hands of the big lorry companies.

For the dwindling services we have to pay more and more. In London, for example, transport fares went up by 14 per cent in 1969, a further 21 per cent in 1971, and have risen still further in 1972.

Why inflation?

The Tories and the employers try to blame the workers' demands for higher wages as being the cause of rising prices. There never was a bigger lie. It is the Tory Government itself which is responsible.

The increase in council house rents has nothing to do with wage demands. It is the direct result of the Government's Housing Finance Act.

House prices in the South East rose by £700 in the first three months of 1972, but building workers never received a penny increase in their wages in this period. The benefit went to the land speculators and the building and building materials monopolies.

The increase in food prices has nothing to do with wage demands. In fact, agricultural workers are still at the bottom of the league where wages are concerned.

Food prices have been pushed up by the Government's import levy system. In addition, by allowing bigger exports of meat to the Common Market countries, the Government has provoked higher prices at home. Entry into the Common Market is pushing food prices up still higher.

Do goods in the shops cost more because of the wages of shop assistants? Not at all. Shop assistants are amongst the worst off sections of wage workers and have been demonstrating on the streets for a living wage. It is not their wages which have pushed up prices.

The introduction of the Value Added Tax (VAT) by the Government in 1973 means that prices will inevitably soar again. This, too, is not because of wage increases.

For millions of people the cost of living has been increased still further by the Government's jacking up of school meal charges and the scrapping of free school milk for the over-sevens. Neither is this the result of wage increases.

For millions of low paid workers, the Government inspired increases in the cost of living mean a further worsening of their position. They are forced, by Government policy, into a "poverty trap" from which they cannot escape, since any increase in wages for them means an automatic cut in the means-tested benefits to which they have to resort in order to live. This "poverty trap" for the low paid is a product of Government policy, not of other workers' wage increases.

Far from wages forcing up prices, it is wages that are having to chase prices, even to defend existing conditions.

While the retail price index rose from 100 in January 1962 to 159 in January 1972—and many would regard this index figure as an underestimate—average earnings for all sections rose from 100 to 124 over the same period, clearly lagging behind prices. This was an average, and included overtime earnings.

Millions, of course, are far worse off. The *Family Expenditure Survey* covering 1970, shows that 51 per cent of all adult male workers were then earning less than £26 a week. Of these, 20 per cent were receiving less than £20.

A recent TUC report shows that while unit wage costs in Britain have risen since 1970 by 11 per cent, prices went up by 14 per cent. These price increases, it points out, have been faster than those of all of our competitors and "must

reflect substantial widening of profit margins".

This is borne out by profit figures. Company profits rose by over 13 per cent in 1971, and have shown a further tendency to rise in 1972. For many of the biggest firms profits have been booming.

Shell Transport and Trading, representing 40 per cent of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group comes top of *The Times* list of 1,000 largest industrial companies. With assets of £2,200 million it made a profit of £472.6 million in 1972.

British Petroleum, a close second as far as assets are concerned (£2,027 million), did much better. Profits in 1972 were £738.5 million, 58.3 per cent up on 1971. British Leyland, number 13, netted £55.6 million, an increase of 117 per cent.

The top 50 firms made an average profit of no less than £61 million. Their percentage increase was much higher than the average.

The Government and the employers—and also some right-wing Labour leaders—are trying to fool the people into believing that if the majority of workers restrain their wage demands, or forego them altogether, this will somehow enable the low paid workers to receive an increase. This is pure deceit.

Who believes for one moment that if the workers at Fords or British Leyland abandon their wage demands their employers would use the money saved to help the low paid nurses, shop assistants or agricultural workers? The only result would be that the money not demanded by the car workers would go to increase the profits of the car manufacturers.

How sincere the Government and the employers are about helping the low paid is revealed by the hostility they showed to paying a decent wage to such low paid sections as the postmen and the railwaymen.

The miners, who had sunk to a position close to that of low paid workers had to mount a major struggle to win a substantial increase. Low paid agricultural workers, too, have not seen any sign of either the Government or the employers rushing to raise their scandalously low pay. In fact, the Government's wage freeze specifically robbed them of some months of their negotiated wage increase. Low paid hospital workers, are also having to struggle against Government opposition to win a living wage.

The only substantial improvements in pay for low paid workers have come from the activities of the trade unions, including industrial action where necessary.

Clearly, therefore, the fight for higher wages is a necessity for workers if they are to maintain and improve their standard of living.

By dint of struggle the average adult worker of today enjoys, in many respects, a better life than his father did back in the thirties. He has won higher wages and a social security system which, despite its many shortcomings, provides better benefits than the miserable pittance of the past.

Our health services admittedly call out for great improvements, but compared with the days before a national health scheme it represents a real change for the better.

Our educational system is still backward in many respects but is nevertheless a considerable advance over what existed forty years ago.

The majority of workers today are able to purchase far more material goods than previously.

Longer holidays with pay have been won for some sections, and more workers are able to spend holidays abroad than hitherto, or take a proper holiday in Britain. A five day week, too, is now the norm for many workers.

But to win these gains required consistent struggle. And to safeguard them will require still more effort.

The strain on a worker to maintain his standard of living is very considerable. He frequently has mortgage payments and hire-purchase debts hanging round his neck. He works constant overtime or awkward shifts to keep up with his costs and with rising prices.

His wife often goes out to work too—not because she necessarily chooses to get away from the home, but in order to help the family income keep pace with requirements. As a result she usually has a dead end job, on low pay, and, likely enough, on a twilight shift.

Despite the material benefits that are gained—and for modern living many items are no longer luxuries but necessities—the quality of life is not greatly different, insecurity is widespread and pressures at work as well as in the home are considerable.

On top of all this, the Tory Government has taken away

a number of social gains that were won in the 1940s and has launched further attacks on the standard of living of the working people.

All workers, including the higher paid, have every right to strive for much greater improvements in their lives. There is nothing sacrosanct about the level they have reached so far.

There is no reason on earth why the bankers, industrialists and landlords should continue to take from the national cake the same large slice they have always had. In fact, they should not be allowed any slice at all. If their system cannot guarantee a constantly improving standard of living for the people, if it cannot control runaway prices, then it is time it was scrapped.

Two nations

The Tory Prime Minister, Edward Heath, had the gall to claim (19th June, 1970), that it was his Government's intention to "create one nation".

This was, for a start, an admission that his class—the bankers, industrialists and landlords, who have ruled Britain for two centuries whatever Government we have had—had created a Britain of two nations, the wealthy and the rest of us.

Two years of Tory rule exposes completely the hollowness of Heath's claim. New millionaires proliferate while new areas of poverty and distress emerge.

Profits continue to rise. The wealthy flaunt their opulence and indolence while growing armies of unemployed search for jobs.

Few things expose better Heath's claim than the housing situation. For thousands of people the search for a decent home has become a nightmare. Even for poor accommodation, rents and purchase prices are beyond many people's pockets.

There are at present 1,200,000 slum houses (7.3 per cent of all homes in England and Wales). Two million homes (11.9 per cent) have no inside lavatory, 1,300,000 (7.7 per cent) have no bath. Housing conditions in Scotland are even worse. According to a recent Shelter report, at the present rate slum clearance will take 200 years to complete.

For the rich it is quite a different story. Coppins, the Buckinghamshire home of the Duke of Kent, has been sold

for £400,000. Michael Pearson, heir to Viscount Cowdray, has added to his collection of homes an eight-bedroomed house in South Kensington costing £232,000. Viscount Hereford has sold his 100-room mansion for £600,000. John Bentley, millionaire chairman of Barclay Securities, recently paid £220,000 for a country mansion in Sussex.

Harry Hyams, Charles Clore and Jack Cotton are not the only men to have become millionaires by speculating in property. Land speculation, gazumping in house prices, and an open season for "developers" have all produced a new rash of millionaires.

The early crop of rich tycoons who made their fortunes largely in the shop and office boom are now being followed by a new crop who have made their millions as a direct result of the boom in house prices. At least 18 new millionaires of this type have appeared on the scene in the past eighteen months.

If our system cannot provide decent housing at low cost for all its citizens, is it not time it was scrapped?

The same sharp class contrast can be seen in health. The oldest and worst hospitals with the longest waiting lists, and the poorest general practitioners' surgeries are to be found in the older industrial areas where there are more poor people and unemployed, and where death and sickness rates are highest. For the rich there is always the private ward, the private home, the private nurse, and the Harley Street specialist.

The incidence of infant deaths in the two lowest social classes is over 50 per cent higher than in the two highest.

Spells of sickness lasting more than four days are twice as common among low paid workers as among those grouped in the "highest social classes". The former are more prone to bronchitis, have fewer and worse teeth, a strikingly higher incidence of mental illness, and are more likely to be disabled when retired.

The Heath Government's attack on the social services, the increase in dental fees, prescription charges and in school meal prices, the ending of free milk for the over-sevens, and the abolition of welfare milk, along with the general onslaught on living standards and the growth of unemployment, will

have widened still further the difference in health standards between the rich and the working people.

While the rich can have a holiday de luxe with grouse shooting in Scotland for £800 a week, or with pheasant shooting in Norfolk for £225 a day, over 40 per cent of British people stayed at home in 1972 or had no holiday at all.

In the field of education, despite some progress, class contrasts continue. For the rich the road is straight, from private school to public school and then to university. For the children of workers, especially those who come from overcrowded homes, with few books, no facilities to study, and parents whose own education hinders them in helping their children, the going is hard.

The 1960s, despite six years of Labour Government, left the educational system largely intact.

Comprehensive education was claimed as the great equaliser that was intended to give a similar secondary education to all children. Yet, by 1970, when Labour went out of office, only 10 per cent of children were in fully comprehensive schools. With the advent of a Tory Government in 1970, the move over to comprehensives has actually been slowing up.

A recent report by the National Foundation for Educational Research shows that only 50 authorities in Britain, out of 164, have fully comprehensive systems without 11-plus selection. In some towns, such as Halifax, Huddersfield, York, Barrow-in-Furness, Birkenhead, Bolton, Chester, Salford, Warrington, Wigan, Durham, South Shields, and Hartlepool the situation is even worse, with less than 5 per cent of their 13-year-olds in comprehensives.

In some areas, grammar schools continue alongside comprehensives, so that the latter are deprived of many capable children and so cannot be regarded as fully comprehensive. Thus a really comprehensive school system does not yet exist in Britain. The fact is that the majority of our children still have to soldier on in underprivileged secondary modern schools.

In their daily lives the workers frequent a completely different world to that of the rich. For the latter the Jaguar, the six-course expense-account dinner, Ascot, holidays in Bermuda.

For the worker it is often a daily battle to make ends meet.

Within the factory he frequently faces long hours. Added to this, his long-distance commuting to and from work extends his working day insufferably. Millions come home from work, utterly tired out, too weary to do much more than put their feet up and watch TV.

Shift work is increasing. The consequent change round of a worker's shifts upsets his whole life pattern and that of his family. It is difficult under these conditions to enjoy regular leisure or to live normally.

While he is at his job, a worker faces the continuous hazards of accidents, disease and sickness. A thousand people are killed at their place of work each year. Half a million suffer injuries in varying degrees of severity.

The total of reported accidents in 1969 showed an increase for the seventh year in succession. The TUC General Council Report for 1970 comments: "On these figures every worker can expect on average to be the victim of at least two disabling accidents during his working life".

Certified sickness in 1970 accounted for 342 million days, a rise of 22 per cent in 15 years. In the same period days lost through psycho-neurosis and psychosis increased by 152 per cent for men, and 302 per cent for women.

Such is the heavy price which the working class has to pay for the "privilege" of working for private enterprise.

At the bottom of the rung

Difficult as life is for so many British people, for those at the bottom of the rung it is even grimmer.

The miserable pension for retired workers is barely sufficient for subsistence, certainly not enough to enjoy old age. A survey of old people by the organisation, Age Concern, carried out in 1972, found that almost one in three were not warm enough for most of the winter.

Housing, food, transport, fuel—all these present a daily problem to the average old age pensioner. There are eight million pensioners, and for most of them life is a constant struggle to make ends meet.

The unemployed, the chronic sick or disabled, the low paid worker, the single woman or widow—all face similar difficulties.

In their survey in 1965, Townsend and Abel Smith estimated

that there were then between seven and eight million people who could be regarded as living in poverty. Since then, with the soaring cost of living and the growth in unemployment, the number has grown. It must now have reached about one in six of the population.

An article by Michael Meacher, MP, shows that between August 1970 and August 1971, the number of adults in poverty went up by about 10 per cent. This estimate does not include low paid workers; of these Mr. Meacher asserts that their numbers "have almost certainly been increasing".

Analysing the November 1972 *Economic Trends* and the Family Expenditure Survey for 1971, Michael Stewart draws the conclusion that the gap between rich and poor widened between the years 1969 and 1971. He adds that "it seems entirely possible that the worsening in income distribution which seems to have occurred between 1969 and 1971 will prove to have been carried further in 1972".

A recent study estimates nearly 700,000 children as being likely to be undernourished because of the poverty of their parents. Rickets, a sure sign of malnutrition, which had more or less disappeared after the second world war, is now back again.

And this in a country which is still one of the richest in the world!

All the government's attacks on social services weigh heaviest on the poor, including the low paid workers. Yet between 1960 and 1968 the wages of low paid workers increased more slowly than those of the average worker. And the poverty trap continues to place heavy burdens on them at a time of further attacks and rising prices.

Such persistent and large-scale poverty is another sign of the deep-seated crisis facing British capitalism.

Women in revolt

No fundamental solution to Britain's problems is possible without the participation of women, who constitute half of our society. Of the 25 million people in employment, 9 million, i.e. 36 per cent, are women. Clearly a vital force for our country's economy and its social life.

But for the employers, women are an ideal form of cheap labour. Despite all the talk for years about "equal pay", the

fact is that the gap between men's and women's earnings is wider than ever.

While women's average earnings in 1950 were nearly 55 per cent of men's pay (£4.12 a week as against the male figure of £7.52), today they are down to 51 per cent (£17.04 as against £33.20 for a man).

The Equal Pay Act, operative from December 31st, 1973, will benefit only a minority of working women. The Government's refusal to ensure that women obtain 90 per cent of the male rate by that date, and the employers' possibilities of taking advantage of every loophole and vague provision in the Act, will limit its application still further.

But women are not only up against unequal pay. They are in revolt against every inequality and discrimination in their lives. They are fighting for their liberation, increasingly determined that their oppression shall be ended.

The deep wave of unrest and revolt which is affecting so many young women today—and those not so young either—is one of the most profound movements of our time. For generations working women have suffered a double discrimination and oppression—exploited, like other workers at their jobs, and discriminated against in pay, conditions, promotion, and opportunity because of their sex.

In social life, too, they have suffered humiliation, treated as inferior and brainwashed into accepting all this as 'a natural law'. In the home and in the family, their inferior status has usually been reinforced.

That women, in increasing numbers, should be standing on their feet and declaring "Enough!" is a cause for rejoicing.

If low paid workers are worst off, and women especially discriminated against, then the worst off section of all are the immigrant workers. Often performing the hardest and dirtiest jobs, they find the highest barriers to promotion. Unemployment hits them particularly hard, especially the youngsters. In 1971 unemployment amongst all young people was 6.7 per cent; but among young West Indians it was 14.9 per cent. It is now estimated by the Department of Employment that unemployment of black youths between the ages of 16 and 20 is running at about 16 per cent. Homelessness among black youths is also exceptionally high.

Frequently immigrant workers come up against ignorant

prejudice. In jobs and housing they meet constant discrimination. They are subject to racialist insults and to frequent harrassment by the police.

For many young people in Britain today, despite the raising of the school-leaving age, the system offers a very uncertain future. They enter adult life at a time of high unemployment and a stagnant economy. School leavers often find it difficult to obtain anything but a dead-end job.

Already by the end of 1971 the appalling effects of unemployment on young people could be discerned. Figures then showed that in one year registered unemployment among the under 25s had risen from 150,000 to 230,000, an increase of over fifty per cent! This rate of increase was then twice as high as for any other age group. It also represented a four-fold increase in a period of five years.

An indication of the problems young people face with accommodation is the fact that every night in London at least 8,000 teenagers sleep rough—in parks, under bridges, in derelict buildings, in seedy cafes. The number of single, often young, homeless people in Britain as a whole is now estimated at 50,000.

On every side young people see the decay of the system, its hypocrisy, its deep class divisions, the spread of poverty side by side with the ostentatious display of wealth by a rich minority.

False values and a 'dog eat dog' philosophy are what they are expected to follow. The genocide policy carried out by the United States against Vietnam outraged them. Over all hangs the shadow of the nuclear bomb and the threat of a third world war. No wonder so many young people are in revolt against the *status quo*, seek a different life, and begin to question the whole capitalist system itself.

Where there's muck, there's brass

This old saying has a new and more threatening meaning today. Pollution from cars and from industry is a recognised menace. The chemicals that enter the sea, the rivers, the earth and the air are damaging people's health and introducing new hazards, the consequences of which we do not yet fully understand.

At the behest of the oil, car and road construction lobbies,

the coal industry is run down, public transport heavily curtailed, the private car boosted as the main means of passenger transport, and the private lorry as the principal form of freight carrier.

City centres become choked by traffic. The fumes from motor-exhausts poison the atmosphere.

A new growing menace is the heavy lorry, already 32 tons, and now threatened to be increased to the 40-tonner with the 13-ton axle load in use in the Common Market. As it is, one cannot hear oneself speak on many high roads when the giant lorries pass. The 40-tonner would be insufferable. The noise would be appalling, and the damage to roads and houses and to other buildings shaken by the earth tremors incalculable.

Noise in factories is now so bad that, according to a recent report, at least a million people at work will be deaf after twenty years' work.

The private "developers"—a better and more appropriate name would be "destroyers"—are allowed, even encouraged, by the Government and local councils to tear down houses, small shops and historic buildings. In their place they put up giant car parks, huge office blocks, hotels and supermarkets—all in the interests of the sacred cow of profit.

In the name of development, bull-dozers get to work, buildings are laid flat, and the countryside is scarred with ill-planned motor roads. The cost, in cash, is enormous, the total social cost of this unplanned and ruthless attack still greater.

More and more people are coming to understand that pollution, unchecked "development", the speedy gobbling up of our natural resources and of those of other countries too, are all man-made disasters. The chief culprits are the big monopolies who produce the pollution, the unbearable noise, and the destruction of our countryside. An equal culprit is the Government which helps them to get away with it.

The new revelations of the thalidomide scandal expose the role of the big drug companies who placed on the market a drug which resulted in mothers' health being endangered and children's bodies tragically deformed. Sjostrom and Nilsson's recent book asserts, with ample evidence: "The main impetus for the running of the pharmaceutical industry, like

any other type of industry in the West, is profit". Their comments as to the main motivation of the pharmaceuticals industry are fully confirmed by none other than the chairman of Beecham's Pharmaceuticals who openly stated "The industry is run by businessmen whose aim is to make a profit". In fact, Beecham's made £16 million profits in 1971 from its pharmaceutical sales. Another drug firm, Glaxo made £23 million.

A system which worsens our environment, threatens ecological disaster, and endangers our health and even our lives in order to safeguard the profits of a handful of rich has written its own death warrant.

A system in crisis

Why does Britain face such acute social problems? Why is there such a concentrated attack against the social gains registered by the working people over the last few decades? Why is the crisis biting deeply into so many different facets of our society? Why is there such an anxious questioning about the nature of our system and where we are going? Why is Britain being rocked by such major industrial and political conflicts?

In our view, the facts we have presented above fully confirm what we have said in our opening paragraphs, namely that what is involved here is a crisis of the economic and political system in Britain.

Britain is a capitalist country. The Tory Government is big business personified. Historically speaking capitalism, as a system, is bankrupt. It has outlived its day. It is unable to solve the problems that face it.

The breakdown of the international monetary system and the slowing down of economic growth in most major centres of capitalism are a reflection of this crisis.

Rivalry between the major imperialist countries for markets, for sources of raw materials and cheap labour, for fields for lucrative investment, for strategic bases and political influence is growing sharper, despite their overall desire to unite against socialism, the working class and the national liberation movements.

Trade war is followed by monetary war. The £ is devalued to help British monopolies maintain their place in the com-

petition with other capitalist countries—and the British people suffer in consequence. Devaluation is soon followed by a new device, floating the £, which quickly turns out to be disguised devaluation, and thinly disguised at that.

The relations of strength between the major capitalist countries are constantly changing as they push and pull and jostle for positions. Despite its power, the United States has suffered a relative decline, while Japan has emerged as a new major competitor and the European Common Market has been created as a third giant economic grouping.

For Britain the problems have become worse because both Labour and Tory governments have tried, in a rapidly changing world, to re-establish Britain's imperialist position. For the monopolies the former Commonwealth basis is no longer sufficient. Entry into the European Common Market, even at the expense of former Commonwealth links, is undertaken in order to be part of a bloc which it is hoped will be able to compete with emerging Japan and the United States, at the same time as it is also directed against the socialist countries and the working class.

But these aims are being pursued in a world in which the forces arrayed against imperialism are growing stronger, thus rendering the objectives of Britain's ruling class unrealisable. Despite the desperate efforts of Britain's rulers to cling to their anti-Soviet position, the cold-war strategy is breaking down.

The strength of the socialist countries and their consistent peace policy, in which a key role is being played by the Soviet Union; the growth of national liberation despite setbacks; the struggles of the organised working class and the democratic and peace movements in the major capitalist countries—all this has created a major stumbling block to the plans of the imperialists and forced the cold-war strategists to retreat.

Of major significance has been the victory of the Vietnamese people whose heroic struggle, aided by the progressive movement throughout the world, has compelled the United States to sign the Paris Agreement and end its aggression against Vietnam.

This victory confirms once again that the world forces for

peace, if they are united and exert all their strength and determination, can defeat the makers of wars.

Brandt's *Ostpolitik*, Nixon's visits to Peking and Moscow, and the first preparations for the European Conference on Security and Co-operation all indicate that in a number of capitalist countries sections of the ruling class are seeking to adjust to the changed circumstances, although they still retain their basic hostility to socialism, national liberation, and the working class.

A Popular Unity Government has now existed for over two years in Chile. Popular Union, embracing the Communists, the Socialists, and the Left Republicans, and pledged to a common governmental programme, has been created in France. In Japan, the Socialists and the Communists made big gains in the recent elections, the Communists becoming the third largest Party in Parliament. In the last Italian elections, the Communist Party won further support to its already massive electoral position. In West Germany the Social Democrats defeated reactionary attempts to regain control of the Government in the recent elections, and in Australia and New Zealand Tory Governments have been ousted to make way for Labour Governments.

All these events are indications that in many countries the working people are rejecting reactionary politics and seeking a progressive solution to their countries' problems.

But British big business and its Tory Government still try to stand outside the mainstream of world politics today, constantly seeking to disrupt the progress that is being made. Above all, by clinging to their objective of re-establishing Britain as a world-wide imperialist power, with investments, bases and influence throughout the world, the British monopolies are hindering the development of Britain's economy.

And, as the crisis worsens, so they try to unload the burden of it on to the backs of the British people.

In pursuit of their imperialist policy Britain's ruling class involves the people in ever-increasing military expenditures at home and abroad. This in itself is a measure of the crisis of British imperialism, created partly by the rise of the national liberation movement as well as by the advance of socialism in Europe.

Overseas military expenditure worsens our balance of pay-

ments and robs Britain of funds which could otherwise be utilised for investment at home, for tackling poverty, helping the old folk enjoy a decent retirement, and improving our educational facilities and our social services. The total deficit in our balance of payments since the end of World War Two is approximately equal to our overseas military expenditure.

To back up their hostile aims towards the socialist countries and the national liberation movements, British big business allows the United States to set up military bases in Britain and to store nuclear weapons here.

At the same time it wastes our precious resources in trying to work with other West European powers to establish a West European nuclear force. This is a senseless throwing away of money, and would produce a disaster for the British people if such weapons were ever used.

Similar imperialist aims determine the whole line of foreign policy followed by Britain's rulers. They never shifted from their support for the barbarous US aggression against the people of Vietnam. They kow-tow to every tyrannical regime, whether it be the Greek fascist colonels, Franco Spain, the apartheid regime in South Africa, Smith and his racialists in Rhodesia, or the Portuguese fascists engaged in their war against the African people.

In the Middle East the Tories flirt with reactionary sheikhs and generals, set themselves in opposition to every genuinely progressive government, and refuse to use their influence to compel Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories.

Towards the countries that have won independence they follow a policy of neo-colonialism, endeavouring to keep them under the domination of large British firms, and tied to British imperialism's political and strategic aims.

They have never abandoned their anti-Sovietism. They are a major obstacle in Europe to finishing finally with the Cold War and making possible the creation of a viable system of collective security between all the European powers, East and West, which would result in the dissolution of both NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Alliance.

Economic stagnation

Nothing shows up more the nature of the crisis facing the system than Britain's economic situation. The economy is

virtually stagnating and has been for many years. The so-called policy of "full employment", proclaimed after the Second World War, has long been abandoned. It has been replaced by the concept of an "acceptable level of unemployment" which deprives hundreds of thousands of working people of a job.

Closure follows closure, limited only by the workers' resistance. With more than three quarters of a million officially unemployed, and census figures disclose that the number is probably fifty per cent higher—insecurity is affecting many millions more. Skilled men are suddenly finding themselves without work. So are many graduates. And so are large numbers of school leavers.

While many enterprises stagger along with outdated equipment, the big monopolies export large sums of capital each year to set up new establishments where labour is cheaper and therefore profits are higher.

They also invest in other countries of advanced industrialisation in order to obtain the additional profits that can be gained by more sophisticated techniques and higher productivity, in other words by greater exploitation. Or alternatively they invest in such countries in order to serve their over-all imperialist aims and participate more widely in the imperialist exploitation of the rest of the world.

Merger succeeds merger. Giant international monopolies are created. They dispose of huge assets and have an annual expenditure superior to that of many governments.

They possess their own immense liquid cash and currency reserves, research facilities and manpower resources. They leap over frontiers, concentrating production, investment, research and employment wherever it is most profitable for them.

They transfer funds from one country to another, thus aggravating currency problems. They close down factories in one country and open them up in another, if it suits their purpose, which is making profit.

The big companies do not care where they make their profits. They only ask: Where are the profits higher and safer? For them, patriotism is strictly a matter of their purse. If their search for profits means slowing down Britain's economy, then the economy is slowed down.

If profit-making for the monopolies requires more unemployment at home, just too bad. If profits demand the complete shutdown of British enterprises, then shut down they are.

And if to safeguard overseas investments and continue the Cold War the monopolies and their Tory Government decide it is necessary to pour out vast sums in overseas military expenditure to the detriment of our economy and our social services, then the money is so poured out, and to hell with our economy and social services.

The monopolies are not merely allowed by the Tory Government to pursue their unending search for profit at the expense of the majority of the people. The Government and the State play an active role in assisting the monopolies in every way.

Government legislation and policies on taxation, prices, nationalised industries, capital exports, social security, trade union rights are all designed to suit the interests of the big monopolies.

State institutions are established and state funds allocated to provide aid and financial grants to big firms—to "encourage" exports, to assist research, to buy new equipment, to open up new factories. Monopoly capitalism becomes state monopoly capitalism.

The role of the State and Government in Britain, in acting in this way in the interests of the big monopolies, confirms the Marxist view that the State is not an impartial or neutral institution, standing above the class struggle but is, in fact, an expression of class realities as shown in more detail later on.

In a socialist system the State represents the working people and acts in their interests. Under capitalism the State acts on behalf of the capitalist class, legislates on its behalf, pursues an economic policy that safeguards capitalist profit, adopts positions in foreign relations that further capitalist interests, and acts to check any threat from the working people that challenges the power and privileges of the ruling class.

Milking public property

In the interests of the big monopolies the Government is allowing them to hive off all the most profitable parts of the nationalised industries.

The Tories jeer at the nationalised industries for their 'failure' to make large profits. They conveniently omit the profits already paid out in the form of compensation payments and interest charges on loans raised to pay the compensation to the former private owners.

They forget to mention the losses sustained by these nationalised undertakings through having to sell their products cheaply to private industry (e.g. cheap coal, gas, electricity and freight charges, while the domestic consumer pays a higher price which, in addition, is constantly rising). The coal industry, for example, calculates that between 1947 and 1957 it lost £2,000 million in this way.

The Tories have kept quiet, too, on the way in which private industry has not only milked nationalised industry by receiving cheap services from it, but has also doubly milked it by having a virtual monopoly position in providing at high prices all the machinery and equipment which the public enterprises require—electronic equipment for the post office, diesel and electric trains for the railways, mine machinery for the coal mines, and so on.

A recent series of articles in the *Morning Star* has exposed a really scandalous position as regards the National Coal Board.

Firms supplying powered roof supports and other machinery have been making fantastic profits from the nationalised industry. The director of one of the firms, Bonser Engineering, is none other than Alfred Robens, son of former National Coal Board chairman, Lord Robens.

Apart from mine machinery firms battening off the Coal Board, a host of other private companies benefit by leasing arrangements and by working the opencast sites and tips. In this fashion millions of pounds find their way into the hands of a few rich people, while the miners have to conduct a bitter battle to win a decent living wage.

The chairman of one company handling tip coal working, L. Ryan Holdings Ltd., is reported to be the proud owner of a new Rolls Royce, a yacht in the Mediterranean, and a personal fortune of £2½ million.

Meanwhile thousands of old age pensioners will shiver, this winter, and some will die, because they cannot afford to buy sufficient fuel or food to keep warm.

When, despite all the handicaps, described earlier, including the necessity to go into the open money market to raise loans at high interest rates for capital development, sections of the nationalised industries began to produce profits, the Tories began to hack away at these under-takings, selling off to private interests all the profitable sectors of this State property.

Could barefaced robbery go much further? In fact, it is a downright fraudulent practice, for it is a case of the Government of big monopolies handing over public property to their own pals.

In April 1971 the Government made the State-owned BOAC give up its West African routes worth £10 million to the private monopoly, British Caledonian. In November 1971 the State-owned BEA had to surrender part of its London-Paris service worth £2 million to the private monopoly. In February 1972 British Caledonian was awarded valuable licences for transatlantic routes. The Government is now insisting that British Caledonian be given preferential treatment as regards new licences for schedule and charter business.

To help private manufacturers of locomotives, railway shops have been closed. The Government has refused to allow British Railways to develop a £2 million hotel at Gatwick.

In the same way, nationalised transport sold up in 1971 its shares in Penarth Dock Engineering to a private firm; the National Freight Corporation sold its subsidiary Atlantic Steam Navigation to the private enterprise group, European Ferries, for £5.5 million; and Thomas Cook Travel Agents, the most successful travel firm, was sold back into private hands.

A similar scandalous position exists with our water supplies. The new Regional Water Authorities, which are to start operations in April 1974, are preparing to instal water meters in houses. The new Authorities will take over existing local authority and joint board water works without compensation. But the 32 private companies, which still supply nearly a quarter of the water in England and Wales will continue to operate intact, as agents of the new Regional Authorities.

As a result the local authority and joint board waterworks,

which might have resisted installing water meters, are now being bought up by private interests who see a future gold mine for themselves in metered water.

The Tories claim to be defenders of the people's property. It is the wicked socialists, they allege, who want to take it away. In reality, it is the Tories who are the enemies of property, whether it is personally or nationally owned. The only property in which the bankers, landlords and big factory owners are interested is their own, which they are concerned to expand as much as they can.

The menace of the Common Market

The Tories are sacrificing the interests of the British people by dragging us into the European Common Market, despite all the indications that the majority of people are opposed to such a step.

All the measures preparatory to our going in, including the Industrial Relations Act, the Immigration Act, devaluation and the decimalisation of our currency have already meant attacks on the working people. Full entry will increase the dangers, lead to still higher prices, especially of food, and threaten a serious worsening of our living standards.

The Common Market was set up to serve the interests of the major monopolies of Western Europe. Its basic aim is the consolidation of capitalism. More power for the monopolies and bigger profits for them. It is anti-working class and anti-socialist. It is an instrument of class war directed against the workers of Western Europe as well as against the socialist countries.

It is also a collective neo-colonialist organisation through which the big trusts can continue their exploitation and domination of third world countries, using them as sources of cheap raw materials and markets for Common Market goods, as fields for profitable investment and as strategic bases.

In dragging Britain into the Common Market so that the British monopolies can realise still bigger profits, the Tories intend that the British people should foot the bill.

The structure of the Common Market is anti-democratic and bureaucratic. Entry into the Common Market means handing over the powers of our Parliament to legislate on vital

economic, financial, and social affairs, to the Market's bureaucratic supranational bodies.

These institutions are completely cut off from any democratic control. Acting on behalf of the big monopolies, with whom they have close connections, the top bureaucrats wield tremendous power.

This undemocratic apparatus will ultimately decide policy on all major economic, social and political questions. Our Parliament's powers, which have already been diminished, would be drastically reduced still further.

To hoodwink the British people into accepting entry into the Common Market, the British Government and the capitalist press, backed by right-wing Labour leaders such as Roy Jenkins, put across a mighty barrage of misleading propaganda. Its aim was to kid the people that the Common Market had brought great benefit to the people in the member countries, and that it was therefore to our advantage to join the Market.

All this deception has been blown sky-high by the outgoing Common Market President himself, Dr. Sicco Mansholt. Speaking at a Hampton Court banquet on January 2nd laid on to "celebrate" Britain's entry, Dr. Mansholt declared:

"For the great mass of the population there has been no broad improvement in conditions generally . . . Dissatisfaction is indeed widespread, . . . The progress of integration has led to major social stress . . . Disparities in standards of living between different areas of the Community have become more marked rather than less . . . Others too are critical—they complain that the community is undemocratic. . . . The man in the street knows that important decisions which affect his own immediate affairs are being taken, but he does not know exactly who takes them. . . . The ordinary democratic decision-making process as we know it in the individual State does not exist in the Community."

Dr. Mansholt is, after all, only now admitting what the Communist Party has been saying for years.

Authoritarian, bureaucratic methods of government are a feature of modern capitalism, as has been witnessed in Britain. This reflects the growing domination of society by the big monopolies.

The Common Market takes this trend to its logical con-

clusion, motivated in particular by the aims of the international firms.

This is why the loss of democratic rights and of national sovereignty is of such vital importance to the British working class.

It is not a question of following a policy of national exclusiveness nor of waving the Union Jack. What is fundamentally at stake is the right of the British people to control our country's affairs.

The Common Market is not only a menace to our present interests. It threatens the future of the British people even more.

The supra-national bodies of the Common Market will eventually decide policy on tariffs and foreign trade, taxation, agriculture, movement of capital and labour, mergers, monopolies and company law, regional policy, transport, energy, banking and common currency, social security and state purchasing. Powers of nationalised industries will be curtailed. In coal and steel Britain's sovereign rights will also be restricted via the special institutions for these two industries linked with the Common Market.

If a future Government in Britain, committed to socialist policies, proceeded to introduce far-going changes in all these sectors, then clearly, if we were in the Common Market, we would have to overcome not only the resistance of big business and its pals in the State at home, but also the resistance of the whole Common Market set-up.

Of course, in the last resort it would be the strength and determination of the British people that would decide the issue whether we were in the Common Market or not. But obviously the struggle would be more complex and the obstacles greater if we were in it. That is why all talk about negotiating better terms is really irrelevant. Entry itself, under any terms, is the real danger.

Those who present British entry into the Common Market as a step towards "European socialism", a strengthening of the European working class and a contribution towards internationalism ignore the real character of the Common Market. The Treaty of Rome spells out clearly that the aim of the Common Market is to safeguard the capitalist system. And the rules have been drawn up to assist this.

The installation of an apparatus of capitalist bureaucrats in Brussels is not a step towards internationalism but a strengthening of capitalist supra-nationalism—the creation of a body standing over and above the peoples of each nation in the interests of the powerful trusts who exploit all working people.

Britain and the National Question

The nation is not the big monopolies, the generals, Buckingham Palace, Heath, Home and Powell. The nation is the people who have built its industries, created its culture, set up their popular organisations and struggled over the years to establish democratic rights and a better life. It is these achievements and this progressive heritage which the working people are called upon to defend. These are the national gains which we want to preserve and extend.

More than ever it falls on the working class to mobilise all that is best and most progressive in our national life in order to defeat the danger threatening the British people.

Lenin once remarked: "The working class cannot grow strong, cannot mature, cannot consolidate its forces, except by establishing itself as the nation, except by becoming national."

It is the British ruling class which, despite its jingoist flag waving, is revealed as the traitor to the nation. It is the Communist Party and the working class which, by opposing Britain's entry into the European Common Market and by putting forward a programme that will challenge the big monopolies, stand out as the real champions of the nation.

The national question in Britain is not confined to the defence of the over-all interests of the British people. It concerns, too, the national aspirations and rights of the people of Scotland and Wales.

In Scotland and Wales the people find their national hopes thwarted daily, their economy forced to run down and decay, their national culture neglected.

Their resources are creamed off to benefit the big British monopolies who find it more profitable to invest and locate their enterprises in the richer South-East region of Britain. Scotland and Wales are particularly hard hit by unemployment. Their older-established industries are constantly

threatened by closures. Skilled workers and many young people are compelled to emigrate to England to seek work.

Northern Ireland, forcibly torn from the body of Ireland by British imperialism fifty years ago, is in the throes of a deep crisis. The British Government's refusal to accede to the just demand for an end to discrimination and repression, and for the introduction of a Bill of Rights to ensure democratic liberties to the people, is producing deep strains in the territory and pushing the people towards the danger of a civil war.

The roots of the crisis lie in the wound inflicted on the Irish people fifty years ago when the British ruling class, despite majority opinion in Ireland, partitioned the territory and denied the people national independence based on territorial integrity.

It is to maintain that division that British imperialism has maintained reactionary governments in Northern Ireland all these years and upheld anti-democratic and discriminatory practices. The sooner democratic liberties are achieved in the North, the sooner the people of Ireland as a whole will be able to find the best way to reunite their territory.

Democracy under attack

The question of democracy is at the centre of the political class conflict in Britain today. Democracy, in the last resort, poses the question of political power. Class struggle always involves the exercise of its strength by one class or another, or by a grouping of classes, in order to safeguard its class interests or to challenge those of its opponents.

For the working class and its allies this means making use of and defending every democratic foothold wrested from the capitalists in order to advance the interests of the working people and diminish the power of the big monopolies who stand in the way of progress. In the course of this conflict the working people are able to come ever closer to the complete assumption of political power.

Lenin always emphasised that the working class will be unable to prepare for victory over capitalism "unless it wages a many-sided, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy". In Britain, the fight to defend and extend democracy

is essential for further progress towards fundamental social, economic and political change.

The democratic liberties that exist in Britain were never handed to the people on a plate. Every right we enjoy had to be fought for in the teeth of the most bitter resistance by our rulers. Repeatedly the law of the day had to be defied by courageous democrats in order to end a particular tyrannical act or practice.

The fight to establish and safeguard the freedom to publish has a long list of heroes who defied the law. The Tolpuddle Martyrs and others had to sacrifice in order to establish the right to form trade unions.

The battle of "Bloody Sunday" in Trafalgar Square, in 1887, when thousands fought the police, was essential to affirm the right to use the Square for public meetings.

Suffragettes went to prison to win the vote for women.

Lansbury and the Poplar Councillors chose prison in 1921 rather than operate Government decisions to saddle impoverished local bodies with the whole burden of relief. Their slogan: "Guilty—and Proud of It!" could well be the slogan of all who are prepared to defy unjust laws.

Today, however, the big monopoly firms which dominate Britain's economy and its political structure want to crush all resistance to their plans to unload their policy on the backs of the working people. Lenin once said that monopoly capitalism means "reaction all along the line." This is certainly what is being attempted by the Tories in Britain.

The turn against democracy arises from the very nature of the crisis of British capitalism, from its weakened international position, and the sharpening of class conflict at home at a time of monopoly growth, mergers, and the emergence of multi-national firms.

The big monopolies, with a powerful concentration of economic power in their hands, constantly seek to increase their parallel concentration of political power.

Moves are now afoot to extend the Confederation of British Industries into a giant organisation for all big business in Britain. It will be one of the most powerful employers' organisations in the world. Big business influence on Government policy will be greater than ever.

At the same time, the monopolies seek to make the State

still more repressive. There are new powers for the police. New threats from the army. Moves to change the law so as to limit the rights of citizens. Steps to lessen the powers of local government. The introduction of computer personal data systems and other intrusions into personal privacy. The extension of private security forces.

The Government is a direct servant of big business, in whose interests it is striving to restrict the democratic rights of the people. Parliament itself is in danger of having its powers still further eroded. The mass media are subject to the same forces of monopoly domination.

Above all, there is the attack on the people's organisations, especially the trade unions and the student unions, because they have both become more militant and are showing a greater readiness to challenge the policies of the Government.

In other words, it is the ruling class of Britain and its Tory Party which, despite its constant clamour about "freedom", is mounting a heavy attack against democracy. It is the Communist Party, the working class, the trade unions, the students, Labour men and women, immigrant workers, intellectuals and other progressive people and organisations which are fighting to defend and extend our democratic liberties.

The attack on the trade unions through the introduction and use of the Industrial Relations Act menaces democracy as a whole. It is a threat to free speech, to the right of association, and to the right to take industrial action, including strikes.

The Act enables the State to intervene on the side of the employers in wage disputes. This was shown in the railwaymen's pay claim, and in the dockers' fight to stop containerisation being used to take away work from the dockers.

The Act attempts to create divisions between trade union leaders and rank and file members, and in reality requires unions to clamp down on shop stewards, as it has tried to do with the dockers.

It provides for State intervention in the internal affairs of trade unions, including interference with the implementation of their rules, as it did when the National Industrial Relations Court warned the Trades Union Congress that it

could be 'in contempt' if it expelled the National Union of Seamen.

The Act encourages breakaways and staff associations, a number of which are now trying to establish themselves under the protection of the Act.

It threatens free speech and action, as it did when it warned the BBC that it could come into 'contempt' if it was not careful how it handled industrial disputes. On the same basis Parliament has been gagged to prevent it from discussing industrial matters before the Court, and the ASLEF conference was even prevented from discussing its own wage claim, then the subject of a dispute in which the Court had already intervened.

It attempts to deprive workers of their right to use various forms of industrial action, not only strikes (e.g. its ruling in the railway dispute that a "work to rule" was an unfair industrial practice which the Court could order to cease).

Finally, the Act brings criminal law into industrial relations, with the Court using the devices of injunction and contempt as weapons against the workers, as it did in the case of the Pentonville Five.

Whose law and order?

As we have already explained, the State in Britain is an instrument of the capitalist class on whose behalf it acts. The drive of the big monopolies to concentrate still more political power in their hands, to introduce more authoritarian methods of rule and to reinforce the repressive character of the State apparatus is especially revealed if we look at developments in respect of so-called "law and order".

The functioning of the departments of State concerned with this, their powers and their outlook are being refashioned to make them even more anti-democratic than hithertoo.

The police force is becoming more and more alienated from the public. The experience which many young people have of the police is as interfering bullies ever ready to stop and harrass a youngster because of the length of his hair or the style of his clothes. A deep gulf exists between the immigrant workers and the police who are often seen by these workers as acting openly in the ranks of their persecutors.

Industrial workers find police resorting to intimidation and violence against strike pickets or demonstrators.

The law, too, is turning more and more in a reactionary direction. All the customary aids to an individual's defence —the jury system, the presumption of innocence, the cautionary warning, rules of evidence, access to a lawyer—are under attack. With the introduction of the Industrial Relations Act the law has been transformed even more directly into an instrument of open class war against the working people.

A group of lawyers has recently urged the introduction of a new Emergency Powers Act applicable to the whole of the United Kingdom. Clauses in the proposed statute cover the right to stop and search any person, to require an account of his movements, to detain anyone for questioning on reasonable suspicion for up to 48 hours, and to search for and seize any articles or evidence of unlawful activity.

Under these proposals emergency criminal offences are defined to include belonging to *any organisation whose objects include any form of subversion.* A very clear recipe for repression and provocation!

The army, too, is being moulded still further into a repressive instrument at the service of big business and reaction. Involved as it is in military operations against urban fighters in Northern Ireland and in repressing sections of the civilian population, it is not only gaining experience in combatting political discontent in that territory, but being trained and psychologically prepared so that, if the monopolies felt it necessary for the defence of their profits and their system, it could perform a similar role in keeping down the British people.

It is not only the experiences in Northern Ireland which are giving rise to these new dangers to our democratic rights. The whole sharpening of the class conflict in Britain, and the growing political isolation of the Tory Government is stimulating demands from the most reactionary sections of the British ruling class for ever tougher methods to be employed against the working people.

Thus, the *Daily Telegraph,* in a recent feature, argued that in the event of a general strike the Government, bereft of the support it enjoyed in 1926 from a "vast reservoir of

volunteer middle-class labour", including that of students, would "have to rely on the police and the Army".

Thus it daily becomes more clear that the army, like any other State institution, is in no sense impartial and above the class struggle, as both Tory and right-wing Labour leaders would have us believe. The army is a weapon of the ruling class.

The upholders of the establishment are given all the facilities they require to mould the minds of armymen, to foster anti-democratic conceptions and influence them to regard civilian activities for the redress of grievances or for changing our society as dangerous heresies that must be repressed by force.

At the same time, the members of the armed forces are denied democratic freedoms, and are banned from participating in normal political activities or belonging to trade unions and political parties.

The politics of preserving the status quo are dinned into the troops every day; but the politics of working for progressive change are disallowed.

Our prison system, too, is crying out for reform. The recent prison strikes and demonstrations have revealed that our jails have become an ocean of discontent. These actions by the prisoners cannot be dismissed as violent riots by confirmed criminals. They were, in the main, well-organised and disciplined mass actions, based on clear-cut and reasonable demands which arose out of the unsatisfactory conditions of the prisoners.

Some indication of these conditions is given in the latest report of the Howard League for Penal Reform. Emphasising that Britain, with near 40,000 prisoners, has one of the highest prison rates in Western Europe, it alleges that there are, in fact, many prisoners who ought not to be in prison. "Overcrowding in prison is so bad that it has become", says the report, "a national scandal".

Last year 48,781 people were held prisoners without having been tried or convicted. Lord Kilbrandon, Lord of Appeal, has scathingly attacked the bad conditions of our prisons, saying: "Unless you supply us with places where we can send people without moral, mental, and physical deprivation, we shall not imprison them".

As for the staff itself, the bad conditions weigh heavily on them, too. Tempers are strained, facilities for work are hampered, and the work load becomes harder to bear.

Other departments of the State and local government are seething with discontent over pay and conditions of work. Numbers of civil servants and local government officials are finding themselves in daily conflict with the aspirations of the people. Whether engaged in housing departments, employment exchanges, social security offices, transport or education, they find themselves pushed more and more into defending bureaucratic instructions and regulations handed down to them by a reactionary authority.

Their daily routine is constantly shattered by angry parents, indignant mothers, and determined workers, demanding, insisting on their rights and complaining against injustices.

In some departments, relations between the public and the staff have deteriorated to such an extent that it is not unusual to find chairs and other normally moveable objects fixed to the floor or the walls.

The present drive to centralise social security offices—a policy begun by the Labour Government in 1966—is compelling applicants, including hard-up pensioners, to travel long distances and spend fare money for journeys even up to 30 miles, to draw emergency benefit. The results of this centralisation are long, dreary delays in offices, with applicants sometimes waiting for hours, with no toilet facilities and no provision for buying a cup of tea. The consequences are more bureaucracy, and more frustration on the part of the people involved, on both sides of the counter.

As a result people very often are led to turn their eyes away from the real culprits—the Government and the ruling class—and to let loose their anger instead against employees who are also victims of this same system.

Thus throughout the State and the administration the trend against democracy is becoming more pronounced.

In the political field, too, there are new dangerous right-wing trends. Racialism, stirred up by Powell and other demagogues, not only aims at dividing the working class, setting white workers against black. It also creates a certain mass sentiment on which the most reactionary and jingoist forces hope to ride to power.

Its strong base in the Monday Club and in the Tory Party generally, as manifested at the 1972 Tory Party Conference, should be a serious warning, as should the votes secured by the National Front in some recent by-elections.

The brain washers

Despite all the talk about freedom of the press, the fact is that never in our history has the press been so much a plaything in the hands of the big monopolies. The main daily papers are entirely the property of a handful of press lords.

In a strict commercial sense a working class newspaper cannot compete with the big capitalist dailies. The increasing scale of commercial advertising through the press has more and more subordinated these papers to the whims and interests of the monopolies.

Richard Briginshaw, general secretary of the National Society of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel, has recently pointed out that "the press and commercial TV is subsidised to the tune of something like £561,000,000 annually spent on advertising from Big Business. The monopolies pay the piper and call the tune". In addition, the Government itself spends large sums on advertisements in the monopoly press which it denies to workers' papers such as the *Morning Star* and *Tribune*.

The main national papers, apart from the *Morning Star*, exist, contrary to their own claims, not to impart information but to serve the interests of their owners and of the big companies whose adverts bespatter the pages of the dailies and fill the bulk of the pages of the glossy Sunday colour supplements.

Sensationalism, downright distortion, attacks on workers and their trade unions, publicity for the Powellites and other racialists, misrepresentation of young people and students—these are amongst the main characteristics of most daily papers.

The so-called "populars" encourage every kind of philistinism and backward thinking—jingoism, racialism, anti-intellectualism, an "Andy Capp" or "Alf Garnett" conception of the worker, and the reduction of women to sexual objects with an intelligence inferior to that of men.

Every day they pour out their slanted news, their comments, their articles, all intended to provide a capitalist view of life to convince the reader that the *status quo*, with suitable modifications, is the best of all possible worlds.

They preach a philosophy that "there will always be poor", "wars are inevitable", and "I'm all right, Jack". Above all they try to sap the confidence of ordinary people in their capacity to take over the running of Britain and to do a much better job than the present ruling class.

These papers are consistently anti-Communist. They combine the most crude propaganda about "Communist conspiracies" with other more sophisticated arguments. Sometimes by mere omission—Communists simply do not exist! Sometimes by the pretence that Communists have lost their revolutionary aim and purpose. This is rich, coming from papers which have spent their entire resources to maintain the present class-divided system and prevent the workers obtaining effective political power.

Everything that one can say about the press is even more true about radio and TV. Television in particular, as the greatest form of mass communications in terms of the size of its audience and its visual impact, has become a major weapon for the ruling class, reinforcing in various forms, from the most crude to the most refined, all the ideas that are judged best suited to serve the interests of the big monopolies which rule Britain.

In contrast, the views of the working class, the trade unions, the Communist Party and many other democratic and minority points of view receive precious little time on either TV or radio.

An additional threat from TV is its increasing subservience to US TV programmes and methods and to US interests.

A recent article by Nicholas Garnham, a documentary director, underlines "the danger of cultural domination" arising from this growing American influence in our TV programmes. It is not, he asserts, just a question of the commercials. Nor simply that we are deluged with American type films. Garnham says: "The problem is the whole package. Television itself is essential to the expansion of corporate capitalism and the moulding of society to its needs. . . . It is the whole TV schedule that delivers the corporate message, day in, day out."

The campaign to end the BBC monopoly, he writes, was "master-minded by an American advertising agency, J. Walter Thompson; it opened up the British market not only to American advertisers and their agents, but also to the sellers of American TV series."

The selling up of TV to American interests in this way is typical of the British ruling class which has already allowed US interests to penetrate so much of British industry.

Monopolies against the students

Students in universities and colleges face increasing difficulties as a result of the deepening crisis of the British ruling class. In a sense a number of the problems with which students have to contend are similar to those facing other sections of the population. Yet these problems manifest themselves to students in specific ways and the forms in which the Tory attack makes itself felt also have their particular character.

British institutions of higher and further education have always been used by the ruling class to serve its interests. Today, however, universities and colleges are being linked more and more directly to big business, which seeks to influence the content of teaching to serve its own needs.

By securing a financial stake in the universities and colleges, and by ensuring a presence on the governing boards of these institutions, the big companies seek to mould the outlook of students and to produce a steady stream of technicians, scientists, research workers, public relations personnel, economists, sociologists and qualified managerial personnel who will satisfy the future staff requirements of these firms.

Thus students find themselves being trained not really to help their own intellectual development nor to serve society, but in order that their knowledge and capacities can be utilised to assist the profit-seeking aims of the big monopolies.

Student awareness of the sordid aims for which they are expected to educate themselves comes into conflict with their own aspirations, especially at a time when the country is in crisis and a ferment of ideas is animating the minds of wide sections of the people as a whole.

As a consequence ideological debate has spread among

students, many of whom find themselves clashing openly with the established views of the ruling class, as well as with aspects of the content, methods and administration of higher education.

Big business and its Tory Government, even though they use the universities and colleges to serve their own class interests, have no intention of pampering students. On the contrary, they aim to obtain their qualified personnel on the cheap and to compel students to bear their share of the brunt of British imperialism's crisis alongside the burden borne by the whole working population.

Thus we have had a wholesale Tory attack on higher education, manifesting itself in the threatened replacement of grants by loans; the proposals to base teacher training on a two-year diploma in place of a three year degree course; the moves to shorten courses as a whole; and the steps to make access to higher education more selective by a stricter enforcement of minimum qualifications.

The economic conditions of students are also under attack. The refusal to meet students' demands for increased grants at a time of inflation means that their real purchasing power, already much too limited, is falling dangerously low.

Charges for accommodation, meals, travel, books, clothing and leisure produce an ever greater strain on the student pocket. Even before the present round of inflationary price increases student grants were woefully inadequate, compelling students to face financial worries throughout their college life.

Their economic position forces them to follow a generally frugal pattern of life. Work during vacations in order to eke out their existence between terms—and the work is often unskilled and low paid—is now a common practice amongst British students.

Accommodation, too, is an acute problem; and at the commencement of the 1972/3 academic year, hundreds of students had to camp out or sleep on hostel floors because of a lack of adequate and cheap enough accommodation.

And at the end of it all is the uncertainty and insecurity about employment. The increased domination of our society by the big monopolies means that there is less and less chance of graduates finding employment that does not submit them to monopoly control. Graduate unemployment has grown,

too, and numbers of students with degrees and other qualifications have had to seek work in fields for which their qualifications are not required. The alternative is the dole or social security.

The Tory attacks on democracy at college level have to be seen in relation to the offensive of the ruling class against democratic rights as a whole, expressed most sharply in the onslaught against the trade unions.

They have to be seen, too, in relation to the specific aims which the ruling class is trying to achieve as far as students are concerned.

If the Tories and big business are to compel the students to submit to the new economic burdens being placed on them, and to submit as well to Tory plans for a streamlined, cheap, utilitarian education system turning out non-radical trained servants of the monopolies and their State, then clearly they will strive to limit the powers of the student body to challenge their assumptions in any way.

As long as the student unions were passive "non-political" supporters of the establishment, no Government moved against them. But now that the National Union of Students and its affiliated bodies are taking up the challenge of the many-sided attack of the monopolies and standing out as real champions of student interests, the Government is trying to clamp down on their rights.

For the same reasons, there is repression and victimisation against student union sabbatical officers as well as left-wing staff, along with bitter resistance to all student attempts to secure effective representation on college and faculty administrations.

The authorities are also concerned at the growing links between the students and the trade unions, including the official support given by the National Union of Students to the workers' protest actions to stop the Industrial Relations Bill becoming an Act, and the help given by students to the miners during their strike

Not only better but different

Many people still lack the material goods that are essential for modern living—a decent home, adequate furniture and clothes, modern forms of heating and cooking, radio and

television, a washing machine. They want to ensure a good education for their children and have enough pay to take a real holiday.

But their hopes are not confined to such objectives. Nor are their aspirations limited to better wages and conditions. They increasingly realise that the provision of all these things and of further items will not, by itself, bring a fuller life, nor will it necessarily produce happiness.

The British people lack proper facilities for their cultural activity and their leisure. The British ruling class is one of the stingiest in the world when it comes to providing people with their social and cultural needs.

The small handouts to the Arts Council are a scandal. Not content with such tight-fisted behaviour as to deprive theatres, symphony orchestras, art museums, ballet companies and opera of all but the most pitiable dole, the Government does practically nothing to encourage millions of ordinary people to "do their own thing" when it comes to cultural activity. Even a mere visit to a museum is made more difficult for millions of families by the new museum charges.

As regards sports facilities, the Government is no better. The "sport of kings" is well-provided for, but for young people wanting to take part in sports at week-ends, playing fields are far too few. Equally bad are the provisions for athletes and swimmers. The few British sportsmen who won Olympic medals deserve an additional medal from the British public—for perseverance in achieving what they did *despite* the British Government.

In other ways, too, people are starved of the opportunities that society could and should provide to enrich the meaning of their lives, to develop their individual talents and capacities —as organisers, spokesmen, artists, creators, scientists, social workers.

People do not live by bread alone. They want not only a higher standard of living. They want a different kind of life altogether, a life that has a meaning and a purpose. They want to get away from the monotony of their daily lives, the same old round of going to work to earn enough money to go to work to earn enough money and so on *ad infinitum*.

They see little purpose in breaking their backs to pile up profits for the boss—whom they have probably never seen.

They resent being made to feel like a robot, carrying out daily tasks about which they have never been consulted—and always in danger of being sacked, again without consultation.

They are fed up with the growth of bureaucracy, the increasing remoteness of the Government and its departments, the indifference of so many local councils and their officials.

They live in a society of "them" and "us", with those at the top holding all the strings in their hands, and the rest of us expected to dance to their tune.

In every field of activity, whether at home or at work, people feel themselves alienated from our capitalist society, a society which neither represents their interests nor heeds their demands for social justice. Employers and landlords, the Government, the State and local authorities, the entire establishment in fact, appears increasingly as the enemy of the people, remote and hostile to their democratic aspirations.

The struggle for democratic change clearly affects wide strata of our society. Workers defending trade union rights, taking action to defend their right to work, insisting on a greater voice in the running of industry and of many other facets of our society. Women insisting on equality and liberation. Immigrant workers resisting discrimination. Students demanding participation in the administration of their educational institutions and defending their unions. People protecting the environment and taking up the cudgels against pollution and wrong transport policies.

In the whole State apparatus, including the army, the police, the legal system and the prisons, new dangers threaten, and drastic democratic changes are required. In the mass media the same struggle for democracy needs to be waged.

All these different streams of democratic struggle are increasingly coming up against the realities of monopoly power. It is the big monopolies and the State which are more and more seen as the main menace to the people's aspirations. The issue is becoming a clear-cut question: Is it to be a continuation of power in the hands of big business? Or is it to be the democratic power of the working people which rules in Britain?

Time to change course

And here we come to the nub of the question. We live at a time of great change. One third of mankind is already building socialism. The former colonial peoples are increasingly insisting on complete liberation. In the imperialist countries the working people are presenting a new powerful challenge to the monopolies.

We are in the midst of a great technological and scientific revolution. There is every possibility of providing everyone in Britain with security, material well-being and a fuller and more satisfying life. Living could be a sense of enjoyment and achievement for everyone, instead of the perpetual round of anxieties, problems and humdrum occupations which it so often is.

But on every side we can see that capitalist society is incapable of solving its problems. It is unable to satisfy the people's basic needs. Year after year, no matter whether we have had a Tory or a Labour Government, things have been becoming more and more critical. No amount of tinkering with the existing system will solve these problems.

Although many things have changed, one thing has remained remarkably constant decade after decade; and that is the division of the wealth of this country.

Despite all the desperately won wage increases, higher pensions, social security gains and other benefits, and despite all the reforms of taxation, death duties, and other measures ostensibly designed to establish a more fair distribution of the national wealth, the total share-out remains essentially the same.

A mere ten per cent of the people owns 72 per cent of the wealth of the country. The top five per cent owns 96 per cent of all company stocks and shares. The wealthiest one per cent of the people owns about four fifths of all company stocks and shares. Seven per cent of tax payers own 84 per cent of the total wealth of the country.

Could there be any more decisive answer to Heath's empty chatter about creating "one nation"?

But it is not simply a question of injustices or unfair distribution. The really basic point is that the wealth of the rich, the bankers, landlords, industrialists, speculators and

other members of the ruling class is based on their exploitation of the majority.

The ten per cent own 72 per cent of the wealth because they exploit the majority of the people.

The reason why we are in such a mess is that the country is run by a relative handful of rich tycoons who are only interested in their own wealth, power and privilege. Everything is done on the basis of "Will it make a profit?" And the whole system is geared to that objective—economically, politically and ideologically.

It is profit that rules in Britain. There is not much profit in council houses for workers. There are huge profits in giant office blocks and luxury hotels. So council housing is cut, despite the acute need for houses, while office blocks and hotels soar.

There is not much profit in schools or hospitals. There is plenty of profit in "central town development". So decaying and outdated nineteenth century school and hospital buildings remain while new super-markets arise in the High Street, shoulder to shoulder.

There is not much profit in playing fields for young people, nor in symphony orchestras for every major town. So the majority of people are starved of cultural and leisure activities, while millions of pounds are made out of gambling on the Stock Exchange, and millionaires spend the worst days of winter sunning themselves on the beaches of Bermuda.

The system is as crazy as it is immoral. It has long outlived its usefulness. Why does the Government allow this waste, this distortion of our economy and social life to continue?

Simply because the Government represents the same parasitic class of big business, and naturally runs the Government in the interests of that class and not ours.

When the new Tory Government was formed in June 1970 only one of its 18 principal ministers had not come direct from the boardrooms of big business. Between them they held 45 directorships prior to taking on ministerial office. All except three came from public school.

Past Labour Governments have not been composed of the same direct representatives of the major monopolies, although increasing numbers of right-wing leaders, like George Brown,

become part of the monopoly establishment or, like Robens or Marsh, become heads of nationalised industries, move up into the five figure income level, and become, in effect, part of the capitalist class.

But the composition of Labour Governments is not the only thing. The outlook and policy of right-wing Labour leaders is based on an acceptance of the capitalist system and an intention to do nothing more than, at most, introduce some modifications in the way the system is operated. Therefore Labour Governments, no less than Tory ones, have always acted to maintain the system even if, at times, popular pressure has compelled them to introduce some benefits for the working people.

It is not only the Government which is composed of defenders of the capitalist system. The same goes for the entire State—the higher posts in the civil service, in the various Government institutions and Ministries, in the armed forces and police, in the law courts and in higher education. Those from the top drawer of society run the roost—and their sons inherit their property, and often their jobs.

The extent to which the upper ranks of the civil service operate to maintain the status quo has been partly revealed in the recent book, *Inside Number 10*, by Harold Wilson's political secretary, Marcia Williams.

These top civil servants did not have to be members of the Tory Party to pursue their essentially Tory policy. Their class origin and upbringing, their property and connections, were sufficient to ensure their loyalty to the system.

If these stiff-backed mandarins of power were prepared to work so hard to frustrate even the modest reforms of a Wilson Government, how much more of an obstacle would they prove to be to a Government which was really intent on making basic changes?

Harold Wilson has never accepted the Marxist analysis of the State. Basing himself, as all right-wing Labour leaders do, on the myth that the present British State is "neutral" and not an instrument of the capitalist class, he presents this myth as a justification for not having taken any steps to end capitalist control of the State apparatus.

The experience of all our Labour Governments only confirms that a Government seriously bent on ending the power

of the monopolies and taking the road to socialism would have to remove the Tory-minded State chiefs who walk the "corridors of power".

Britain today is run *by* big business *for* big business, by profiteers on the hunt for profits.

Labour Governments, despite some reforms, have fundamentally acted no differently than the Tories. Why? Because they, too, tried to operate within the existing system. Instead of making a real challenge to big business, they submitted to it. They allowed the big monopolies to maintain their domination of our economy. They permitted the landlords to continue their speculation. They let the same Tory-minded top brass keep their positions in the State apparatus.

They allowed rising prices to rob workers of the benefits of hard-won wage increases, and to depress the standards of old age pensioners. They even tried to introduce anti-trade union legislation before the Tories.

They acted in this way, supporting all the reactionary imperialist policies of their Tory predecessors in their dealings with other countries, because they accepted the system, accepted the idea that Britain should continue to be exploited by the giant firms and enterprises.

In short, because they accepted that ten per cent of Britain's people should continue to own 72 per cent of our national wealth, and should enjoy the exercise of real political power that helps to safeguard that division of our wealth.

In other words, the right-wing Labour leaders made no challenge to the power of the capitalist class because they have never had any intention of carrying through a socialist transformation of our society.

Britain is now at the crossroads. Are we to continue with the existing system of capitalism, staggering from crisis to crisis? Are we to go on allowing the big monopolies to dominate our lives? Or are we going to end the power of the rich and start the rule of the people?

Only by the latter path is it possible to end Britain's recurring and deep-seated crisis. But for the people to take over the running of the country, to transform the big enterprises into public property run in the people's interests, represents a fundamental political challenge to the ruling class.

It means the replacement of capitalism by socialism. This is a giant step. But this new course must be taken if the people are to win through to a better and richer life.

We are confident that the British working people, highly organised and adaptable, will be fully capable of making this historic change once they have grasped its necessity and possibility.

We, the people, are many. They, the ruling class, are few.

CHAPTER II

WHAT A SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT WOULD DO

Capitalism and Socialism—Power for the People—More and More Democracy—Democratic Participation—Socialist Nationalisation—Socialist Planning—The Unions and Industrial Democracy—Socialist Agriculture—An Important Role for the Small Man—A Better, Different Life—Health and Welfare—Education—Environment—Where Will the Money Come From—Britain and the World—The Creators of History.

Capitalism and Socialism

Although some people argue that "things never change", a look at history will show that since the dawn of mankind society has been in a continuous process of development and change.

Since human life first evolved on earth five main forms of society have been created. They are primitive communal society, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism. When productive processes first reached a stage at which it was possible for people to produce a surplus over and above what they needed to maintain their own existence, slavery was born and the first class societies came into existence.

Ever since then, until the Russian workers and peasants took power in October 1917, the exploitation of man by man was the rule in all ages and in all continents, whether the people lived under slavery, feudalism or capitalism. The historic significance of the Russian Revolution was that, for the first time in history, the exploitation of man by man ended and the creation of a classless communist society began.

Today over one third of the world's inhabitants, in fourteen different countries, live under socialism; and in the rest of the world, which is dominated by capitalism in its modern monopoly form, imperialism, the striving of the people to end capitalism and take the road to socialism becomes ever stronger, despite temporary setbacks in particular countries.

Historically speaking, capitalism is now outdated, especially in an advanced capitalist country such as Britain. The trend of our epoch is the trend towards socialism. But capitalism will not die of its own accord. There will be no automatic collapse of the system. What will end capitalism is the action of individuals and organisations, the activities of millions of people inspired by an understanding of the nature of capitalism and the seat of its power, and by a determination to end the system and establish socialism.

If the British people are to take a new course and commence the construction of socialism, it is necessary to be clear what socialism is.

For years the British Labour Movement has been presented by its right wing leaders with conceptions of "socialism" that are simply a vague collection of pious platitudes and liberal hopes, which have nothing to do with socialism. In fact they imply only marginal adjustments in the present system under which we live, leaving it basically intact.

The essence of the present system, capitalism, is that the means of production—the factories, land and banks and other enterprises—are privately owned. Wealth and economic power is concentrated in the hands of a rich minority. By virtue of this economic strength, and in order to maintain their economic domination of society, this minority concentrates into its hands a corresponding State and political power, as well as power over the mass media, the press, radio and television, films, publishing, education and other fields through which the ideas of the ruling class are propagated.

In other words, the wealthy and powerful control our country and run it in their own interests.

It is not simply that they control our resources and our lives to suit their own purposes. To advance their own class interests they have to oppose the interests of the majority of us, not because they necessarily dislike us but because their advancement depends on the extent to which they can make profit out of people's labour.

The source of their wealth is rent, interest and profit. The higher the rent which the landlord can squeeze from the tenant, whether he be householder, shopkeeper or farmer, the better for the landlord and the worse for the tenant.

The larger the profits which the employer can obtain,

whether by jacking up prices or by holding back wages, providing poor working conditions, neglecting safety devices, exacting more productivity per worker, or replacing a worker with a more productive machine—the better for the employer and the worse for the worker.

The larger the interest which the banks and building societies can impose on people paying off mortgages to buy a house, the better for the moneylenders and the worse for the house-buyer.

In other words, what is meat for the capitalists is poison for the working people.

All the goods created in Britain, from the smallest and simplest to the largest and most complicated, are the product of human labour.

They go through many stages before they are completed. First, the obtaining and processing of raw materials; then the designing of the product, followed by its different stages of production, its transport, its distribution and sale, the recording of its operative stages, and the keeping of accounts.

At each stage wage and salaried workers are employed; and at each stage they expend their physical and mental resources in carrying through their stage of the process.

Thousands of workers may be involved in producing a single commodity—but when the final product is completed it does not belong to them, but to their employer. So workers make the product by their collective labour, but the private owner takes possession of it.

But that is not all. At each stage of the process workers add to the value of the original raw material, but the capitalist employer pays them in wages less than the added value they have produced. He pockets the surplus value when the product is sold, and even after deducting overhead expenses and taxation there is still a margin left over to provide a profit on the total operation.

The source of that profit is the added value produced by the workers. The workers produce the profit, but the private employer takes it.

It is obvious, therefore, that the private owners of enterprises, who benefit from this system, will do what they can to keep it in being. That is why they maintain their own political party, such as the Tory Party, to fight to preserve

capitalism. That is why they control the State and strive to ensure that laws and regulations are adopted by Parliament which best suit their class interests. That is why they control the mass media and other forms of propaganda and education in order to persuade the people to accept the existing set-up.

The policy of the right-wing Labour leaders does nothing to challenge this system. All previous Labour Governments in Britain have left it intact.

Socialism would end completely the rule of big business and transfer power into the hands of the working class and its allies. This is what we mean by a socialist revolution.

Socialism is a system based not on the *private* ownership of the means of production but on their being *publicly* owned—by the State, by local authorities and by co-operatives—and democratically managed.

Under socialism no one can own a bank, a factory, a supermarket or a block of flats. Therefore, under socialism no one can enrich himself at the expense of others or by the work of others. Exploitation of man by man will be ended by socialism.

Once private ownership of the economy is ended and private profit abolished, all the values created by people through their labour will be available to be used by them in their own interests. A part will be available in direct cash—in wages, pensions, children's allowances, student grants, and other benefits. A part will come in the form of social services—health, education and so on—in cultural and leisure facilities, in various social amenities in town and country, including housing, transport, roads and town planing. Part will go on the further development of industry and agriculture, on research, on building new enterprises and constructing new machines. Finally, there will be the necessary allocation of funds and resources to maintain the new Socialist State, to staff its administration, and to provide the necessary forces and equipment to defend the system against its enemies from without or within.

To make this basic alteration in the ownership of our whole economy, to take it out of private hands and place it at the disposal of the people, is the essential step that will enable us to pass from capitalism to socialism. But to make this change requires the removal of the representatives of

the capitalist class from all the key posts they hold in the political power structure and the refashioning of these institutions so that the ruling class can no longer utilise them to obstruct or prevent the complete transfer of the economy from private hands into the hands of the people.

By carrying through this transfer we would open the way to a radical transformation of all aspects of our society. Many of these changes will need to be striven for in the very process of ending the old system. In fact, without them the basic turnover from capitalism to socialism will never be achieved.

An outline of the main measures that need to be taken are provided in our Party programme, *The British Road to Socialism*. This is in no sense a detailed blue-print of a Socialist Britain but a programme of struggle, a line of advance, and an indication of the main changes that would have to be made if Britain is to solve its basic problems and make the leap from the past to the future, from capitalism to socialism.

Power for the people—more and more democracy

Power in the hands of the people will mean a profound change in the functioning of democracy.

On the one hand it will mean firm and conscious steps to remove the present ruling class from all positions which enable it to maintain its domination of our society.

On the other hand, it will enable the people to exercise more fully than ever before their democratic rights, to utilise the civil rights that have been won, to make full use of their democratic organisations and to create new democratic bodies where necessary.

A Socialist Government, based on a Parliamentary majority comprising Labour Party MPs supporting genuine socialist measures along with Communist MPs, and with the full backing of the majority of the people acting through their political and social organisations, will use its new-won political power to carry through the political, social and economic measures needed to end capitalism and introduce socialism.

Parliament itself will undergo significant changes. Its full powers as the sovereign body in the land will be restored and strengthened.

Government will be a collective body, fully answerable to

and supervised by the Members of Parliament who will themselves decide on all major policy questions.

Parliament will be the sole legislative body. The House of Lords and the Monarchy, both outdated institutions which at present have the power to obstruct progress, will have no place in a socialist society.

Parliament itself will be answerable in its turn to the people who elect it and MPs will be subject to recall. There will be no inflated salaries for Ministers, and MPs will receive pay more in line with that of the average skilled worker.

The socialist majority would consult the people on all relevant matters, discuss with appropriate public bodies and institutions and draw on their views.

In some cases such bodies would be asked to prepare the outlines or drafts of relevant legislation. Trade unions, for example, would obviously be involved in deciding on all labour legislation. Tenants' associations would play a part in deciding on housing policy.

Everything possible would be done, in fact, to ensure that the people and their organisations have the easiest access to Parliament and the MPs, and are really in a position to influence Government policy.

A Socialist Government which based its policies and actions on the people's aspirations and demands, and consulted and informed them at every stage, would be seen by the people as *their* Government. The feeling of "them" and "us" would subside. Such a Government could be confident of retaining popular support for its programme, of winning ever wider sections over to its side and reducing the backing for any Opposition parties.

The electoral system would be reorganised, and proportional representation would replace the present unrepresentative two-party system, based on single member constituencies.

All democratically organised political parties, including those opposed to socialism, would have the right to exist, to maintain their organisations and publications, carry on their propaganda and take part in Parliamentary and local council elections, provided, of course, that they conformed to the law.

In elections, both national and local, people would enjoy a real possibility to discuss policy, press for changes and

decide what Government they wanted and what they wanted the Government to do. They would have the full right and powers to elect a new Government if they were dissatisfied with the one they had; and in such a case, the Communist Party would accept the verdict of the people.

We believe, however, that once a Socialist Government has been elected, and once it has had the opportunity to implement the main features of its programme, it will enjoy more popularity not less.

The people who struggle for and elect a Socialist Government because they want it to carry out its programme will be all the more eager in their support for socialism once they begin to see its benefits.

Many of those formerly opposed will probably think again once they begin to enjoy the better life that socialism can provide.

The Tory Party, on the other hand, should be in a much weaker position. The nationalisation of all the major firms will have broken the economic spine of the capitalist system. The big monopolies which at present provide the financial sinews of the Tory Party will have been taken over by the Socialist State. The national newspapers of the press lords which at present confuse the people and drum up support for capitalism and for the Tories, will no longer be under their monopoly control. Neither will the Tories and other supporters of capitalism enjoy any longer their virtual monopoly use of radio and television.

The working class and its organisations will have far more access to the mass media and will be able to influence broad public opinion in a way which at present is not open to them. All the restrictions and limitations on their activity, their publications and their TV appearances will have gone.

If it is possible for the working class and its allies to defeat the Tories decisively and establish a Socialist Government in conditions in which the monopolies and their Tory Party have enjoyed all the advantages which their control of the economy, the State and the mass media has given them, then surely once these advantages have been taken from them, and once the people have experienced for themselves the difference between capitalism and socialism, the chances of a Tory electoral come-back will be less.

This does not mean that there will be no problems or difficulties. As we have already warned, the ruling class will do everything possible to hold on to its power; and will be equally desperate to regain it once it is lost. But the election and sustaining of a Socialist Government will put the British people in a better position to face the capitalists, not a worse one.

It is important to realise in this respect that it is not the Socialist Government alone which will defeat a Tory comeback. It will be the vigilance and mass actions of the people that will be decisive.

If the capitalists and their Tory Party refuse to accept the electoral verdict of the people and instead turn to the use of force to upset the people's democratic decision, then the people will have to be prepared to use its own force, its organised strength, to crush such illegal and anti-democratic activity. In such circumstances, it will be seen that it was not the working class and its allies that flouted democracy and resorted to illegal violence, but big business and its supporters; and the people will justifiably use whatever measures are necessary to end the violent activity undertaken by the capitalists.

Government and Parliament are only one part of political power. State power, too, would have to be transformed.

The majority of civil servants and local government officers belong to trade unions, are affiliated to the Trades Union Congress and can be won for socialism. The same applies to teachers and university staffs, to technicians in nationalised industries and Government economic institutions.

But the key posts in the State apparatus, in the armed forces, police, Ministries and departments, diplomatic service, economic institutions and nationalised industries, would have to be held by men and women who really believed in socialism, were loyal to its aims, and were in touch with the people and their problems.

In addition to changing the top personnel it would also be essential to make drastic changes in the structure of these State bodies, to eliminate some sectors, introduce democratic practices, diminish bureaucracy, and give a new orientation and function to all the activities of these institutions. Recruitment and training would be correspondingly changed.

A Socialist Government would introduce more democratic procedures into the armed forces and the police.

Members of the armed forces, the police, and the Civil Service would be allowed to take part in political activities, attend political meetings, read political literature and join political parties and trade unions. Within the armed forces the necessary machinery would be introduced to protect the rights of serving men and ensure the redress of any grievances.

The recruitment, training and powers of the police would all be related to the aim of establishing a service whose functions, in addition to those of combatting crime, would be to protect socialist democracy and preserve the rights of the people instead of, as under the present system, being directed against working class and democratic organisations and progressive individuals.

Private security forces would be banned and so would all private investigation bodies which maintain dossiers on citizens and intrude into their private lives.

Parliamentary committees would play their part in supervising the State machine and combatting bureaucracy. Even more important, people would be encouraged to play their part, too, in controlling the various bodies of the State, in helping individuals to secure their rights, and in seeing that the State carried out its functions promptly and efficiently on behalf of the people.

The aim would be to ensure that the Socialist State would be the servant of the people and respond to their needs.

Democratic participation

In factories, shops and offices, workers would be encouraged to take part in the democratic management of their enterprise.

Teachers, parents and school students would be encouraged to work out the most appropriate forms for effective democratic supervision of our schools. Students and college staffs would be expected to do the same in the field of higher education. The relevant trade union bodies and the student organisations would naturally play a key part in this.

With the aid of the co-operative societies and local trades councils, local consumers' committees would be set up to supervise the shops, to help control prices and the quality of goods supplied.

Doctors, nurses, patients, and local bodies would be encouraged to establish committees to help control our hospitals and health services.

Local tenants' organisations would be given rights and powers to intervene more actively in defence of tenants, to ensure speedy attention to necessary repairs, to help on housing allocations and the proper control of rents.

In every possible field the people would be encouraged to establish their appropriate committees to help run the socialist society. Old forms of organisation would be given a new content and a new lease of life. New forms of organisation would spring up. The aim in all cases would be to involve the people in managing their own affairs, to make every cook an administrator.

The British people have a considerable tradition and capacity to create grass-roots democratic organisations. Under capitalism, to defend their interests, they have evolved not only trade unions and co-operatives but countless other local and national bodies—to protect threatened railways, to combat pollution, to campaign for cervical cancer tests, to safeguard people's rights under social security, to protect historic buildings and beauty spots, to organise disabled people, and so on. A Socialist Britain would encourage the fullest expression of such democratic initiative which would act as an essential check to bureaucracy, helping to supervise the working of the State, Government, and Parliament.

In addition to any functions such bodies might play on various official committees set up by the Government, its institutions, and the local authorities, these grassroots organisations, as completely independent and autonomous creations of the working people, would have the freedom to exercise their democratic rights and to use their initiative for championing the different causes for which they have been established, and to look into Government and State shortcomings, red-tape or the abuse of power.

The judiciary, too, would undergo changes, and so would the legal system. All laws on the statute book which were designed to protect, directly or indirectly, the capitalist system, or to uphold backward practices would be repealed. Any laws limiting the rights of organised labour, or restricting the democratic rights of the people would be abolished.

The civil liberties that have been won by centuries of struggle would be preserved and extended. Our basic civil rights would be protected by Habeas Corpus, which protects citizens from arbitrary detention. There would be an end to the practice of keeping untried people in jail for long terms; individuals awaiting trial would be allowed bail except in cases where lives could be endangered. Trial by jury would be preserved. No one would be tried without legal representation.

The right to strike would be guaranteed. There would be freedom of association and organisation, freedom to hold meetings, march, demonstrate, petition and to lobby Parliament and other representative institutions, and freedom to publish.

There would be freedom of thought, speech, dissent, action and beliefs, and freedom to work and to travel, subject only to those limitations which any just and ordered society would require of its citizens.

Freedom of religious worship would be ensured, and all religions and religious beliefs and creeds respected. Incitement to race hatred and all forms of discrimination based on race, colour, sex, religion or creed would be prohibited.

All these basic freedoms and rights would be embodied in a code of citizens' rights which would have the force of law.

The administration of justice would be made more democratic, with judges drawn from the widest progressive circles of the people, and with magistrates nominated by trade unions, co-operatives and other representative bodies. The judiciary, once appointed, would be independent of the executive and free to carry out its functions without any pressure or interference from the Government.

The legal profession would be reorganised leading to the creation of a free legal advice system with lawyers serving the community in local legal centres.

Our prison system would be completely overhauled. In consultation with specialist bodies, prison officers and representatives of the prisoners, as well as with representatives of the legal profession and of public organisations, including trade unions, measures would be taken to transform our prisons from houses of detention and punishment into institutions for real rehabilitation and reform. Offenders would

be trained and educated so that, on release, they would be able to play a worthwhile part in society.

National newspapers, both dailies and Sundays, which at present, except for the *Morning Star,* are owned by a few big business firms, would be reorganised.

Democracy does not require commercialised newspapers any more than it needs commercialised radio or television. On the contrary, the retention of the mass media in the hands of big business is a threat to the democratic rights of the people. The imparting of information or the expression of views on such a large scale would be taken right out of the sphere of profit-making. The press monopolies would be dissolved.

Newspapers and periodicals would be owned and controlled by political parties, social groups, trade unions, co-operatives, professional associations, organisations of women, youth, national minorities and immigrant groups, sporting bodies, and those engaged in literature, the arts and sciences, hobbies and recreation, and different specialist interests.

A radical change in the control of television and radio, with the participation of democratic organisations in the management of these institutions, would facilitate the expression of different views and the provision of news and information freed from distortion for commercial ends. Publicly-owned regional and local radio and television would extend opportunities to all social, religious and democratic political groups and bodies to express their views.

Creative artistic activity, and full freedom to experiment and introduce innovations in style, form and content would be encouraged without any administrative interference. Not every innovation will lead to positive results but without it culture will be stifled and stultified.

The Communist Party does not see its task as being to direct what should be written, painted or composed either in terms of subject or style. It does not see its role as laying down laws governing literary and artistic creation. We do not believe that, under socialism, painting, sculpture, literature music, drama and film must comply with a single official standard or style, acceptable to all, or immediately comprehensive without effort and study, but that society, through a vast expansion of cultural and educational facilities, must

make both the enjoyment and the practice of all forms of artistic activity easily available to the entire people.

Socialist society will provide the conditions for the massive development of scientific enquiry. The Communist Party welcomes the most critical enquiring and searching spirit among scientists whose function we recognise is to explore all aspects of phenomena and to avoid going into enquiry with a fixed notion of the result. The development of science requires the free confrontation of different scientific theories and, where necessary, prolonged debate.

There can be no question of the Socialist State or any political party "laying down a line" on science. Their responsibility is to create the conditions for the freest possible study of nature and of society in all its complexity. For the more freely nature is explored the more effectively can it be controlled in the interests of humanity; the more society is understood the more will people strive to develop and change it.

If Welsh and Scottish Parliaments are not in being at the time that Britain elects a Socialist Government, then their establishment would be one of the prior concerns of such a Government. The peoples of Scotland and Wales would then be in a position to work out the most appropriate effective and democratic forms of self-government in the course of building socialism. Together with the people of England they would jointly decide on the best and most fruitful forms of their association in order to advance their common interests and to fulfil their national, democratic and social aspirations.

Such changes would enable the people of Scotland and Wales to overcome the problems of neglect and economic distortion to which their countries have been subjected by the British monopolies.

By all these and other democratic measures the involvement of the people in determining their own future would be extended.

This is vital for a socialist society. Socialism can only flourish and make progress if it enjoys the full-hearted co-operation of the people. And this co-operation, and the trust, confidence and constructive criticism it will entail, will develop to the extent that the people are really involved in making their own history.

Socialist nationalisation

With democratic political power in their hands the working people will be able to nationalise all major undertakings and so refashion the entire economy. Three major changes will ensue.

First, production will no longer be run for private profit, but will be organised to meet the needs of the people.

Secondly, production under socialism will be planned.

Thirdly, production decisions will no longer be the private bureaucratic prerogative of the monopolies, but will become the direct concern of the working people who, from the shop floor up to the level of Government, will participate in evolving economic plans and in ensuring their implementation.

To make all this possible, a Socialist Government would bring all the main industries and resources into public ownership. Large-scale industry, all forms of transport, fuel and power, the banks, insurance companies, building societies and other financial houses, and large-scale privately owned multiple wholesale and retail concerns, would be taken out of the hands of private capital. The same would happen with large estates as well as with urban land—but the land of owner-occupiers and of small farmers would remain in their owners' hands.

Socialist nationalisation of all the major firms will be quite different from the nationalisation we have experienced under capitalism.

Instead of being limited mainly to the utilities and to providing cheap services to the dominant private sector, it will cover all major industries and constitute the decisive sector of our economy.

There would be no private monopolies to milk the nationalised industries as at present—no private banks to charge them high interest for loans, nor private companies to charge high prices for providing them with equipment.

There would be no heavy burden of compensation payments; at the most there would be reasonable life annuities to individuals, paid by the State. The State budget would make provision for the necessary funds to modernise and extend the nationalised undertakings.

The nationalised industries and services would not be organised in bureaucratic fashion, nor headed by former directors of private monopolies, retired army generals, tame right-wing trade union leaders and other played-out has-beens. Instead, their management boards would be composed of workers, technicians, scientists and managers with direct experience of the industry.

With all the main industries and resources at their disposal the British people would be able, for the first time in their history, to carry out effective economic planning for the country as a whole.

All the tremendous potentialities of modern scientific and technical development—automation, nuclear power, cybernetics, lasers, computers—would be utilised for the people's benefit. Science, an immense productive force in its own right, would play a still greater role in production and in transforming our lives.

The great changes that would come about as a result of the rapid expansion of the use of automation, computers and other scientific and technological developments would be felt not only in industry.

The composition of the labour force would be transformed. Higher education would increasingly become a necessity for everyone engaged in production. New skills would be required. The outlook of people and their cultural life would be deeply influenced.

This, together with their growing role in the direction of society, and combined with the sense of purpose that will arise as they witness the fruits of their labour being utilised for the common good of society, including themselves, and not for private profit, will have a profound effect on their personality.

Their closer identification with society will result not in a diminution of their individual capacities but, on the contrary, in the flowering of their talents and abilities. People will feel taller. They will acquire a greater sense of dignity.

They will no longer have the sense of being a powerless cog in a senseless machine but will increasingly be aware that they are the masters of their society which they are guiding in a planned and rational way in their own interests.

This change in the people's outlook will, in its turn, have

an important influence on production itself. Imbued with a a real sense of purpose and unity, equipped with a constantly growing stream of new techniques and machines, trained and educated for more advanced forms of productive work, people will be willing and more able to give freely of their best.

Under such conditions, and with proper democratic management and sound investment policies, there is no reason why the national economic plans of a Socialist Britain should not achieve high annual growth rates of 8 per cent or more. Such an expansion will make it possible to carry out rapid improvements in people's standards of living in every way.

Socialist planning

Socialist economic planning is not solely a matter of economics. It is also essentially a matter of democracy, too.

Since there will be no basic conflict between management and workers in publicly owned industries, even if at times they have different points of view on some questions, it will be possible to draw up viable economic plans that both meet the needs of society as a whole and at the same time, safeguard the interests of workers in each industry and each enterprise.

An increased role for the trade unions and the introduction of the most effective forms of industrial democracy will be essential. This will help to ensure that the plan makes necessary provision for improving people's lives as well as meeting the other requirements of the economy.

Socialist planning will require the establishment by the Government of a national planning authority. The authority will have the responsibility to work out its draft plan after Parliament has indicated the priorities to be taken care of, and after adequate consultation has taken place with the socialist managements of enterprises and whole industries, with trade unions, co-operatives, local and regional authorities, and with various specialist bodies where necessary.

The plan itself will then be subject to nation-wide discussion which will assist the subsequent debate and amendment in Parliament before its final endorsement. Once these plans have been approved by Parliament the industries concerned would proceed to carry them out.

Social ownership of the means of production will not only

mean an end to the exploitation of man by man. By making economic planning possible it will also enable us to fulfil in practice the slogan: "The right to work". Full employment, in fact, would be a major priority of socialist planning.

A socialist Britain will start off with many advantages. compared with the position that faced other socialist countries when they commenced. We have a strong industrial base, a large highly skilled working class with an outstanding capacity for organisation, a relatively developed sense of industrial discipline, and a powerful trade union movement. We also have a much higher level of education, and a substantial army of scientific and technical personnel, although in no way yet sufficient.

These factors would enable a Socialist Britain to utilise forms of planning more appropriate to our situation and our stage of development.

Other socialist countries have, in the main, been compelled by their circumstances to commence with highly centralised forms of planning, largely necessitated by the backward state of their economies, and the need to provide for the rapid establishment of an industrial base and for a big increase in food production to feed the growing armies of workers in the new industries.

In these conditions there was an early emphasis on quantity growth, especially in raw materials, food, coal, iron, steel, oil, electric power, trucks, railway wagons, and tractors. These countries also lacked a large skilled working class; in fact, the ranks of the workers were mainly filled by former peasants unused to industrial techniques and disciplines, and not versed in trade union organisation.

There was a shortage of scientific and technical personnel, and a lack of trained managers. Resistance from rich peasants and other remnants of the former society, and the economic hostility of the major capitalist countries also created grave difficulties for the socialist states.

In these circumstances highly centralised forms of economic planning were evolved, and were later maintained when the original factors that had led to their adoption were already beginning to disappear.

These problems are now being overcome. Changes in the methods of management and economic planning are being

introduced which combine central planning with provision for greater initiative to individual enterprises, and which make it possible for industry to be more responsive to the consumer needs of the people.

The quality of goods, and their variety, are now receiving more emphasis without abandoning in any way the need to constantly increase the quantity of goods available to the people.

In a Socialist Britain, starting with all the advantages we have indicated above, there will be no need for over-centralised planning, even though there will be no question of submitting individual factories to the complete anarchy of the market.

The unions and industrial democracy

Trade unions in a Socialist Britain will be completely autonomous organisations, independent of the State machine, and with full rights to negotiate at all levels and on all questions affecting their members. They will also have the right to express their views or take up with appropriate authorities wider political questions with which they may be concerned.

They and their members will have the right to strike. This will be guaranteed by law. They will also enjoy full rights to carry on their trade union activity without let or hindrance, to hold meetings on factory premises or elsewhere as they wish, to issue their own publications and to carry out other democratic activities in pursuit of their union policies.

They will be able to exercise new powers such as administering sections of the social services, controlling social security and being responsible for safety inspections at all places of work.

They will have representatives on committees responsible for local housing allocation, supervising shops, schools and hospitals, assisting town planning, combatting pollution, noise and other environmental dangers—in fact, there will hardly be any aspect of a Socialist Britain in which the trade unions will not be involved in one form or another. They will also own clubs and cultural and recreational centres, and organise holiday homes and tourism for their members and families.

In order to assist the workers to participate in these

democratic activities, and so that they can have the time to undertake further education and improve their qualifications, it will be necessary to reduce the real length of the working day. This will become easier to accomplish as the scientific and technological revolution proceeds and productivity soars.

Within the factories the workers will be able to practice their industrial democracy. It is essential that in a Socialist Britain they have a real voice in managing the enterprise, in helping to draw up the plan and ensuring its implementation.

The entire status of the worker will be changed, whether he be engaged in a nationalised industry or in a small enterprise remaining for a time in private hands.

"Power in the hands of the people" has no meaning if, at his place of work, the worker is expected to carry on as before, simply obeying instructions handed down to him from above.

The hierarchical and bureaucratic boss-worker relationship must be eliminated. "Managerial prerogatives" will be ended. Old-style methods of arbitrary management can have no place under socialism. And it will be the responsibility of the workers and their factory trade union organisation to ensure that no "boss", even in a nationalised enterprise, lords it over them as he did in the past.

Workers and their trade unions will have considerable powers in the enterprise, whether it be nationalised or still in private hands. Canteen facilities, sanitary arrangements, working conditions, noise, heating, lighting, industrial clothing—all this will be their very close concern, as well as wages, hours of work, shifts, overtime, training for new processes, apprenticeship, and medical provision where necessary.

No worker will be dismissed without the agreement of his trade union organisation. Shop stewards and factory representatives, often under capitalism the much-abused workshop organisers of the unions, will have the status which their unpaid and devoted work on behalf of their fellow-workers really entitles them.

Socialist agriculture

Agriculture, too, will undergo a substantial transformation. The socialist nationalisation of all large estates will make

it possible to introduce planning into the production of our agricultural resources.

Despite its relative neglect by past Governments, our agriculture is efficient and one of the most productive in the world. During the Second World War, when we were desperately short of food because submarine warfare had heavily cut down our imports of food supplies, our farmers and agricultural workers performed miracles and pushed up our food production to new heights.

Under socialism we would expect our agriculture to expand its food production in order to improve the diet of our people, cut down food imports and so save unnecessary spending of our sterling. At the same time it would reduce our dependence on other countries for our food supplies. This latter factor may become especially important in the first stages of our transition to socialism.

An expansion of our food production could also make its contribution towards overcoming the critical food shortage in other countries.

Our agriculture is largely characterised by its large number of small producers. At present they are threatened by large-scale farming interests who are attempting to squeeze out the small man as they are doing so rapidly in all Common Market countries.

Our small farmers are also menaced by the big monopolies which constantly jack up the prices for fertilisers, machinery and fuel. The socialist nationalisation of the monopolies will therefore be of direct benefit to the farmers.

The various forms of co-operation which the farmers have introduced in order to meet the threat from the monopolies will be encouraged. Co-operative forms of marketing, buying, and using machinery and cultivation will be assisted.

Where appropriate, large State farms would be set up and run as model enterprises, both for the purposes of scientific research as well as to study the benefits of large-scale production methods.

In order to close the gap between urban and rural living conditions, amenities in the countryside would be improved, especially transport, health and welfare, roads, street lighting, and recreational, cultural and social facilities.

Farmworkers, who are amongst the lowest paid yet hardest

working of all workers, and who do a job that requires great skill and energy would be guaranteed considerably higher pay commensurate with their skill and importance. Working conditions would be improved and security in their homes, which is so often denied them by the tied-cottage system, would be guaranteed.

In a number of other fields, in addition to agriculture, there will be a role for co-operatives, especially in the supply and distribution of consumer goods in which they already play a substantial part. As mass democratic organisations, the co-operative societies will be able to make a valuable contribution to the national plan.

They will also be able to participate, along with other organisations, on consumer bodies concerned with observing price movements and in supervising quality standards. Co-operative forms of organisation could also be extended into handicrafts and fishing, and in the production of consumer goods.

An important role for the small man

Individual small producers and shopkeepers too, would have a place under socialism. Under the present system, as a walk down the local high street can reveal, the small man is being rapidly squeezed out by the supermarkets and chain stores. The margin he is allowed by the big monopoly trading firms from which he obtains his goods proves insufficient to meet his rising overheads, especially the ever soaring rent he is expected to pay for a High Street site.

The nationalisation of the monopoly producers and trading firms and of urban land, will allow the small man to breathe easier; and the increased purchasing power of the people that will result from their higher living standards will increase his turnover.

There are many services too, which require the individual attention and craftsmen's skill which are not always best provided by a large-scale concern. Watch-mending, furniture repair and upholstery, shoe and other leather goods repairs, dressmaking and clothing repairs, hairdressers, house decorating, domestic plumbing and electrical work and so on can often be done more speedily and satisfactorily by the small local man than by having to apply to a larger and

more remote concern which can result in tedious delays and bureaucracy.

There would be no danger of such concerns growing into new monopolies. Their supply of essential materials would be controlled by the Socialist State through its local economic bodies. They would have to conform to the country's labour laws. In time, it is hoped, they would establish appropriate forms of co-operation with one another.

A better, different life

With political power in their hands, and in possession of all the main industries and enterprises, the land and financial institutions, the people will then really be in a position for the first time in their lives to provide themselves with a constantly improving standard of living and with a completely different quality of life.

It will not be a question of production for production's sake, or planning for planning's sake. The supreme purpose of all the nation's planned economic effort will be a richer life for the people in every way.

The provision of the necessary material goods the people require for a fully satisfying life. The creation of the educational, cultural and recreational facilities that will bring people enjoyment and the opportunity to develop their talents and skills. The establishment of better social conditions to lift all the burdens and anxieties from people's backs. The fixing of hours of work, shifts, and holidays that enable people to enrich the quality of their life outside working hours. The guaranteeing of the freedoms and democratic rights that provide people with the opportunity to play their full part in society. The creation of environmental conditions in town and country that bring greater ease and contentment to all. These will be the aims and objectives of socialist planning.

Everyone who contributes to society by his work, whatever the nature of his job, whether it be heavy labouring or skilled machine work, whether it be scientific research or serving in a shop, whether it be in industry or agriculture, working in a state concern or self-employed, a student preparing for subsequent work or an old age pensioner who has already made his or her valuable contribution to society, or

a housewife who prefers to stay at home—all will have equal opportunities.

Socialism would open up an entirely new era for women. Equal pay for work of equal value, and the upgrading of wages and salaries in jobs traditionally regarded as women's jobs and therefore hitherto lower paid, will provide an important economic underpinning to women's status in society.

This, together with changes in the law regarding women's rights relative to property, inheritance and disposal of the assets of a married couple, will help to provide women with the economic status and equality which is an essential basis for equality in other fields.

Women will be encouraged to take part in all manner of jobs and no occupations will be barred to them. A British Socialist Government would endeavour to ensure that women are given equal training opportunities in all fields, that all discrimination against them as regards employment, promotion and pay are eliminated not only by law but in practice. Social services would be expanded and developed so that women are no longer tied to the home nor to domestic chores but have the possibility of playing a full role in society.

Full access to the most up-to-date methods of contraception and abortion would be provided free of charge, by local authorities, under the National Health Service. This is important both to enhance women's rights and status as well as to assist the planning of population.

By education, publicity and by social pressures the Government, aided by women's organisations as well as by the more politically conscious people involved in the labour movement and other democratic bodies, would work to overcome the ideas of male domination which are at present so strongly entrenched both in our society in general and in the home.

The full flowering of a Socialist Britain demands that all vestiges of discrimination and male superiority be eliminated not only in the practices of society but in the minds of men and women, too.

Socialism plus automation and other technological breakthroughs will make possible the provision of many more goods and services for everyone. But production would be planned, with social priorities determined by the people and their

representatives, who would ensure that there was no waste on unnecessary gadgets or excessive personal goods.

Real wages for individual consumption would steadily increase as economic plans are fulfilled. Young people would no longer be used as a form of cheap labour. Special measures would be taken to raise the lower paid out of their poverty conditions and to close the gap between them and higher paid workers. All workers in Britain, whether immigrant or resident, and whatever the colour of their skin, would be freed from wage discrimination.

Pensions, too, would be raised substantially, and so would other social benefits. They should approximate to one's personal wage or salary, so that people who have retired, or are disabled, chronically sick or in receipt of other social payments, would be able to live in dignity and under normal conditions like other people. There would be no means test, no personal deductions for pensions and people entitled to benefits would no longer be harried or abused by bureaucratic officials.

In addition to the increased purchasing power of individuals arising from these changes, an ever growing proportion of the total national income would be devoted to social expenditure from which all would benefit.

At places of employment there would be improved canteen and restaurant facilities, better toilet arrangements, proper wash places, adequate cloakrooms and locker space.

Housing, education and health would all be high on the list of social priorities. The two-class system that is characteristic of all these essential social services would be abolished.

The slums in our cities and the millions of sub-standard houses would be replaced, by a special crash programme, as quickly as possible. Housing would no longer be a source of profit to the landlords, speculators, big building firms and building materials monopolies. Housing would be regarded by the Socialist Government as a social service. State subsidies would be provided both to speed up the house building programme and to ensure that rents or house prices for individual purchasers are kept low.

Urban land—except for that of owner occupiers—would be nationalised and local authorities requiring land for building purposes would be provided with it free of charge. Private

rented property would be municipalised. The cost of new council housing would be borne by the State. Councils would be released from the burden of high interest on housing loans. Reduction of mortgage interest charges would also make things easier for owner-occupiers. All tenants would be guaranteed security of tenure.

Thus all the ills associated with the private landlord system under capitalism would be done away with, and so would the abuses of the private speculator and property company, as well as those of the jerry-builder.

With public owership of the construction industry, and with democratic control and supervision by the workers on the job, good, modern housing could go up quickly, using all the most up-to-date methods of industrialised building.

Where new communities are built, they would be provided not only with well-equipped and reasonably priced houses or flats, for rent or purchase, but also with all the essential amenities which so many of our new housing estates and new towns so obviously lack.

Health and Welfare

All health services would be free and available to everyone without any means test and without any deductions from wages. This would cover visits to doctors, nursing service at home if required, hospitalisation, operations, medicines and surgical aids, dental and optician services, convalescence, and any other specialist treatment required.

There would be no more private paying sector in our health services. All patients would receive equal treatment—and the needs of the patient would be paramount.

The big drug houses which batten off people's sickness would be nationalised. There would be no charge for prescriptions. No new drug or treatment would be allowed for public use until the most stringent tests had ensured that every possible precaution against danger had been taken. There would be no more private monopolies playing with people's health for the sake of profit.

While doing everything possible to enable people when sick to regain their health, a socialist medical service would put special emphasis on preventive medicine, and would co-operate with other Government departments to assist this.

An essential basis for good health requires good housing, sufficient pay, shorter hours and longer holidays, less strain at work whether physical or mental, security of employment, adequate safety provisions, a proper diet, the elimination of all forms of pollution and the elimination of industrial diseases.

Also necessary is enjoyment of one's job, a democratic atmosphere at one's place of work so that one does not feel isolated or under pressures from on top, and a democratically run society in which people no longer feel powerless or at the mercy of remote bureaucrats. The considerable increase in mental illness in capitalist Britain indicates the intense strain under which so many people live today, and the necessity therefore for a Socialist Britain to create a new atmosphere in which people work and live.

Other preventive steps would include periodic and systematic check-ups, so that illnesses such as cancer, high blood pressure, heart complaints and so on could be detected in good time.

Naturally enough there would be a vast expansion of all the health services—more hospitals, more beds, more equipment, more doctors and nurses, more research—in order to introduce these comprehensive changes.

In addition to an expansion and improvement of hospital facilities, there would be a big development of health centres and a vast increase in social and medical services in the community in order to minimise the need for hospitalisation. Equally important would be the introduction of a comprehensive national occupational health service, as well as a fully equipped accident and emergency service.

The health service as a whole would be administered democratically. The ex-army officers, industrialists, ladies bountiful and other inappropriate members of our present regional hospital boards and boards of governors of our teaching hospitals would be replaced by people sharing the common experience of using the National Health Service without privilege. The administration would be composed of those directly elected by local bodies, representatives of doctors and all other health workers, of local authorities, trade unions, and the various specialist associations of sick people.

Health centres would be controlled by the doctors and committees of their patients.

All health workers, together with representatives of the public, would be thus involved in planning and managing our health services.

Social security, under a Socialist Government, would be operated on the basis of the principle of narrowing the gap between normal earnings and social payments made to the old age pensioner, the sick and the disabled.

People would be allowed to retire on pension at an earlier age than at present. Special housing and free welfare services would be provided for retired people where necessary, including chiropody, nursing, home help services, transport, shopping deliveries, mobile libraries, meal delivery, laundry services, social and recreational facilities, and telephones where not already installed.

Retirement would not mean withdrawal from society. Those who retire after a lifetime's service to the community would be treated as honoured citizens, but would also be encouraged to continue playing an active role in society. With improved health services people are already living longer, and the proportion of old people in our population is rising.

Under capitalism many people feel lost when they retire. They no longer have their mates at work. Their limited education and cultural interests, their past non-involvement in political and social activity, and their meagre material resources all combine to leave them very much up in the air, with a feeling that they have nothing to do and that society no longer has any use for them.

This is a very real and growing problem which will require much attention by a Socialist Government, in consultation with retired people and their organisations.

Where possible, and without in any way blocking the opportunities for younger people to be promoted, people of retirement age could if they wished stay on at work, although preferably they should no longer hold executive, managerial or administrative posts. Some might choose to branch out into a somewhat different occupation altogether. They would not, in any case, lose their pension if they continued working.

The whole point is that society should still find a place for their accumulated experience and skill even after they

have given up positions involving important fields of decision making and responsibilities for personnel.

Similar considerations regarding the unique value and contribution which each individual can make to society would also govern the attitude of a Socialist Government to the sick, disabled, and handicapped. Recent experiences show that it is possible to encourage the capacities and talents of those who have previously been regarded as of little or no use to society. Under socialism everything possible will be done to enable people to live a life with purpose despite any disability they may suffer.

Education

Education is a third major field in which much will need to be changed. The mature development of a socialist society, especially in this age of rapid scientific and technological change, will require a vast expansion and improvement in our educational system.

The aim would be to provide a full and free education to everyone, from nursery school to completion of comprehensive secondary education, and with a constantly increased opportunity for students then to take up a course of higher education, in university, technical training or teachers' training college, polytechnic, 'open university', or by sandwich courses.

Adults, too, whose education may have stopped short under our present system, would be encouraged and given the opportunity to take up educational activity again in order to improve their qualifications and increase their all-round knowledge and their appreciation of culture.

There would be a single, uniform educational system in the sense that there would be an end to class differentiation in educational establishments, no 'public schools' or fee-paying private schools as at present, nor any question of one buying oneself a university education. In other words, educational opportunity would be equal for everyone. Those taking up full-time studies after secondary school would be provided with full maintenance.

The whole content and function of education would also undergo important changes. Our society will require men and women combining special qualifications with a comprehensive

general knowledge, creative imagination, ability to take responsibility and make decisions. This would require an end to the present narrow over-specialisation in schools and colleges, and the introduction of new courses which, while increasing skills, encourage discovery and invention and foster a critical and progressive outlook.

This will not mean a 'preparation for life' in the limited sense of being trained just for some narrow speciality, but a real preparation that will develop the all-round capacities of the individual and, at the same time, make him or her best fitted to make a valuable contribution to society. Educational content would also be improved in order to provide students with a fuller understanding of the nature of society.

Colleges and universities would be expanded to accommodate the increased number of students, and would be geared to meet the needs of a planned society.

Both in schools and in establishments of higher education it will be necessary to make changes in the methods of administration, so that staffs, students and other interested bodies can establish a democratic machinery for dealing with their common problems. Corporal punishment would be prohibited in all schools. The maintenance of discipline and order in colleges and universities would be worked out in conjunction with the National Union of Students, and would be no different in principle from what normally pertains in other institutions and places of work.

Apart from the education provided through schools and colleges, and which would be a major priority for a Socialist Government, the educational and cultural development of individuals would also be assisted by the Government and local authorities through the use of radio, television, cinema, books, publishing, concerts, theatre, opera, ballet, libraries, museums and art galleries.

There would be an end to the inflated charges which, at present, make it difficult for many people to go to our theatres, opera houses and ballet companies. Admission fees would be within the range of the average worker, and museums, art galleries and libraries would be free of charge.

Popular education would also be developed by public discussions, debates, lectures, and scientific demonstrations.

Financial help and encouragement would be provided for

popular organisations which work to promote drama, music, literature, the visual arts, industrial and historical archeology, and the study and practice of other fields of activity.

Sports activities of all kinds would receive the same assistance from the Government. While there would be ample and expanded opportunities for people to become spectators, or audiences at professional cultural and sporting events, new emphasis would be placed on the encouragement of more people to actually participate in different pursuits, so that the all-round intellectual and physical capacities of men and women could be developed.

Environment

Town planning would no longer be the prey of speculating "developers". In a Socialist Britain the machinery of Government and of economic and social planning would be greatly decentralised, democratically administered and controlled, and made more responsive to the local and regional needs and demands of the people.

The nationalisation of land, freed from the burden of compensation, together with the nationalisation of building and construction and of the building materials industry, would greatly ease the task of town planning.

Those areas and regions which have been allowed under capitalism to run down and deteriorate would be helped to start renewal.

Two major problems of our time, pollution and transport, would be tackled jointly by central and local government. At present our transport system is chaotic. The deliberate running down of our waterways, railways and other forms of public transport in the interests of private business, especially the car and oil lobbies, the big road constructing firms and the heavy goods traffic interests, has greatly accelerated private car and lorry saturation on our roads and in our cities. An integrated transport system would enable us to make the maximum and most efficient use of each form of transport.

Steps would be taken to concentrate as much internal freight as possible on to the railways and, where possible, by waterways and by coastal shipping. This, together with the necessary planning, would make it possible to cut down heavily on the large container lorries and other supersize

vehicles which have become such a menace in our towns and on our roads. Container lorries and other large conveyors would be restricted to certain routes and would be obliged to end their journey at major terminals, where their cargoes could be transferred to rail or broken down and carried by smaller lorries to their actual final destination. The laying of pipe-lines, where feasible, will help in cutting down the number of petrol tankers on our roads.

The growth of the private car has created new problems. Steps would have to be taken, as they have in some other countries, to regulate the use of private cars in cities.

Public transport would be extended, and assisted with Government subsidies both to expand and to develop more efficient and speedy forms of transport. There would be an early introduction of free public transport. The main aim of these measures would be to reduce the heavy volume of private car commuters especially during peak periods. More research on electric cars would also be undertaken to cut pollution.

To improve our environment and combat pollution, green belts adjacent to towns would be extended, parks within city boundaries created where necessary and measures adopted to protect the countryside, preserve wild life and safeguard areas of natural beauty.

Apart from providing people with more facilities for their leisure and recreation, this would also improve the atmosphere and provide cleaner air. The air would also be improved by a further extension of smokeless zones, the compulsory fitting of all vehicles with equipment to limit the pollution of air by poisonous fumes from exhausts, and stringent controls over air pollution by industrial processes.

There would be a strict ban on the disposal of untreated sewage into rivers and seas. It would also be essential to prevent the poisoning of our soil and our rivers through industrial waste and discharge. There would also be a careful vetting of all chemicals used in agriculture.

The prevention of pollution in our seas would command special attention; and fishing would be controlled so that fish-stocks are maintained.

The Socialist Government, by virtue of the public ownership of the major sectors of the economy which would enable

it to conduct overall planning, would be in a position to utilise the normal cycle of ecological processes to the advantage of this and future generations and to make the best and most effective use of our natural resources to enhance people's lives in every way.

Where will the money come from?

People will naturally ask: where will the money come from to pay for all these things?

The budget of a Socialist Government would be quite different from those of capitalist Governments, both as to its sources of revenue and as to its expenditure.

The budget of a capitalist Government is worked out on the basis of a society in which the main wealth and capital resources of the country are in the hands of a rich minority. Such a Government, therefore, has to rely heavily on various forms of taxation, customs and duties to obtain the revenue it requires for its expenditures.

Under socialism, with all the main industries, land, resources and financial houses publicly owned, it is from these sources that the main forms of revenue will be derived.

Personal taxation will be simple and not too arduous for the majority of people. Indirect taxation would be kept to a minimum. The present rating system would go. Local authorities would rely on other steps to raise local revenue.

Cancellation of the national debt would provide large funds for the central government which could be used, after compensating small investors, for productive use. Further funds would come from drastic cuts on armaments and by ending overseas military bases; a cut of fifty per cent in arms expenditure would provide over £1,000 million at today's prices.

As production expanded—and an annual growth rate of 8 per cent should be possible—so would more funds be available to the Government, which would be able to use these constantly growing resources to finance all the social changes envisaged above, as well as providing sufficient funds for building new plant, supplying new up-to-date equipment, financing research and so on.

Not all the changes could be introduced by a Socialist Government straight away. Priorities would have to be

worked out. Immediate attention would have to be given to those in the worst conditions. Despite all the fashionable talk about our "affluent society", there are millions without a decent home, with insufficient wages or pensions, without a job, with an acute shortage of essential material goods. Substantial areas of dereliction, neglect and backwardness would need speedy elimination.

There is such a huge programme ahead of us that our factories could be kept fully occupied, work could be found for all, and a better life achieved for everyone.

We could make a valuable contribution, too, to overcoming the poverty and misery that exists throughout the third world. The concept that we live in a "consumer society", that we already produce more than enough, that mankind is being satiated with too many goods ignores the fact that there are millions in the world without a home, without a job, who watch their children starve to death, and who live a life utterly without hope or future.

The world needs a vast expansion of production, not less. But an expansion, of course, that requires planning, that would end the production of senseless luxuries and useless gadgets, take into account the availability of natural resources, cut out waste, eliminate built-in defects, make greater use of once-used materials, and search for new forms of energy and ways to fabricate new materials.

As mankind gains greater control over his environment so he will be able to introduce elements of planning into population growth, too.

Above all, we need an integrated and rational industrial and agricultural system. This is impossible except under Socialism.

A Socialist Britain, as its production advanced, would be able to introduce certain free or partly free services apart for such things as education, health, libraries, museums. Some forms of transport, domestic heating and lighting, water, telephone, radio and television licences—all these could be considered as fields within which charges would be gradually eliminated. Other services could also be considered for similar treatment.

Britain and the world

A Socialist Britain would have no interest in holding on to other territories, in exploiting other peoples or their resources. There would be no British monopolies left to invest overseas in cheap labour in pursuit of super-profits.

Our armed forces would be strictly for the defence of our socialist system and we would maintain no military bases on other people's territories; nor would we require other powers to maintain bases in Britain.

This would in no sense mean that we would pursue a policy of isolation from the rest of the world. On the contrary, both because of our economic capacity and because we would, as a socialist country, be able to follow a policy of genuine peace, we would be able to make an important contribution to maintaining world peace and to assisting all peoples to achieve their full self-determination.

A Socialist Government would end the neo-colonialist structure and practices which continue the exploitation of the former colonies and which place them under political and military pressure. We would hand over to the liberated peoples any imperialist properties and assets which they themselves had not yet acquired.

We would seek the closest friendly relations with them and, with their co-operation, provide large-scale genuine aid, without strings, so that they could build up their industries, diversify their economy, train their technicians, acquire new technology and extend their trade on the basis of stable prices. All countries still under colonial status would be granted their immediate independence, and assisted in similar fashion.

Our troops would be withdrawn from all overseas territories, and we would end our commitment to Nato and similar military alliances. A Socialist Government would renounce nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. It would work for general and complete disarmament, covering both nuclear and conventional weapons, and would support any partial agreements to that end. It would also seek to obtain the universal and complete banning of all forms of chemical and biological warfare.

A Socialist Britain would co-operate with all peace-loving states to prevent any imperialist aggression, assist all peoples

fighting against such aggression, and promote peace and national independence throughout the world.

It would oppose racialism and militarism and stand in firm opposition to all fascist and other reactionary dictatorships.

A Socialist Britain would naturally co-operate closely with other socialist countries to our mutual benefit, both in helping to maintain world peace and in promoting our economic, cultural and social ties to our mutual benefit.

We would expand trade and economic relations with all countries irrespective of their social system, and would not participate in any restrictive economic groupings.

A Socialist Britain would be completely independent, neither oppressed nor oppressor, yet fully conscious that we all belong to one world and that in a world living in peace, with all countries fully independent, with no more tyranny and exploitation, there lies the best chance for the British people, too, to prosper.

The creators of history

The British people have frequently been promised the moon by different political parties which, as soon as they have become the Government, find a hundred and one excuses why they cannot fulfil their election pledges. It is not surprising, therefore, that so many people are inclined to be sceptical about such promises.

The Communist Party, however, is not making any empty boasts about what we will do or not do. What we are setting out here is what the British working people will be able to achieve themselves once they have taken political power into their hands and shattered the economic power of big business.

In contrast to other parties which promise what they will do *for* the people, Communists explain what we will help the people to do for themselves. It is the people's own action and the exercise of their own political strength and power that will determine the kind of future they obtain.

We see our task, therefore, not as a Party which takes decisions on behalf of the people; nor as a Party which carries on its work on its own, while the people remain passive and simply cast their votes every few years. What we strive to bring to society is political understanding and

a rational method of thought which will enable the people, in conjunction with us, to work out correct policies, reach realistic decisions and act to put them into practice.

We seek no monopoly of political power, nor any exclusive right to evolve policies and take decisions. What we seek above all is to kindle the flame of creation and action that lies within all of us. To make people aware that it is they who have created all the material goods and cultural values in the world. To make them conscious that it is they who are the real creators of history.

If the British people are to have a better and different future, that future must be conquered now—and only the people themselves can conquer it.

We cannot leap into socialism at one go, even though all the material prerequisites for it already exist in Britain.

To the degree that the working class and their allies engage in active struggle *now*—to defeat Tory policies in every field, to drive the Tories from office, and ensure the return of a new Labour Government committed by mass pressure to carry out basic changes that challenge the ruling class and begin to take away its power—to that degree the future will be brought nearer.

Britain will be what we, the people, make it. If we allow it to remain capitalist, it will continue to be a sorry tale of burdens and increasing conflicts.

But the people have no need to cling to the past. By taking the high road to socialism, and pursuing this new course with determination and intelligence, we can begin a new, happier, more fruitful life for everyone.

CHAPTER III

HOW TO CHANGE COURSE

The Bases of Ruling Class Power—Why a Change of Power is Needed—A Strategy for Socialist Revolution—Transform Parliament—New Forms of Struggle—Kill the Industrial Relations Act—The Lessons of the Pentonville Five—The Nature of the Political Crisis—The Next Round of Battle—The Tories Must Go—The Right-Wing Must Be Defeated—Labour's New Programme, No Challenge to Capitalism—An Alternative Programme—The Labour Party—The Communist Party—Left Unity—End Bans and Proscriptions—A Democratic Alliance.

The bases of ruling class power

To turn Britain off its capitalist course and on to the high road to socialism requires a social revolution. It means no less than the removal of the existing ruling class from their positions of economic and political power.

Who in reality rules Britain today? A relative handful of people. Governments come and Governments go, but the big bankers, landlords and industrialists continue to exploit our land, our resources and our people.

They control our jobs. They control our income. They control our law. They control our ideas.

But just consider. There are 25 million wage and salary workers in Britain. Together with their families and the eight million pensioners they comprise the overwhelming majority of the people. Why is it that this immense force cannot vanquish the few thousand who own the banks, the big companies and the land?

It would be incorrect to think that the monopolies continue to hold decisive power in Britain solely by holding the people down.

The capitalists, of course, can rely on the State machine—its legal apparatus, police, army, prisons and the various Government departments and upper echelons of the permanent Civil Service—as well as their influence over the Government

itself, which is also part of the machinery of political power. The capitalists are able to utilise this whole array of power and force because these institutions are designed to serve their interests and are headed mainly by representatives of their class.

Yet, although this machinery of control and repression is always available to it, the British ruling class does not rule solely or even mainly by the direct use of this apparatus. It also rules by the force of its ideas. By their control over the mass media, education and all other means of influencing people's opinions, by virtue of the force of ideas instilled into people's minds over decades, the capitalists have been able to persuade the majority of working people that the present rulers should be left in charge because "they know more about such things than we do."

In short, they have been able to prevent the majority of working people concluding that they and their allies *ought to take over the running of the country*, that they are *capable of taking it over*, and that they would be *perfectly competent to make a success of it* once they had taken over.

The majority of people still accept the existing system in Britain because they believe that life can go on like this indefinitely and that they can continue to improve their conditions within the existing system.

The monopolies are able, furthermore, to persuade a wide section of people—intellectual and technical personnel employed by the big companies and by the State, professional people, small shopkeepers, small businessmen, small farmers, —that their interests are tied up with the *status quo*, and even with voting Tory. Some sections of workers, too, are influenced in the same way.

In reality, the interests of these strata are not served by the Tories and by big business. Many of them can be won therefore to the side of the working class, and so help cement a broad alliance of anti-monopoly forces which is essential to defeat the ruling class. The experience of 1945, when considerable numbers from these strata were won over to an anti-Tory position, shows, in a limited way, the potential scope and strength of such an alliance.

There is a further basis of capitalist power in Britain. The monopolies continue to rule because for years the right-wing

Labour leaders have performed an invaluable service for them. Like the Tories they have over the years striven to damp down the people's own struggle and weaken their resolve. They have tried to sap the workers' confidence and limit their activities to casting their votes for Labour Party candidates in elections.

Today, the right-wing leaders, no less than the Tories, are against the working class taking massive industrial action, whether it be for wage increases, for the right to work, for higher pensions, against the Housing Finance Act, against the Industrial Relations Act, or to compel the resignation of the Tory Government.

When the capitalists, after the 1926 General Strike, proclaimed "never again", the right-wing Labour leaders, with relief, echoed and encouraged the same slogan.

The right-wing leaders have helped the rulers to persuade the majority of working people that the way to a better life is by winning improvements within the existing system. Yet what is really needed is an understanding that it is the system itself that is wrong, and needs to be changed.

The British ruling class is never tired of prating about democracy. But the very word means "government by the people", or, in modern terminology, "people's power". Our present system in Britain is not "government by the people" —but by a small rich handful of the people. They rule not for the vast majority, but to protect their minority interests.

For the working people to take over political power in Britain would be a major act of democracy, an assertion by the people of their right to decide their own destiny.

Engels once said of the British working class that if it were determined and organised as a class, then no force could resist it for a single day. Since that time the dominance of the ruling class has grown. But the working class has grown, too, and now constitutes an overwhelmingly decisive weight in our society.

It is an immense force. Over ten million are organised in trade unions. The great majority belong to a single united centre, the British Trades Union Congress. Nearly a quarter of a million are elected shop stewards. The Labour Party has 750,000 individual members, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ million affiliated from the trade unions. Millions are members of co-operative

societies. The working class has also created a Communist Party based on scientific socialist theory and practice. In addition many people belong to other democratic organisations, including pensioners and tenants' associations.

If this great force were really conscious of its strength and began to use it, unitedly and for clear political aims, it would enjoy the support it is already gaining from other strata and organisations, from the 600,000 students and their unions, the awakened women struggling for liberation, the immigrant organisations, intellectuals and technicians.

Small businessmen, farmers and shopkeepers, too, could be attracted to the side of this great power and won away from their traditional allegiance to the Tory Party.

Such a change, however, will never take place spontaneously. The giant force of the British working class will only be able to fulfil its historic role of leading all anti-monopolist sections against the ruling class and for socialist change if it is imbued with a scientific understanding of society, with a clear Marxist vision.

The organised force which can bring this understanding to the movement is the Communist Party, a Party based on Marxism and with a strategy for revolution in Britain based on the realities of British society and its institutions.

Why a change of power is needed

To carry through such a revolution it is important to be clear as to what is involved. What is political power? What is economic power? What is it that the ruling class possesses which must be taken away from it?

Political and economic power means having control of the decisive levers of decision-making and the decisive economic sanctions and State powers to implement decisions once they are taken.

In Britain today these powers of decision and the means of their enforcement rest in the hands of the big bankers, landlords and industrialists.

In their conflict with the workers, the employers, in a purely economic sense, have the positions of advantage. They can push up prices. They can decide to close a factory or declare workers redundant. They can decide the wage structure and wage levels.

To challenge the employers on any of these points, the workers have to organise and use their industrial strength, knowing nevertheless that the economic levers remain in the hands of the employer, no matter how successful any particular wage struggle may be or how great the workers' resistance to redundancies or closures.

If one takes the mass media, which in capitalist Britain are overwhelmingly under the control of the monopolies, here again the workers face a disadvantage. Through their economic power the monopolies are able to set up huge printing establishments and produce newspapers with millions of readers and with additional revenue derived from the advertisements of other monopolists or from the Government which they control.

Under the present system, the workers' only effective reply is to strive, with all the obvious difficulties to build up their own newspapers and journals, as they have for example with the *Morning Star* and *Tribune*.

If there is to be any fundamental change in Britain, the effective political power must be taken into the people's hands and used for their interests, not to advance those of the capitalists. Such a transfer of power would not only take away from the capitalist class the instruments of political power. It would also enable the people to deal effectively with the other basic sources of ruling class domination, namely its economic power and its control over the mass media and other forms of ideological influence.

While a few rich people retain possession of the main sectors of the country's economy, they have a whiplash over the working people. Moreover, they can dictate to the Government, which after all is their representative, what laws and regulations it should make in the interests of their profiteering.

That is why old age pensioners go short of food and shiver in winter, while the rich are given the benefit of handsome tax reliefs. That is why millions live in poverty, while the Government hands over the rich North Sea oil fields to the big petroleum companies.

With full political power in its hands, the people could dispossess the capitalists of their ownership of the means of production—the factories, land and banks—and pass laws

and introduce regulations that favoured the people, not the rich.

The economy could then be run to meet the needs of the people, not to pile up profits for the millionaires. Production and services, and the allocation of resources, could all be organised in a planned way to produce the goods and facilities that the people require, and not left to the hazards and chaos of private enterprise.

As we have said, political power in the hands of the people would enable them to shatter the monopoly which the rulers have over the mass media. As a result the rich would no longer be able to use radio and television as their private instruments to dominate people's minds, to boost in a hundred and one ways, direct and indirect, blatant and devious, the *status quo* and its attendant conservative views. The press lords and the radio and TV establishment would no longer enjoy their powerful press and broadcasting monopoly to slander shop stewards, militant workers, and students, and to distort reality and spread confusion and reaction.

To take away the political power from the capitalists, to end their economic power and their monopoly over the mass media represents a formidable challenge to the people.

Obviously such a decisive change demands the united efforts of millions of men and women, inspired by an understanding that what they are after is not a patching up of the system but its replacement by something entirely new, by socialism.

A strategy for socialist revolution

A unique contribution made by the Communist Party has been its strategy for a revolution in Britain, outlined in its programme, *The British Road to Socialism*.

Each country will carry out the socialist revolution in its own way, according to its history, class structure, the nature of its institutions and traditions, the character of its State, the strength and disposition of the forces for socialism within the given country, and the situation in the world in general.

In Russia it was necessary to achieve this by means of an armed uprising in the key cities led by the Communist Party. In China, where the revolutionary movement led by the Communists was defeated in the towns, it was necessary to retreat to the countryside and conduct a long and bitter

armed struggle for more than twenty years until power was eventually won.

In Eastern Europe socialism was achieved as a result of the defeat of fascism. In Vietnam and Korea it was linked to the fight for national liberation, first against Japanese fascism and later against Western imperialist powers. In Cuba, it took over two years of armed struggle in the mountains, culminating in insurrection and other actions in the towns including a general strike in the capital.

In Chile, the attempt is being made, in very difficult and complex conditions, to make big strides towards socialism on the basis of the Popular Unity victory in the Presidential elections of 1970 and through using the existing Constitution backed up by the extra-Parliamentary actions of the people.

In most developed capitalist countries the possibility has arisen of building a wide alliance of all forces exploited and oppressed by the monopolies, an alliance which can become so powerful that it can break the power of the ruling class without recourse to armed insurrection. Under these conditions it will be possible to carry through the socialist revolution by democratic means, without civil war, though not without struggle involving millions of people.

This new path to revolution has been adopted by a number of Communist Parties including such powerful and important Parties as those of Italy, France and Japan. In all these three countries, where Communist votes in general elections run into millions, where Communist councillors can be numbered in thousands, and where major towns and regions are administered by elected Communist majorities or by alliances in which the Communist Party plays a key role, progress towards this new road to revolution has already been made.

Of special significance in this respect is the position in France where the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the Left Radicals have reached agreement on a Common Governmental Programme, which would be the basis of the policy pursued by a Government of Popular Union.

The Programme is not yet one for complete socialism but rather a programme for an advanced form of democracy which will begin to break the economic stranglehold of the monopolies in France and enhance the democratic power of the people. The nationalisation measures envisaged, when

carried through, will mean that sixty per cent of total industrial production in France will be in public hands. The democratic proposals will greatly increase the power of the working people, both at their place of work and in society as a whole.

The adoption of this joint programme would not have been possible without the unity of the Communists and the Socialists; and such unity would never have been achieved without the years of unremitting work by the Communist Party.

For decades it has fought for the principle of working class and popular unity—throughout the thirties in the fight against fascism, during the period of the war-time Resistance, in the immediate post-war years when, for a short-time, it held posts in a Coalition Government, in the fight against the Cold War, in opposition to the personal power of De Gaulle, and in its more recent activity to create a Popular Union.

This latter significant achievement of the French Communist Party, an achievement which is in the interests of the majority of French people, has become possible only because hundreds of thousands of French men and women have joined the Communist Party and millions have voted for it. It is the strength of the French Communist Party, as well as its policy, which has resulted in unity with the Socialist Party and other radical forces and so given a new perspective of democratic advance to the French people.

In each country which has already ended the power of the capitalist class, as well as in those which have yet to reach that stage, the route to revolution is different because the conditions in each case are different, and the transition takes place in a different world setting.

In Britain, the road to socialism must be based on the particular conditions, traditions and institutions that we have. It must take account of the class structure of our country and the relations of strength between the different classes. It must be based on the deep democratic traditions of our people, and take account of the nature of our political system.

Methods found essential or appropriate in other countries may have little or no relevance at all in Britain.

What is common to all socialist revolutions is firstly, that

they involve a decisive transfer of political power into the hands of the working class and its allies; secondly, that they are the product of the democratic activity of the people and result in a great extension of democratic liberties and in the democratic participation of millions in managing the affairs of the State and the economy; and thirdly, that as a consequence of the changeover of political power the means of production, distribution and exchange are taken out of private hands and become public property.

Everything else—the kind of State and institutions, the forms of government and Parliament, the methods of economic planning, social changes, character of the democratic instruments—flows from these three essential changes.

Just as there is no single road to socialism, so there is no single model of socialist society, as Lenin often pointed out. Each socialist revolution is an act in itself, taking place in a particular country, in a specific set of circumstances, conditioned by that country's history and class relation of forces, and occurring at a particular moment of world development which cannot but also stamp its imprint on the route taken by the revolution and on the new society which emerges.

How will the revolution be achieved in Britain—by armed uprising or by different forms of struggle?

Communists have always been in favour of the working people achieving revolutionary change in the most peaceful and painless way. Even in Russia, which was the scene of a classic insurrection, Lenin sought throughout the stormy year of 1917 to make use of whatever peaceful possibility might have existed to bring about a peaceful transition to socialism. The circumstances at that time, however, prevented the taking of such a path and the armed uprising became essential.

In British conditions we believe that it is possible—and in fact the only realistic strategy—to strive to carry through socialist change other than by means of an armed insurrection.

Our belief is based on the changed conditions in the world and on the possibilities of assembling the overwhelming power of the people in Britain for socialist change. The existence of socialism in fourteen countries, inhabited by a third of mankind, the historic advances of the national liberation movements, and the progress being recorded by the

working class and progressive movements in a number of the most developed capitalist countries, has brought about a new relation of forces on a world scale.

As a result there now exists the possibility in a number of countries to end the political power of the capitalist class without armed struggle.

Such an advance can in our view be achieved in Britain provided that the overwhelming majority of our people desire it and are prepared to act in order to attain this objective.

This aim of winning the majority is a fundamental principle for Communists who, contrary to the misguided beliefs of some people, are utterly opposed to conceptions of revolutions being carried through by a dedicated minority. Lenin advised Communists that their tactics "should be based on a steady and systematic drive to win the *majority of the working class*", especially in the trade unions. "Then we shall win for certain, whatever the course of events."

The struggle to carry through socialist change in Britain will be intense. The British capitalist class is one of the most powerful, cunning and experienced in the world. To defeat it will require skill, determination and an ability to utilise a variety of forms of struggle.

The advance to political power will go through many phases and will be accompanied by setbacks as well as periods of advance. But an understanding that political power is the goal, and confidence that it can be achieved are essential.

The decisive fields of struggle will be those undertaken by millions of working people. All experience shows that basic changes in society are not possible without large-scale actions by the people themselves.

In Britain this will involve many forms of extra-Parliamentary action—powerful demonstrations, strikes, occupations of factories and other institutions. Every form of direct action, in fact, which can bring into full play the formidable and organised strength of the working class, and which can compel deep-going changes that weaken the grip of the ruling class and eventually break it altogether.

In the course of such a struggle the working people themselves will evolve further forms of action and new methods of organisation enabling them to participate more massively

and more effectively in bringing about the necessary change of political power.

Transform Parliament

One of the citadels of power is Parliament. Our present Parliament is dominated by men and women determined to uphold the capitalist system. To think of a change of power without ending ruling class control of this seat of authority and decision is totally unrealistic.

Just as it is vital to end the domination of the State apparatus by supporters of capitalism and transform the structure of this State so that it is made to function in the interests of the working people, so must there be a sweeping change in the personnel in Parliament and a radical overhaul of Parliamentary methods, procedures and functions, so that it is transformed into an institution expressing the interests of the working people.

The power of the monopolies must be ended in Parliament as over all aspects of the State, the economy, and the mass media.

This involves winning a Parliamentary majority of Labour and Communist MPs, pledged to socialist change and actively supported by the overwhelming majority of the working people.

If the people are to win the struggle for power, then they must use their votes as part of that struggle. But to think that winning votes in Parliamentary elections will be enough is to delude ourselves. It is an equal delusion to think that the present Parliament, with all its bureaucratic procedures, its powers fashioned to serve capitalist interests and harnessed to a State apparatus designed for their purposes, will be appropriate for helping to make fundamental changes in Britain.

It is because of such delusions that millions who voted for the Macdonalds, Attlees and Wilsons have seen their hopes dashed again and again.

We Communists stand for a Parliament transformed from being a servant of the monopolies into an effective instrument of the ordinary people, responsive to their demands and composed mainly of their representatives.

Under the right-wing Labour leaders the Parliamentary

opposition, despite the stand of a number of left-wing MPs, becomes part of the deception practised by the ruling class.

In these conditions Parliament is unable to function on behalf of the people. The tacit agreement between the Tories and the right-wing Labour leaders that the capitalist system must be maintained results in Parliament remaining a legislative machine for pushing through decisions taken by big business.

Parliament is in no sense powerless. Its function under capitalism is to give legal sanction to the acts and decisions of the monopolies, and thus to provide them with legal cover for their coercion and exploitation of the people.

Parliament, it should be recalled, attacked the trade unions by enacting the Industrial Relations Act. It carried out a divisive manoeuvre against the working class by passing the racialist Immigration Act. It lowered the living standards of the working people by its Housing Finance Act. It legislated Britain's entry into the European Common Market.

Understandably many workers, especially young people, distrust Parliament and doubt whether much good can come from it. Such opinions are natural, especially while Labour's Parliamentary ranks are filled with a succession of such opportunists and career politicians as George Brown, Ray Gunter, and Roy Jenkins, not to mention Harold Wilson and his other right-wing colleagues.

But if Parliament were filled with a majority of working class representatives, sent there by a powerful united movement of Communist and Labour men and women, based on the organisation and power of the working class such as we saw displayed by the miners during their strike, the building workers' action committees, the UCS Co-ordinating Committee, the movement of solidarity with the Pentonville Five, the forces expressed in the mass lobby in support of the pensioners, the thousands of tenants refusing to pay increased rents—then surely we would have a very different Parliament, one that could begin to effect drastic changes.

Parliament, under these conditions, would be able to act as the supreme organ of representative power—and the power on whose behalf it would act would be that of the working people.

For such a change to take place, Parliament itself will need

a body of Communist MPs alongside representatives of the Labour Party. But it will need to be a Labour Party in which the right-wing has been defeated in which the dominant influence is firmly rooted in the demands of the organised workers and based on a conscious aim of ending the political power of the capitalists.

The presence of Communist MPs will be absolutely essential. Without the Communist Party the leftward changes in the trade unions would not have taken place. Without the Communist Party progressive victories in several Co-operative Societies would not have been won. Without the Communist Party the National Union of Students would not have been able to overcome both the right-wing and ultra-left and create an effective organisation defending the students interests.

In the same way, without the Communist Party and without Communist MPs there can be no possibility of transforming Parliament into an effective instrument of the people's will for socialist change.

With a changed composition at Westminster, and using their democratic rights to change existing institutions, the working people would be able to ensure that Parliament carried through major legislation to challenge capitalist power, and replace capitalism by socialism.

A socialist majority in Parliament will require the active support of the mass movement outside Parliament in order to press home the decisions taken in Parliament, and help overcome any resistance to such measures offered by the capitalists. Conversely, Parliamentary decisions will be based on the aims and struggles of the people and will give legal endorsement to their actions and demands.

Such action by millions of working people will be essential, for the powerful group of hard-headed, hard-hearted businessmen who rule Britain are not going to give up their power, their profits and their privileged way of life without the most desperate struggle.

On the contrary, they will do everything they can to frustrate the people's will and even be prepared, if they can, to use violence.

To prevent or defeat such an attempt the working class and popular movement would have to make it absolutely

clear that it will not tolerate such an illegal defiance of the people's democratic verdict. It would have to be prepared to counter every move made by the capitalists, and to use the full array of force at its disposal in order to end their resistance.

The degree to which the popular movement, and especially its main force, the organised working class, is vigilant, politically alert and acting all the time to bring its formidable strength into play in support of socialist measures, will be the decisive factor. This strength will determine how capitalist resistance is overcome.

Extra-Parliamentary action is therefore a vital part of our strategy. In no sense do we see Parliament as the sole arena for settling the issue. On the contrary, in the last resort, at every vital stage, it will be the mass action of millions of working people that will be decisive.

New forms of struggle

How effective such actions can be we have seen from the events of the past year or two. Yet these have been only a beginning, a mere harbinger of what will be needed and what will undoubtedly develop.

A national strike, for example, in British conditions today, and accompanied by factory occupations, mass demonstrations, and other actions by the working class, could have a most powerful effect.

In a highly developed capitalist country like Britain, based on a complex interplay of industry and technique, everything —industrial production, sources of fuel and energy, communications, transport, public services, press, radio and television, as well as Government administration—is increasingly dependent on the operations of large armies of workers, including scientific and technical personnel. These latter are becoming organised and integrated with the whole working class movement.

The full, determined and united action by all these sections of the working people could deliver a hammer blow to the ruling class, helping to restrict and paralyse some of its powers.

Deprived of the press, radio and TV, unable to use the telephone, without heating, lighting or any sources of energy

or transport, the ruling class would face unprecedented difficulties.

Even the loss of their newspapers for a few days during the fight around the Pentonville Five was sufficient to throw the monopolies into a frenzy. Their national papers were goaded by this temporary deprivation into writing angry editorials lamenting the alleged threat to our democracy resulting from the people being left for a few days without the tedious distortion and misrepresentation that covers the pages of the capitalist press.

During the nine days of the 1926 General Strike many towns were virtually in the hands of the workers, and it was they who decided what material, if any, would be moved in or out of the town.

We have come a long way since then. The working class is much more highly organised; the left is stronger; the Communist Party larger, and more organised. In these respects the working people are today much better equipped to face up to the capitalist class.

Some people, however, doubt the ability of the British working class to lead the people into changing the system. They argue that the workers are too docile. That the rulers are too strong. Or they think that the Labour Party, and the millions who vote for it, will always be dominated by the right-wing leaders, that the left will always be contained and can never win a majority, and that the Communist Party cannot grow sufficiently large.

Such views are quite understandable. After all, although the British working class is the oldest in the world, the most highly organised of all capitalist countries, and, in proportion to population, numerically the most decisive of any country in the world, *yet it has never moved as a class to end the rule of the capitalists.*

As for changes in the Labour Party, it is now seventy years old, yet it has always been dominated by right-wing leaders. Its members have been repeatedly betrayed by men like Macdonald, Snowden, J. H. Thomas, Morrison, Bevin, Attlee Gaitskell, Wilson, Jenkins, Gunter, George Brown. And there is always the knowledge that another such right-wing leader is waiting in the wings to take over.

But to see only the setbacks and the difficulties and not

to see what has been happening in the past few years in Britain is really to fail to see the wood for the trees.

Take first of all the strike situation. 1971 saw 13½ million work days lost in strikes, the highest since the 1926 General Strike. In 1972, it was just under 24 million. In comparison with 1926—162 million—this seems small. It is considerably less even than the 40 million a year which was the average from 1919 to 1926, excluding the General Strike.

But figures themselves do not tell the whole story. The post-1918 strikes were long, drawn-out, bitter, and often defensive battles, many of which were lost. The General Strike itself was a defensive battle—against direct wage cuts. A large proportion of the strike days lost in 1926 were accounted for by the grim battle put up by the miners for seven months after the betrayal and collapse of the General Strike.

What a contrast with the recent miners' strike! This time it was an offensive action—in its purpose and in its character. The demands were for a substantial increase in pay and for better conditions.

The conduct of the strike included mass picketing by the miners, not so much of coal pits but of power stations throughout the country. Thousands of miners were despatched by their union to all the main towns to organise mass picketing and prevent the movement of every sack of "black" coal.

The militancy of the miners, the scale of their action, the active support of their wives, the wide public sympathy they enjoyed, and the considerable scope of the material help and solidarity they received from other sections of the working class injected a new element into the struggle.

This was expressed above all by the Birmingham engineering workers, ten thousand of whom stopped work and marched to join the miners' pickets outside the Saltley coke depot, the largest in the country and the key one remaining open at that decisive stage of the strike. The action of the Birmingham engineers ensured the closing of that depot despite the presence of 800 police. The same night the Government began its capitulation to the miners' demands.

1926 ended in the miner's defeat. 1972 was a historic victory. This is a sign of the change.

Similarly, the action of the shipbuilding workers at UCS

introduced something new in working class struggle in Britain, the "work in". For several years workers had been experiencing shutdowns and mass dismissals. Closures in the coal mines had taken place despite the miners' opposition. Great engineering plants like AEI in Woolwich had been unceremoniously closed by the decision of its boss, and though thousands of working people in the area had marched and demonstrated in protest, they had been unable to stop the shutdown.

The Clyde shipbuilding workers, however, decided that they were not going to leave matters any longer in the hands of the owners. Insisting on "the right to work", they took their own direct action to ensure this, taking over control of the yard gates, continuing the work, and maintaining the workers whom the Government liquidator declared as dismissed.

This action inspired workers throughout Britain. It showed that the bosses could be defied. It revealed the great capacity of the workers to organise, to practice operative democracy, with themselves taking the major decisions in consultation with their elected shop stewards.

As later in the case of the miners it received immense public support and solidarity. Funds flowed in from all over the country, from factory collections, from unions, from old age pensioners, from churches, from schoolboys, from actors. Solidarity came from overseas, too, including funds collected by Soviet workers.

The historic UCS work-in, which eventually compelled the Government to retreat and which safeguarded the jobs of the men, inspired workers at some 50 other factories threatened in the same way to organise similar action. So work-ins and take-overs took place at Plesseys (Alexandria), River Don Steelworks, Fisher-Bendix, the Briant print works in London and elsewhere.

All these actions in defence of jobs have had a high measure of success. Their significance, however, is not limited to the results achieved in the struggle to prevent sackings. Important political lessons have been learnt, too.

The work-ins have demonstrated in a dramatic form the power of the workers. They have revealed the latent talent and capacity of the working class to manage industry.

At UCS, for example, over the entire period of months of struggle, work proceeded in an atmosphere of responsibility. The machinery was maintained in perfect order. There was an excellent record of time-keeping and production had never been more efficient.

This experience, and that in other factories where work-ins and sit-ins have taken place, has increased the morale and confidence of the workers in themselves. Many of them have begun in a small way to see in practice that socialism, a society run by the workers themselves, is possible.

These actions have also inspired other sections of workers to introduce more militant and direct forms of action. In Manchester, for example, thousands of engineering workers during the first part of 1972 organised factory occupations to back up their struggle for a new wage deal, shorter hours and longer holidays.

The miners' strike, with the mass participation of the miners, was followed by the great strike of the building workers. At its peak 300,000 were out on major sites throughout the land.

This was no ordinary strike. It was conducted in a remarkably militant spirit, accompanied by mass demonstrations and marches. Those on strike marched *en masse* to other sites to urge other building workers to join. During the 12-week action, hundreds became trade union members.

Kill the Industrial Relations Act

The biggest and most significant action of all was the struggle to secure the release of the Pentonville Five. There is little doubt that the previous struggles of miners, railwaymen, shipyard workers, engineers and builders had all contributed to the mounting feeling of indignation, militancy, determination and solidarity which erupted into a mighty flow of anger and fight when the five dockers were jailed in Pentonville.

The Tories' anti-trade union legislation, the Industrial Relations Act, had already sparked off a great surge of protest throughout the country.

The determination of the workers not to be chained was shown previously when the Labour Government in 1969 tried

to introduce similar legislation to restrict the rights of the workers.

The workers' opposition then was so firmly demonstrated, as shown in the 1969 February and May strikes against the proposed legislation, and in the hundreds of resolutions, marches, meetings, conferences and other actions, that the Labour Government had to retreat and abandon its Bill. As soon as the Tories returned to Government in 1970 they began to push through their Industrial Relations Act.

Why had the ruling class of Britain come to the conclusion in the late sixties that it was necessary to tame the unions? There has never been such an attack by the capitalists against the trade unions in Britain since the General Strike of 1926. The last piece of such vindictive legislation against the unions was the Trades Disputes Act which was repealed in 1945. So why is it that now, twenty-five years later, both Labour and Tory Governments felt compelled to move against the unions?

The crisis facing British capitalism, its fierce competition with other major powers such as the United States and Japan, its drive to enter the European Common Market, the challenge of the socialist countries and the growing pressure from the countries of the Third World to take over the big British monopolies on their soil—all this drives the employing class to make fierce attacks on the standards of the British working class in order to force them to bear the burden of the crisis.

But this alone does not suffice to explain why the Industrial Relations Act has been introduced. Basically, as already pointed out, the capitalist class in a country such as Britain does not rule solely by repression although the forces of the State are always available to it.

Decisive for maintaining its political and economic domination is the role of ideas.

As long as the capitalists, through the help of the right-wing Labour leaders, are able to limit the horizon of the workers to one of accepting the system, and are able too, to restrict their actions for a better life—again because of the role of the right-wing leaders—then the capitalists are safe. The British ruling class has only been able to overcome the problems connected with the critical period

after 1945 through the help of the right wing Labour leaders. Provided that these leaders could continue to contain the workers' struggles and to limit their political perspective, the capitalists could sleep in relative peace.

In the past five years, however, there have been significant changes in the trade union movement. The former capacity of right-wing Labour Party leaders to lean on the support of major unions under leaders with a similar outlook is beginning to break down.

There have been moves to the left, notably in the Transport and General Workers' Union and in the different divisions of the merged AUEW, but also in other unions, as in building. New sections have been unionised. Unions of white collar workers have joined the Trades Union Congress. There has been big recruitment amongst technicians.

There is a militant mood among large numbers of workers. Conference decisions of the Trades Union Congress increasingly reflect this swing to the left and present more and more of a challenge to the Government and the employers. Some right-wing members of the TUC General Council have lost votes or even been ousted.

The perspective, outlined by the Communist Party in its programme, *The British Road to Socialism,* of defeating the right-wing in the trade union and labour movement, and opening up the way to the election of a new kind of Labour Government, firmly based on the mass actions of the millions and on a pledge to introduce socialism, and backed in Parliament by a majority of Labour and Communist MPs, is beginning to take shape. The forces that can bring about such changes are beginning to be created.

It is to stop this trend, as well as to attack living standards, that the Industrial Relations Act has been introduced. The trade unions are the main defence for workers' wages and conditions. Hence, if these conditions are to be worsened, the trade unions have to be weakened.

But the trade unions are also a political factor. They are the main base of the Labour Party. If the trade unions move to the left then they can move the Labour Party in the same direction. Hence, combined with the economic objective of the Industrial Relations Act, is the political aim—that of

bolstering up the declining influence of the right-wing Labour leaders, of stopping the turn to the left.

As long as the right-wing trade union and Labour leaders could, in the main, keep the workers within the framework of their own reformist politics, a direct attack on the unions of such a character was not needed. The fight to sweep the Industrial Relations Act off the Statute Book is therefore a vital *political* necessity for the workers as well as an economic one.

There is only one answer to this vicious piece of anti-working-class legislation. Make it inoperative and compel its repeal. To achieve this the united determination of the entire trade union and labour movement is required, a determination which must find expression in a clear and firm defiance of the Act and a blunt refusal to have anything to do with it.

But defiance is not enough—for such a challenge to the Government will not go unheeded. What is needed further, therefore, is a readiness on the part of the movement to use all its resources and strength, including massive industrial action, to face the consequences of such defiance, force the Government to retreat and secure the total repeal of the Act.

The lesson of the Pentonville five

All the recent lessons, especially the battle to secure the release of the Pentonville Five, bear this out. The arrest of the five dockers' leaders exposed the character of the Act, and the aims of the employers and Government. It was clear that they wanted to bludgeon the workers into acceptance of their conditions.

The struggle to win the men's release also showed up the role of the right wing Labour and trade union leaders. When the dockers were under attack for defying the Industrial Relations Court, Wilson, Callaghan and Prentice told them to "obey the law".

If our forefathers had obeyed that senseless advice, would Wilson and Co. be where they are today? Would trade unions have existed if the law had not been defied? And without the trade unions, would the present Labour Party have ever been established?

This argument about "the law" is completely fallacious.

Laws do not descend from heaven. They are man-made. In the main, they reflect the interests of the different classes which enact them.

Sometimes they are the fruit of long struggles by the working people for democratic advance. Some laws are progressive. Some are reactionary.

People have not only a right but a duty to oppose reactionary law. This was clearly established at the Nuremburg Trials when the German fascists were tried for their war crimes. "Obeying the law" was not accepted as a legitimate defence.

The argument that it is better to wait until a Labour Government is returned so that the Industrial Relations Act can be repealed is equally misleading. Unless the Act is fought now, unless the utmost resistance and opposition to the Tories is organised now, the possibility of getting rid of the Tories and their Act will be that much less.

Fortunately, despite the right-wing leaders, the mass of workers displayed an immense willingness to struggle on behalf of their victimised brothers.

The strike action of the dockers in support of the Pentonville Five, the solidarity strikes by print workers, busmen, engineers, builders and others and the obvious intention of other sections to take industrial action to secure the release of the five dockers' leaders was the only possible answer to the Government and the Industrial Relations Court.

So rapid, firm and militant was the response of the rank and file that even the General Council of the Trades Union Congress had to move and call for a 24-hour General Strike.

At the time of that call only some 300,000 workers were on strike. But the feeling engendered by the arrests, and the insistence of the workers that they would not allow a single one of their members to be touched by the Industrial Relations Act, was so powerful that despite a number of right-wing votes in the General Council against the General Strike resolution, it was carried.

This means that even some right-wing leaders, feeling their angry members breathing down their necks, felt obliged to support the strike call.

One should not underestimate the significance of that TUC decision. Ever since 1926 the philosophy of "never again" had dominated the thoughts and actions of right-wing

trade union officials. For that reason they refused to call a strike against the Industrial Relations Bill when it was still under debate in 1971, although it was clear that only such massive industrial action could have prevented the passing of this anti-union legislation.

The 1972 decision for a General Strike has broken the tradition of "never again", and this is of great importance for the future.

But the biggest lesson to be learnt from the case of the Pentonville Five is that of the power of the British working class. A strike of some 300,000 workers, and the decision to call a 24-hour General Strike (not even the carrying through of that strike action itself) was sufficient in the prevailing conditions to compel the ruling class to retreat and release the five men. How much more could be achieved if the British working class used its full resources against the ruling class?

This question was precisely what caused such fear in the hearts of the British capitalists as a result of the use by the workers of their industrial strength to win the release of the five dockers. The *Financial Times*, in a panic-stricken editorial (July 28, 1972), claimed that "what is at stake now is the way in which this country will run its affairs. Will the country accept that the wishes of the majority and the law must be respected. . . . ?"

But no majority has ever agreed with the Industrial Relations Act. In reality, the Act is the work of a minority, the few thousand big industrialists, bankers and landlords who want to tame the workers.

The Times, (also of July 28, 1972), likewise bemoaned the substitution "of the rule of law and constitutional Government for the direct clash of power against power."

It is not the "direct clash of power against power" that frightens them. After all, if they had won in the confrontation there would have been no lamentations in *The Times*, nor in the *Financial Times*.

What makes the rulers anxious is the fact that *the workers won*—and, still more, that the working class might draw some political lessons from that experience as to its great power to bring about fundamental changes in Britain.

The Times openly expressed these fears when it wrote:

"Once this sophisticated faith in conventional conduct starts to break down, power is again released from its frail bonds. The power of the unions will then be used, not inside the conventions which govern the negotiation of pay and conditions through systematic bargaining, but crudely and for political ends."

The same fears were voiced by the former Tory Chancellor, Reginald Maudling, in his Memorandum, published in *The Times* (September 12, 1972), when he referred to "an arising consciousness of the power of organised labour . . . the growing organisation of workers . . . organised into unions now possessing the powers to bring any capitalist economy to a halt. . . ."

Hence the immediate response of the Tory Government was to strive to stamp out the spirit of class struggle which had swept over the workers, and to ensnare them once again in the toils of class collaboration. So Vic Feather and his colleagues were invited to restart discussions on incomes and prices with the Government and the CBI; and to this offer the right wing leaders were only too ready to agree.

If the release of the Pentonville Five let the Government off the hook by making it unnecessary for them to face a General Strike which could have involved 15 million or more workers, it also let the right wing trade union leaders off the hook.

They, too, must have heaved a sign of relief when they learnt that they would not have to go through with the strike action. For them, as well as for the employers, the political consequences of carrying through the strike, and the heightened class consciousness that would have resulted from such a massive industrial action, was something they wanted to avoid as much as possible.

The battle for the Pentonville Five, and the antics of the right-wing leaders during that engagement and subsequently, demonstrate once again that the defeat of the right-wing leaders of the labour movement is essential if the British working class is to overcome capitalism and introduce socialism.

As long as these leaders remain, they will strive to smother the actions of the workers, to limit their objectives and crush their initiative. The mass democratic participation of the working class in action is the last thing these leaders want.

The nature of the political crisis

There is no doubt that the British working class is entering a period of further major confrontations with the ruling class and its State. The ruling class is facing acute problems on many fronts. The very nature of its crisis is limiting its possibilities of manoeuvre in the face of the mounting resistance of the working people. As a result the political struggle becomes more acute and confrontation grows.

The Tories and the capitalists, in their attempt to re-establish their imperialist world position, are now obliged to launch a massive attack on the living standards and conditions of the British working people. To effect this, they must strive to weaken the organised industrial and political power of the workers.

To meet this challenge, and to make further advances, the workers in their turn find it essential to conduct major struggles against the monopolies and their State, in the course of which they begin to challenge some of the prerogatives of power of the ruling class.

The workers have fought back against the capitalist offensive, finding new forms of struggle and conducting some of the most militant actions witnessed in Britain for many years. Because of the Government's anti-trade union legislation, and because of its intention to use all its powers to restrict wage increases and intimidate workers taking industrial action in support of their demands, every major industrial conflict becomes a test of strength with the Government and the State, in fact with the entire ruling class.

It is this new situation which is leading to major conflicts and opening up the prospect of further defeats for the British capitalist class.

The Tory Government and the big monopolies face a big dilemma. This is connected with the crisis of the right-wing Labour and trade union leaders, on whom the ruling class depends as a factor undermining the fighting capacity of the working class. In the past few years, although the right-wing still controls the machine, its ability to dominate the movement and control its activities has begun to weaken. Wilson's attempt to push through his own anti-trade union Bill and his failure to achieve this shows the growing difficulty of the right-wing leaders.

One should not exaggerate the stage reached, nor the extent to which the hold of the right-wing leaders has been loosened. But neither should we fail to grasp the significance of what is happening.

Everyone can see that over the past few years important trade unions have begun to move to the left, both in policy and in leadership. One can see, too, that this is having a partial reflection inside the Labour Party, even though the right wing still has a firm grip on the apparatus, the Executive Committee, the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Shadow Cabinet.

The changes that have come about are the fruit of the increasing militancy of the working class, and the patient political work and leadership of the Communist Party and others on the left. This is producing progressive changes in policy and leadership, strengthening left unity and advancing the united action of the whole labour movement.

This progress would not have taken place to the extent that it has without the work of the Communist Party. We have consistently worked in line with the strategy we have outlined to develop mass struggle, win left changes in policy and leadership in the trade unions and, by moving the unions to the left, to begin to influence the Labour Party in the same direction, as part of the process of securing a basic political shift in Britain.

The changes registered so far are therefore not only an advance for the whole working class. They are a confirmation, too, of the correctness of our policy and a success for our work in implementing it.

These changes, of course, are only the first tentative steps towards what is required if the capitalist system is really to be challenged. Further progress is needed in order to build a much bigger mass movement, and one moreover that is armed with political understanding and that comprehends the need for a basic transformation of society.

Such a movement can only grow out of further experiences in struggle in which the working class acquires the necessary organisation, confidence and fighting capacity to move decisively against the power of the capitalist class. This further development of the working class demands a much bigger Communist Party.

The partial decline of the right-wing that has so far taken place, and the inability of capitalism to achieve its economic and political objectives without trying to break the power of the workers to resist, has led to a great sharpening of class struggle.

The class confrontation, which the political crisis has forced on the Tory Government has, in its turn, produced new political problems for it.

Within a few months of taking office the Tories began their policy of heavy confrontation. They tried it on with the miners—and got a smack on the nose. They tried it on with the railwaymen—and came unstuck. They tried it on with the dockers and the Pentonville Five—and they were defied and defeated. They had to retreat, too, over their attempt to shut down UCS.

With all the power of the State at its disposal—the army, the police and the law—the Tory Government could not bend the miners. Its display of force was met by the workers' counterforce, dramatically shown above all at Saltley, where the very weight of the miners and Birmingham engineers overwhelmed the several hundred police.

The Government had more police available, although their resources were severely strained coping with pickets in other parts of the country. They had the army, too, but judged it unwise to use it.

It was the same story again with the Pentonville Five—the forces of the State were challenged, but it was the State and the Government that had to give way.

In the recent round of conflicts the Government has had to calculate in a complex and tense situation what would have been the consequences of attempting to employ still greater force against the working class; how far would further confrontation have deepened its political crisis to a dangerous degree; and whether, by retreats on this or that issue, it could buy time in which it could work to achieve its objectives by more devious methods, and with the help of the right-wing trade union and Labour Party leaders.

But to facilitate a switch in tactics in this way, it has had to make considerable concessions to the working people, concessions that would not have been made but for the

deep-seated nature of the political crisis, and the level of the struggle.

The same crisis is seen at work in connection with the UCS and other factory sit-ins and work-ins. The factories belong to the employers. The employers have this economic power of ownership. But in some fifty cases, ownership or not, economic power or not, the workers have defied them. Neither the owners nor the State deemed it wise in the present political conditions to use force to stop them.

One should not draw too far-reaching conclusions from these experiences. After all, major conflicts as they were, none of these recent actions directly posed the question of transferring political and economic power. They did, however, show the enormous potential power of the working class and prove, beyond doubt, that fully used and with the correct leadership, that power could make the position of the Tories impossible, sweep them out, and open up new conditions for the advance to socialism.

The next round of battle

The set-backs in their policy of open confrontation, which the Tories began in 1971 with such determination, soon produced a new crisis for them. If they had won the first round of struggles, they would have been hell-bent on further open attacks. But they lost. Hence their manoeuvres to prepare for the next round of battles.

This, for the ruling class, requires three things. First, a drive to win over public support for the Government's action against the organised workers. In the case of UCS, the miners, and the Pentonville Five, public sympathy was largely with the workers engaged in struggle. This considerably inhibited the Government in its handling of these confrontations.

The second requirement for the Tories and the monopolies in the coming round of battles was to isolate the militants and divide the workers. Hence the spate of Ministerial speeches and newspaper articles attacking militants, especially the Communists. The capitalists concentrate so much fire against the Communist Party because they realise that the more our Party's policy and leadership wins support among the workers, the more serious grows the challenge to the policy

of the monopolies and eventually to the whole capitalist system.

The third requirement of the ruling class was to strengthen collaboration with the right-wing leaders. This is not intended to replace class confrontation, but to provide the Government with enhanced possibilities of coping with the working class in the new battles that will arise.

Thus, almost immediately after the release of the Pentonville Five, the Government summoned the TUC General Council representatives back to No. 10. The aim behind the talks was not only economic, to find capitalist solutions to the present economic difficulties, but also political. In short, to re-establish machinery for class collaboration, to divide and confuse the movement, and so put the ruling class in a better position to face the next round of confrontations.

But the breakdown of the talks, and the Government's imposition of a 90-day wage freeze, revealed the continued nature of the political crisis. Once again, the right-wing leaders were unable to deliver the goods. *The Guardian* (Friday November 3, 1972), on the day after the talks broke down, commented: "Some participants to the talks came away with the feeling that the majority of the trade union leaders would have been willing to negotiate some kind of deal but the power of the militants was too strong."

The power of the militants has advanced considerably in the recent period. It has been expressed in the various forms of direct action in which sections of workers have acted in defiance of past conventions, and have been prepared to face direct confrontations with the employers, the Government, the State and the law.

There is no doubt that this strength of the movement and its readiness to take militant action, together with the knowledge of the widespread anger over the new round of price increases and the higher rents arising from the Housing Finance Act, were among the factors that influenced the General Council of the TUC at the tri-partite talks and led to the deadlock.

The Government will continue with its two-fold tactics of class confrontation combined with collaboration with the right-wing leaders. It is trying to establish a hidden form of

coalition, and, through the aid of the right-wing trade union and Labour Party leaders, safeguard capitalism.

But the partially weakened influence of the right-wing leaders hinders, from the employers' point of view, the most satisfactory operation of such a policy. Hence the monopolies, their ground for manoeuvre becoming more limited, will tend to more and more authoritarian methods of government in which they anticipate the right-wing leaders will in essence, acquiesce, or at least confine their opposition to mere words.

There should be no illusions. The Government's search for a *de facto* coalition with the right-wing leaders is in no sense an alternative to attacking the workers. The attack will be pressed forward—is in fact being pressed forward—both in terms of attempts to worsen living standards and in terms of trying to restrict the democratic rights of the unions.

The Tories are manoeuvring in order to provide themselves with the most favourable conditions for battle. *The Guardian* (in the article already cited) comments in relation to the breakdown of the tri-partite talks: "Ministers at least have the satisfaction that they have achieved their fall-back objective—to secure public sympathy for the Government's position before the confrontation begins. That has always been at the back of Mr. Heath's mind as the ultimate bonus from the talks whether they succeeded or failed."

This only serves to underline once again how right we were to demand from the start: "No talks with Heath"; and how right it is to insist on no resumption of the talks.

The Government's introduction of a wage freeze, via Phases 1 and 2, and its plans for further phases to follow, reveals the intentions of the Tories and the monopolies to establish a form of permanent State regulation of wages.

Every worker can see, from his own experience, that the freeze is a colossal swindle. There is not even a pretence of controlling food prices, rents or rates, and the White Paper on the freeze has so many loopholes on the general prices front as to leave hardly a single item for which the excuse will not be available for pushing up the price.

Faced with this new threat to living standards and to the rights of unions to negotiate, Vic Feather's reaction was to run away from the battle, arguing defensively that the unions are "not seeking a confrontation with the Government or employers."

The real issue is that the Government and employers have presented the unions with a confrontation which has to be met by struggle, not by capitulation. Feather has no authority to throw in the towel before the fight has begun. What is needed is the mobilisation of the entire immeasurable power of the working class in order to defeat the freeze policy and, in so doing, force out the Tory Government itself.

The working class has the power to achieve this. *The Times* (January 18, 1973) commented:

> "There is no point in blinking the fact, however hypothetical, that if the whole body of trade unionists in Britain chose to challenge the new law head-on, they have the power to bring the economy to a halt."

The *New Statesmen* (January 19, 1973) made a similar comment:

"When they choose to exert their power, the unions cannot be beaten."

Wilson, Healey, Prentice and Feather, who echo the Tory call to obey the new law, are playing Heath's game.

This underlines once again that to carry on effective struggle against the monopolies and the Tory Government it is essential to expose and defeat the right-wing trade union and Labour Party leaders; for one cannot rule out the possibility of these leaders reaching agreement with the employers and the Tory Government on some form of wage restriction in defiance of the wishes of the workers themselves.

While there has been a considerable shift to the left by the whole movement in the past few years it is not yet decisive. The right wing leaders are working night and day to stop this trend. It is therefore vital to extend left unity still further and to strengthen the Communist Party whose role in the fight to defeat the right wing leaders is indispensable.

The Tories must go

Significantly, in every major demonstration, strike, poster parade or other popular activity in recent months the cry has gone up: "Heath OUT!" This sums up the growing anger of the working people against the Tory Government and its attacks against the people's livelihood and democratic liberties.

But to get rid of this Government will be no easy task.

It would be entirely wrong to be mesmerised by any illusory picture of an automatic "swing back to Labour".

It is too glibly believed sometimes that we have a simple system in Britain of "ins" and "outs", with Tory and Labour replacing one another at regular intervals as the Government. But this is not how it has worked out in reality.

It is seventy years since Labour candidates were first put up in Parliamentary elections. In those seventy years we have had only six Labour Governments. Even more significant, the total number of years of Labour Government over that whole period has been only fifteen. From the time of the first Labour Government in 1924 until today, the Tories have governed the country for almost 70 per cent of the time.

After the collapse of the 1929-31 Macdonald Government we had to tolerate 14 years of Tory rule before we had another Labour Government. After Attlee's defeat in 1951, again we had to put up with the Tories for another 13 years. Without a further development of mass struggles, shifting the whole movement further to the left, there is no guarantee that as a result of the defeat of the Wilson Government in 1970 we will not have to suffer another long spell of Tory Government.

If the policy of the Labour right-wing leaders were to be accepted and the movement waited passively until the next opportunity to vote then there would be the danger of another Tory victory. What happens on polling day will be largely decided by what is done now.

The way to get the Tories out is not by waiting but by struggle, by militant action. This is one of the lessons that the experiences of the past twelve months should have taught us.

This Tory Government is utterly ruthless. It is one of the most reactionary Tory Governments we have ever had—and considering how reactionary they have all been, that's saying a lot.

Every day longer that the Tories are allowed to stay in office is a day too much. The longer they are allowed to govern, the more they will try to worsen the conditions of the people. It is therefore essential that every effort be made to compel them to resign long before their normal term of office is up. When one considers what they have done to

the people in two years of Government, the thought of being saddled with them for another three years is appalling.

The difficulties we will face as a result of their decision to enter the Common Market are in themselves sufficient warning of the way in which the Tories are prepared to ignore totally the interests of the British people as long as the big monopolies which they represent can make still bigger profits.

The danger is that the right-wing Labour leaders by their policy of collaborating with the capitalist class and by their refusal to conduct a continual struggle against the Tory Government, are weakening the very basis for defeating the Tories. That is why to force the Tory Government to resign it is also essential to overcome the dead hand of the right-wing Labour leaders.

The right-wing must be defeated

But the right-wing Labour leaders are not only an obstacle to forcing the Tories out of office. Another spell of a Wilson Government like the last one would solve nothing for the working people, and could only pave the way for disillusionment and the danger of another return of the Tories.

So the aim must be not only to defeat the Tories, but to replace them with an entirely different Labour Government, one that is committed to left policies, policies that would really start to tackle the big monopolies, that would cut deeply into the capitalist class and commence to weaken their grip on our economy and political life.

Why have all previous Labour Governments ended in collapse and fiasco, with the people disillusioned and the Tories able to stage a comeback?

In our Communist Party Programme, *The British Road to Socialism*, we have explained it in the following terms:

"Labour Governments, like Tory Governments, have in fact subordinated all their essential policies to the needs of the great monopolies. They have left the overwhelming bulk of the basic means of production, distribution and exchange in private hands. They have facilitated the growth of monopoly. . . .

"They have accepted, lock, stock and barrel, the existing State machine. They have worked within it, become its prisoner.

"Tory and Labour Governments alike have strengthened the capitalist State, created new Government departments, adapted old ones, formed new public bodies. . . . On all of them representatives of the great firms play the decisive role and advise the Government on policies and practice.

"Labour Governments have developed nationalisation in such a way that it strengthens capitalism, helps it to work.

"Like Tory Governments, they have 'managed capitalism'. They have introduced reforms, often material and important, but never taken decisive steps to end the power of the monopolies and the private exploitation of the country's resources and transform the State.

"Attempting to work within the framework of capitalism, to make capitalism work, they have ended by leading the attacks on the working class. . . .

"If Labour Governments and Labour leaders accept the role of managers of capitalism, if they content themselves with restricted nationalisation controlled by a State loyal to capitalism, then inevitably monopoly is strengthened and Labour Governments end in fiasco." (pp. 20-21).

Does not this sum up perfectly the role played by the last Wilson Government, as it does that of all previous Labour Governments?

But if we are not to go through the same lamentable experience again, then the policy and leadership of the Labour Party must be changed. But how to defeat the right wing?

The right-wing maintains its position partly by manoeuvre, by undemocratic practices, by the operation of bans and proscriptions, by administrative methods open to it by virtue of its control of the apparatus in a number of unions, as well as in the Labour Party.

But the right-wing also maintains its control because its basic policy of reformism, of working within the confines of the existing system and of not making an open and direct challenge to the power of the ruling class, is in essence the philosophy of the majority of the members of the movement. Not enough has been done to convince the majority of militant workers who take part in strikes, participate in pickets, march in processions, and are involved in work-ins or sit-ins, to raise their sights clearly towards ending the power of the capitalist class.

Many are beginning to question the system, but much more needs to be done to clarify what steps need to be taken in order to end capitalism, and what stage has been reached.

It is no exaggeration to say that not for decades has the British working class been so militant and ready to struggle. Even with sections that have suffered setbacks, like the post office workers, their long struggle was an unprecedented display of determination and unity, never before witnessed in this industry.

Apart from the big battalions that have been in action, or the more dramatic factory work-ins and sit-ins, there have been a number of quite remarkable actions by women workers, including the Leeds clothing workers, the women at Fords and Plesseys, the night cleaners and others. In the struggle on behalf of the Pentonville Five numerous small plants that had been dormant for years swung into action. There were even cases of factories that had not been on strike for forty years coming out on that occasion.

1973 has opened with new sections being drawn into battle. On the one hand, low paid workers, such as hospital auxiliary workers and gas workers, have conducted industrial actions in support of their justified wage claims. On the other hand, white collar sections, such as civil servants and teachers, have displayed unprecedented militancy in their actions for higher pay. Coming on top of demonstrations and other expressions of dissatisfaction from young hospital doctors, and from actors and actresses, they clearly show that the tide of discontent is flowing ever wider and deeper, and that the basis for an alliance in action of all sections of wage and salaried workers and personnel is beginning to take shape.

Other people and organisations have also been active in opposition to the Government's policy—tenants, women's groups, pensioners, peace and anti-imperialist bodies, immigrants, organisations concerned with poverty, housing, unemployment and civil liberties. Clearly there is a new mood abroad.

It is significant that trade unionists are now thinking more in terms of using their union and industrial strength to back up demands which are outside the traditional sphere of industrial action in Britain. Thus in a number of places trade unions have spoken out in favour of industrial action to

support the stand of those local councils and tenants who are declaring their intention of defying the Government's reactionary Housing Finance Act. Trade unions are rallying increasingly, too, to support the demands of the old age pensioners, as seen by the massive lobby of Parliament.

Trade unions have also been involving themselves in the campaign against the US war in Vietnam, for a European Security Conference, against the Common Market, against the attempted sell-out to Smith in Rhodesia, against the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Students, too, have been very much in action, not only in defence of their unions and in support of their own demands, but on wider political issues and in support of industrial actions by workers.

Yet, despite all these magnificent actions there are two major shortcomings that have to be overcome if decisive solutions to the problems of our time are to be found.

First, many of these activities are carried out as separate struggles. Secondly, they are unrelated to an overall strategy, to a perspective of advancing to challenge the political power of the ruling class. These two shortcomings can only be overcome if the working class is led by a strong Communist Party whose aim is to unite the working class and its allies in order to carry forward this challenge to the point of revolutionary change.

People are taking up the fight on numerous specific issues. That in itself is perfectly natural, since this is how struggles arise in real life. But as long as people fight separately, without seeing the connection between their own fight and that being waged by other strata and classes and by other organisations, the ruling class is left free to concentrate its attention and forces against each particular section of people in opposition to it.

If the ruling class is to be forced to yield and give up its power, all these different streams of struggle need to be united into a single, powerful united flood directed against the landlords, bankers and industrialists against whom the people are fighting in their present separate endeavours.

The achievement of an overall united movement of the people is related to the second shortcoming mentioned above. As a result of people pursuing their activities on particular

issues unrelated to one another, they are really only tackling the immediate effects and not the real basic causes of their problems. Militant struggles, even when they lead to successes, will never by themselves change the system.

Each painfully won wage increase is immediately faced with higher prices and other problems, necessitating the taking up of the struggle again. A worker can spend his whole working life of forty years or more, fighting militantly for better wages, only to end up with a miserable old age pension so that he passes his last years in comparative poverty. People scrimp and save to buy a house, only to find themselves with rising rates and higher fuel prices.

Individual wars can be stopped, or threats of war averted; but as long as imperialism exists we all live in the shadow of a world nuclear disaster.

All our struggles for better conditions, for improvements —valuable as they are—have their limitations unless they are directed to the basic aim of getting rid of the rule of the millionaires and establishing the power of the working people.

The victory at UCS, and the victory of the miners, significant as they were, are only a challenge to the monopolies, not an answer. As long as our present system continues, the shipbuilders on the Clyde, whether making ships or oil-derricks, always face the danger that their employer will declare them redundant or even try to close the job down again. The miners, too, know only too well that to maintain the gains they won in their last big struggle they must be prepared to face further strife with the National Coal Board and with the Government whose price policy threatens to rob the miners of the real value of the wage increase they won.

The crucial problem is not how to win improvements which make life under this system more tolerable, important though this is. The crucial problem is to scrap the system altogether. Otherwise the big bankers, industrialists and landlords will retain their control, the class basis of our society will remain, exploitation, hardship, crises, poverty, pollution, and other social ills will continue.

Therefore it is necessary to have a clear strategy for socialist change in Britain, and a powerful Communist Party which can assist the working people to relate their current struggles to such a transformation.

Such a strategy must include defeating the right wing leadership, policy and outlook in the labour movement, including in the Labour Party. Despite the progress made there should be no underestimation of the heavy task still remaining.

As we have seen the right-wing still controls the whole apparatus of the Labour Party. It still dominates its leading organs. It has a majority on the National Executive Committee. It dominates the Parliamentary Labour Party which, in any case, acts independently and in defiance of the decisions of the Labour Party Annual Conference and of the National Executive Committee. This is even more true of the Shadow Cabinet and the Leader, Harold Wilson.

Equally important, as we have already pointed out, the Labour Party's basic reformist ideology of working within the framework of the existing capitalist system still dominates the minds of the vast majority of workers, even including many of those who participate in militant class struggles.

Labour's new programme—no challenge to capitalism

The necessity to defeat right-wing policies and leadership is underlined by the publication of the discussion statement, "Labour's Programme", which has been issued by the Labour Party National Executive Committee as its view on what should be the programme of the next Labour Government. In essence this document is the mixture as before—a programme for making capitalism work.

Admittedly it contains propositions that will be supported by the majority of working people as necessary and progressive steps. A number of these proposals are really unavoidable for the Labour Party leadership, so intense has been the feeling of the rank and file for such changes.

These include the promise to repeal the Industrial Relations Act and the Housing Finance Act, to take back into public ownership without a second gift of compensation those firms and industries which the Tories have denationalised, and to restore school milk. A number of other social reforms are also included.

On the Common Market, however, it accepts entry in principle (in contrast to the 1972 Trades Union Congress conference decision) and only opposes the terms accepted

by the Tories. Most foreign policy questions are deferred for another statement in 1973; and policy on the vital question of Northern Ireland is also put off till later.

There are no proposals at all for abolishing fee-paying education, nor for ending prescription charges early—only a promise to ensure they are "phased out as quickly as possible".

Even discounting the above weaknesses, and on the assumpton that the positive aspects of the programme will be fully acceptable to the majority of working people, there is no guarantee as to when a future Labour Government will put them into practice, if at all.

In fact, the document itself explains that it will not be possible "for the next Labour Government in its first term to implement the whole programme". Priority is apparently to be given to undoing the worst features of Tory policy, and to carrying through the unfinished parts of the last Labour Government's programme.

Propositions beyond that remain considerably vague. There are many promises of further studies to be undertaken and questions to be further considered.

All this apart, the worst and most alarming feature of the whole document is its attitude to the big monopolies which dominate our economy and our lives. There are dramatic words about "crucial levers of financial and economic power . . . still in irresponsible private hands," and the "continuing power of financial speculators to influence national economic policy", but there are no clear proposals to end this power.

Instead there are proposals to invest Government funds in private companies, to support and promote the mergers of monopolies and their further expansion, and to introduce a "substantial measure" of public ownership of some industries *if they are incapable of carrying through their own necessary reconstruction.*

Presumably those major firms which show themselves quite capable of maintaining their empires and of continuing to enrich themselves at the expense of the people are to be left intact.

Apart from the proposed speedy nationalisation of docks and renationalisation of the firms and industries hived off

by the Tories, all we are promised under the section of the programme on nationalisation are various forms of State *participation* in private industry; measures for State *control*, not ownership; a promise to "consider plans which will lead to *an element* of public ownership" of the pharmaceuticals industry; consideration of the Labour Party Conference call for the nationalisation of motor insurance (itself by no means the most profitable branch of insurance); and consideration of the "best pattern of public ownership" in shipbuilding and ship-repair. There is also a promise to bring an unnamed group of "selected companies" into public ownership.

The oft-repeated demands of different sections of workers for the complete take-over of major firms, including giant companies in engineering, aircraft manufacture, motor car manufacture, all civil aviation, building and construction, electronics, chemicals, banks and insurance, urban land (apart from owner-occupiers), are ignored.

Even if the whole of the Labour Party programme were carried through in one term of office, that is within a span of five years, decisive economic power would still remain in the hands of the big monopolies.

As for their political power, nothing in the programme would affect this. It states "We must counter . . . the view that the upper classes are 'born to govern', or the view that the workers should have no say in how their lives are run." But countering wrong views is not the issue. Nor is it a question of giving the workers "a say", whatever that might mean. What is at stake is the whole question of political power.

The Labour leaders who prepared this programme know only too well that the top positions in all the departments of State are in the hands of anti-socialists. There can be no question of carrying through decisive changes in Britain unless these people are removed and replaced by those whose loyalty to socialism is unquestionable. Otherwise it is rather like electing a group of company directors to be members of a trade union executive and then expecting them to safeguard the workers' interests.

In short, the new Labour Party programme would, even if entirely implemented, leave the economic and political

power of the big industrialists, bankers and landlords basically as it is.

This is the real heart of the problem. Politics is about political power. Whichever class or coalition of classes holds the power decides the way the country is to be run. If Britain is to overcome her crisis, end capitalism and build socialism, then power must be taken from the hands of the big monopolists and placed in the hands of the working people.

Labour's programme reveals the real problem that faces the British working class. It is not enough to get rid of the Tories. It is equally vital to change the Labour Party, to end its domination by the right-wing, and to win it for left policies and left leadership.

An alternative programme

As part of this process the Tory Government must be replaced by a Labour Government committed by the power and pressure of the mass movement to carry out left policies.

The achievement of such a Government would be the next key stage in the struggle of the British labour movement and the British people to challenge the power of the monopolies.

What would such a Government be expected to do? And what are the possibilities of it carrying out such a programme?

Certainly if it were left to the right-wing leaders, and the next Labour Government were to confine itself to following the programme they foisted on the Labour Party at its last conference, no real weakening of the power of the monopolies would take place and the problems facing the British people would largely remain.

It is therefore essential for the labour movement and other progressive forces to unite around a series of demands which together make up a coherent policy for tackling Britain's problems and improving the people's livelihood, and which at the same time begin to dismantle the economic, political and ideological power of the ruling class.

Such a programme should include immediate steps to raise living standards at the expense of profits. All policies of wage restraint should be ended and trade unions allowed full freedom to carry out collective bargaining.

Substantially higher pensions and social security benefits,

a statutory minimum wage, higher pay for low paid workers, and equal pay for work of equal value for women workers, should be introduced, along with a crash programme on housing, education and health. The Housing Finance Act should be repealed and steps taken to prevent the raising of rents and rates and to stop the scandal of high house-prices.

A strict control should be imposed on prices in order to prevent the benefits of higher wages, pensions and social security payments being swallowed up by inflation.

A 3 per cent wealth tax on the rich, an increased profits tax, and the halving of the arms bill would provide the Government with more funds for public investment as well as for raising living standards. Investments overseas should be reduced and the export of further private capital rigorously controlled.

To expand production and tackle unemployment, sweeping measures of nationalisation should be introduced, but it needs to be a new type of nationalisation with measures of workers' control, democratic direction and management, and a slashing of compensation.

The industries that should be in public hands are chemicals, key sectors of engineering, shipbuilding, the building materials industry, electronics and computers, banking and insurance, fuel and power including oil and North Sea gas, transport, all urban land except that of owner-occupiers, and all foreign owned or controlled monopolies in Britain.

If the big firms dominating these industries were taken over, then, although substantial sections of our economy would still be in private hands, the key sectors would have been taken out of the hands of the monopolies whose economic spine would be largely shattered.

To extend the democratic rights of the people, all authoritarian legislation and practices, especially those introduced in the last few years, should be swept away, and the Industrial Relations Act and the racialist Immigration Act repealed. New democratic powers should be extended to the people, including democratic rights for workers in the management of industry, and the democratic reorganisation of education.

There should be electoral reform, including the introduction of proportional representation, and the demands for Scottish and Welsh Parliaments should be conceded. Women must

be liberated from all social and economic injustices, and provided with full equality in all spheres. There should be democratic access to television and radio and an end to monopoly domination of the press.

There should be a bold policy to deal with the menace of pollution of the environment, overcome the chaos and deficiencies in transport, and secure a progressive improvement in the quality of life.

There needs to be a complete change in foreign policy, with Britain pursuing an objective of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems, the ending of colonialism in all its forms, and opposition to all acts of imperialist expansion and aggression.

Britain must use its influence to ensure that the Paris Treaty on Vietnam is fully implemented. Britain should quit the Common Market and NATO and make a positive contribution to the achievement of all-European security and co-operation and the dissolution of all military blocs and exclusive economic groupings.

A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland should be legislated by Westminster, all repression and discrimination ended, the people granted democratic freedoms, and the British troops withdrawn.

Britain should quit all imperialist military alliances and all British troops overseas should be brought home. There should be a comprehensive programme of disarmament, and support given to all steps to end the manufacture of nuclear weapons and destroy existing stocks.

The adoption of such a programme by the next Labour Government is by no means impossible. Already many of the measures advocated here by the Communist Party have been voiced by different sections of the labour movement, including individual trade union conferences, and the Trades Union Congress annual conference, and, in some cases, the annual conference of the Labour Party.

The task now is to ensure that these demands become the overall programme of the whole movement and, even more important, that the movement exerts pressure in order to secure their adoption and implementation by the next Labour Government.

Decisive to achieve this is the level of the mass movement

—not just in terms of the scale, the numbers involved, and the militancy of the actions undertaken, but in terms, too, of the political understanding of the movement and its conscious aim of advancing to break the power of the monopolies and carry through socialist change.

Many will ask: Is it really possible to expect a new Labour Government to be different from those of the past and to carry out policies that really hurt big business?

Such doubts are understandable, both in the light of past experience of British Labour Governments and because of the attitude taken by the right-wing leaders on all major questions of the day, including in the recent big actions.

But nothing ever remains static. Governments can be compelled by popular pressure to change their policies. Even the present Tory Government has been forced by the power of the movement to retreat in connection with UCS, the miners' strike, and the Pentonville Five.

A Labour Government would be even more susceptible to mass pressure. This was strikingly shown in connection with the last Labour Government's defeat over its attempt to introduce its anti-trade union legislation based on *In Place of Strife*. Strike actions then and other forms of protest compelled a climb down by Wilson and his Cabinet.

An interesting lesson can be learnt from the experience of the French Popular Front Government of 1936. Extra-Parliamentary action by the workers at that time compelled their Government to bring in major reforms to benefit the working class and the people. By large-scale strikes and factory occupations the French workers forced the Government to introduce the 40-hour week, holidays with pay, and other significant social advances.

As far as a future British Labour Government is concerned, even at this stage, with the present still inadequate level of struggle and of extra-Parliamentary activity, the right-wing leaders are already committed on some important matters.

They are committed to repeal the Industrial Relations Act and the Housing Finance Act. They are committed to renationalise the hived-off sections of nationalised industries without new compensation. They are partially committed on the Common Market and, with further pressure, can be compelled to bring Britain out.

A further rise in the scale and purpose of the mass movement and a strengthening of the Communist Party and the whole of the left can force the Labour leaders still further, whatever may be their present intentions or even their later wishes.

In other words, what the next Labour Government will do will not be decided solely by the plans and desires of the right-wing. The policy it pursues, and in the long run even the composition of the Government, will be determined by the strength and pressure of the popular movement, and by the movement's insistence that its demands, including its resolutions as recorded by Labour Party conference decisions, are implemented by the Labour leadership.

This perspective also requires the presence at Westminster of Communist MPs who would be the strongest guarantee that in Parliament itself strong pressure would be maintained on the Government to respond to the demands of the people as expressed in their extra-Parliamentary activity.

The programme presented here is not a detailed blue print for the next Labour Government but an outline of the major direction Government policy will have to take if it is really to meet the needs of the situation and take decisive steps towards overcoming what is basically a crisis of the system.

Such a programme cannot be won without making big inroads into the capitalist power structure, ending the domination by the monopolies of Britain's economy, terminating their stranglehold on the State and other levers of political power, and breaking their absolute control over the mass media.

To secure such sweeping changes requires a much higher level of struggle than what we have witnessed so far. It entails a major confrontation by the working class and its allies against monopoly capitalism and its State, aiming not only at victories on specific issues, important as these are, but directed all the time to the more fundamental aim of changing the balance of class power in Britain in favour of the working people as an essential step towards socialism. In the course of these struggles the working class will increasingly come to understand the need to break the grip of the right-wing Labour leaders.

The Labour Party

What this entails can only be understood by appreciating the structure of the Labour Party and the way in which it is developing. The British Labour Party is a federal organisation, comprising both individual members and affiliated organisations, primarily the trade unions. Of a total Labour Party membership of some six millions, less than 750,000 are individual members, but almost $5\frac{1}{2}$ million are affiliated trade union members.

The trade unions were formed much earlier than the Labour Party; and it was they who took the initiative in setting up the Labour Party in the hope that it would defend their interests in Parliament. The trade union basis of the Labour Party means that the powerful trade union movement is in a position to have a major influence on the whole position and policy of the Labour Party.

Lenin, who lived in Britain for a time and studied the British labour movement very carefully, regarded the formation of the Labour Party as "the first step on the part of the really proletarian organisations of Britain towards a conscious class policy, and towards a *socialist workers' party.*"

Lenin obviously recognised that it was the working class trade union basis of the Labour Party that was so important. Yet, at the same time, he warned that the formation of such a political wing for the movement did not signify that it was, in fact, waging a consistent struggle against the capitalist class. Nor that the action of the organised workers in establishing their own political representation in Parliament meant that they had become "independent of the bourgeoisie *in the whole of their conduct.*" For this to take place it was necessary for working class politics to dominate the entire behaviour and activity of the movement.

The domination of right-wing ideas and leadership in the British Labour and trade union movement arose from the very conditions in which this movement was formed and matured.

> "Developing the analysis of Marx and Engels, Lenin showed how British imperialism with vast colonial possessions and a virtual world monopoly led to the temporary victory of opportunism in the British labour movement. British imperialism was able to give a small

share of its super-profits to an upper, privileged section of the working class, who turned aside from the class struggle, worked within the confines of the capitalist system, and who became identified with it. This gave birth to the right-wing outlook and leadership which despite much struggle and the emergence of a Marxist revolutionary trend, came to dominate the labour movement.

"Henceforth, Lenin argued, there would be a ceaseless conflict between the Marxist revolutionary and the reformist right-wing trends in the movement. 'It is in the struggle between these two trends', he wrote, 'that the history of the labour movement will now inevitably develop'." (John Gollan: *What is the Socialist Way Forward,* 1970: p. 7).

This struggle between left and right in the movement has, in fact, been the dominant factor in this century; and today its significance has never been greater, nor the chances of victory for the left more hopeful.

What is new since Lenin's time is the changed position of British imperialism. Powerful though it still is, it no longer enjoys the world colonial monopoly which enabled it for so long to provide a share of its super-profits to an upper, privileged section of the workers.

It still has the strength to make concessions when hard pushed, but its ability to do so has become less because of the fierce competition it faces from imperialist rivals, the advance of socialism and national liberation, and the new powerful challenge of the workers in the major capitalist countries. Thus the economic basis of right-wing reformist trends is beginning to shrink.

This does not produce an immediate disappearance of reformist ideas among the workers. Ideas often cling long after the original basis for them has diminished or even disappeared. But the erosion of the economic foundations of reformism, which is now taking place, slow as it may be, is beginning to have its impact on the thinking and actions of millions of workers.

It is this which provides the possibility, and which should provide the confidence, too, for overcoming the right wing domination which has persisted for so long.

The fact that the trade unions are the mass basis of the Labour Party provides the key for progressive change in that party. The Communist Party has always understood that a central issue is to win the trade unions, as the elementary class organisations of the workers, for left policies, for a working class standpoint.

By ending the domination of right wing leaders in the unions and of their right wing policies, and by securing the election of left wing leaders and the adoption of progressive policies, the way will be open for a leftwards development in the Labour Party and in the working class movement as a whole.

Thus the essential thing is to change the balance of power throughout the working class movement from the right to the left. Moving the unions to the left is a first step to moving the Labour Party to the left. And a victory of the left in the Labour Party is a vital part of the process of securing the election of a new type of Labour Government which will start to weaken the power of the monopolies.

The need for such changes in the Labour Party are beginning to make themselves felt more emphatically within the Labour Party itself, as was evidenced at the 1972 Labour Party Conference.

The 445 resolutions put forward by affiliated trade unions and Constituency Labour Parties were in the main radical in character, going beyond and often in opposition to the major policy positions of the right wing and demanding more left policies to solve the principal problems facing the British people.

There were significantly many calls for an extension of public ownership and for the next Labour Government to implement Clause IV of the Labour Party Constitution, which proposes public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

A welcome sign, too, was the number of resolutions insisting that the Parliamentary Labour Party and the individual Labour Members of Parliament be bound by the decisions of the Annual Conference. This question of the supremacy of Labour Party Conference decisions over the National Executive Committee and the Parliamentary Labour Party

has emerged in the past two years as a major point of conflict within the movement.

It has become more acute as a result of the defiance of a number of right wing Labour MPs of Labour's policy on the Common Market, and of their having voted on this issue against the Conference decision, thus coming to the rescue of the Heath Government when it could have been defeated and forced to face a new General Election in which the Tories could have been routed.

These matters of basic principle, which concern the democratic functioning of the Labour Party, are dealt with in the recent pamphlet, *Labour Party or Puppet,* published by the Tribune Group. The proposals made in this pamphlet express the concern of the rank and file and left forces in the Labour Party and an understanding that the struggle to put the Labour Party on the road to socialism involves a change in leadership as well as policy. Otherwise, as all past experience has shown, correct and radical policies demanded by the movement are frustrated, delayed or simply ignored by the right wing leaders.

Surely it is time that the membership of the Labour Party, both of the affiliated trade unions and of the Constituency Labour Parties, ended this tragic farce of adopting a number of progressive resolutions at the Annual Conference and then saddling themselves with a leadership which they know has no intention of implementing them.

Surely it is time, too, for the Labour Party membership to give serious consideration to bringing about changes in the structure and democratic functioning of all parts of the Labour Party so that it responds more faithfully to the real position in the movement, and the real hopes and wishes of the members.

The Communist Party

Despite the progress made in moving the labour movement to the left, and the consequences which this has had on the whole position and tactics of the Tory Government, it would be idle to think that the changes registered so far are in any sense decisive.

Big as the battles of the past two years have been, the working class will have to conduct far greater struggles if

they are to attain their objectives and really mount an effective challenge to the whole position of the monopolies.

Such a challenge will never be made unless the role and influence of the right wing Labour leaders is shattered; and this will never come about unless there is a powerful, united left movement, with a clear perspective, strategy and policies.

But such a left movement will never emerge spontaneously. It has to be created with the aid of those who have a clear strategy, and it has to embrace all the main forces of the left.

This is underlined by the history of the left in the Labour Party. Although left Labour people and MPs have fought against the right-wing leaders with varying degrees of vigour and success, they have not been able decisively to break the right-wing grip. The greatest successes for the left have been achieved when, as in the recent period, Communists and Labour people have worked together, especially in the trade unions, to develop the mass movement of action.

Moreover, many who are bitterly opposed to the Tories and on the side of the working class have still not grasped the need for revolutionary change, and the kind of struggle that is needed to end capitalism and establish socialism. They are not guided by the principles of scientific socialism, and because of this they often vacillate or weaken or take the wrong course at crucial moments in the struggle.

Communists reject the views of some ultra-left groups who write off virtually all left Labour MPs and trade union leaders, and sometimes attack them even more strongly than they attack the right-wing.

But many Labour people and many trade unionists would agree with us that both in the Parliamentary Labour Party and the leadership of the trade union movement there are weaknesses and a lack of unity among the left forces which hinder the full development of the struggle against the right.

This position won't be improved just by criticising individual left leaders, though such criticisms must be made when necessary. The most important factor in strengthening unity and getting a principled leadership will be the strengthening of the militant fight of the working people, combined with the battle to defeat reformist ideas among them and win them for the ideas of scientific socialism—of Marxism.

Central to the achievement of these aims is the building

of a bigger Communist Party and the strengthening still further of unity between Communists and all other forces in the labour movement who can be won for struggle against the monopolies and eventually for socialist change.

The entire labour and progressive movement has to face the fact that it has now reached a stage in the struggle beyond which it cannot advance decisively without a much bigger and more influential Communist Party.

Short-term gains can still be won. Some Tory attacks can still be beaten off. But such partial successes really only gain the people a breathing space before facing the next onslaught.

If the working people are to register major victories against the monopolies and challenge their power then they must create the necessary organisations for such a revolutionary task.

Carrying through revolutionary change requires a strong revolutionary party, a party capable of leading the people to challenge and defeat the capitalist class. A party deeply rooted in the working class, responsive to its needs and able to help it in its daily struggles. A party whose members and leaders cannot be bought over by capitalist blandishments. A party whose integrity and loyalty to the working class has been tested in scores of struggles. A party which understands the dynamic laws of social change and is therefore able to chart the way forward at each stage of the struggle.

Such a party is the Communist Party.

The recent period has revealed the significant contribution which our Party is making to all the outstanding struggles in which the working people are engaged. At UCS, in the miners' strike, among the railwaymen, dockers and building workers, well-known Communists, along with other left leaders, have played a most valuable role.

But the contribution of the Communist Party has not been confined to the work of outstanding individual leaders, important as their effort has been.

What we have brought to the movement we have provided as an organised Party, with a clear policy, an organised membership of nearly 30,000 in factories, localities and colleges, a daily paper, the *Morning Star*, which each day explains events from the point of view of the interests of the working

people, and other publications, journals, pamphlets, broadsheets and leaflets, together with numerous meetings and demonstrations, large and small, which have given to millions a clearer understanding of the whole nature of the struggle.

Our Party has been a consistent champion of the workers in every recent struggle. A tireless advocate of solidarity for each and every fight, seeking to spread the message of unity to every section of the movement and to win it for an understanding that socialism is the ultimate answer, and that to achieve it the working people must take over power from the millionaires and end their ownership of the big enterprises, banks and the land.

The significant role we have played in the recent struggle is recognised on many sides. It was not so long ago that the capitalist press tried to wish us away simply by pretending that we did not exist. There were plenty of articles in the capitalist press and TV appearances by all manner of unrepresentative ultra-left groups claiming to represent the revolutionary trend in Britain.

If the Communist Party was mentioned at all it was mainly to spread the false idea that we had become part of the establishment, that we were seeking after respectability and were no longer revolutionary.

The scale of the recent struggles, however, and the leadership provided by our Party in these actions, has caused the ruling class to change its tune. Once again it is busy discovering the Communist bogey. Now, it appears, the Communist Party is once again "the menace". This distortion is, in itself, an admission of the Party's important role.

Why is the Communist Party able to play the role it does? What is it that enables our Party to make its distinctive contribution to the struggles of the British people?

Our Party was created by the British working class over fifty years ago. Its creation was the outcome of more than one hundred years of struggle in which the most politically conscious workers came to the conclusion that fighting the effects of capitalism must be extended to a conscious effort to end the system itself; and that to carry through the revolution which the ending of capitalism involved, it was necessary to create a revolutionary political party, based on a scientific theory, Marxism-Leninism.

From the British working class the Communist Party inherited its finest traditions of class solidarity, democracy and internationalism. But to these great traditions, the Communists added the vital ingredient, scientific socialism, which has enabled the Communist Party to be in the fore of every progressive cause and to provide a consistent socialist lead on all major political questions.

The Communist Party has no special narrow interests of its own. It exists solely to help the working class and its allies conduct their struggles, stage by stage, until they have ended the power of the monopolies, created socialism and advanced to build the future completely classless society, communism.

Through its scientific understanding of society, and because it is an organised force banding together men and women committed to the ideas and outlook of Marxism, the Communist Party is able to show the way forward for the working people at each stage of the struggle, and to advance policies and programmes which enable the people to link their immediate activities with the more fundamental aim of winning political power for the working class.

We do not claim that we shall achieve such a mighty transformation by ourselves. We seek no monopoly of power or decision-making in the labour movement, neither during the present phase of activities, nor in the decisive challenge to the power of the capitalists, nor in the building of socialism. Nor shall we claim any privileged position in any future Government of the United Left.

We respect, and will continue to respect, the rights and views of all other parties, organisations and individuals who are working with us to defeat the Tories, and, beyond that, to change the system. We make no claim to possess all political wisdom, and will extend to the views of others the same attention and consideration that we expect them to show to ours.

Our whole aim is to ensure the utmost democratic participation of all working people in the taking of decisions on all the decisive economic, social and political questions affecting their lives, and being involved, too, in implementing them. Under socialism political power, in our view, must not be the prerogative of any political party but must lie firmly in

the hands of the working class and its allies. The whole purpose of socialism is that there should be an end to monopoly power and that the people themselves should rule.

Unity of the working class and progressive forces is a principle for Communists, whether their Party be large or small, whether they have large Parliamentary representation or little or none, whether they be in Government or not. That is why powerful Communist Parties like those of France, Italy, Japan and Chile work for unity with socialists and other anti-monopoly parties, just as do Parties like our own which, at present, do not have such large membership or voting support as do the Communist Parties in these other capitalist countries.

Yet, even if we are not large enough for the tasks that must be carried out, we are far and away the strongest organised political force on the left today.

We are, moreover, a force which alone of all the parties and political trends has mapped out a clear strategy for changing political power in Britain and advancing along the road to socialism.

Further, our Party is organised in such a way that it can respond more rapidly than others on the left to developments as they arise. Through its branches in the localities, factories and colleges, and through its members who play an active part in the trade unions, co-operative societies, tenants, peace and other mass organisations, it is able to take quick and correct initiatives when it comes to moving many people into action.

To move the organised ten million trade unionists into action for radical change, and beyond them, to move millions more, is going to demand an immense effort. It requires organisation. It requires the working out of policies. It requires making those policies known amongst millions. It requires moving those millions into action in support of those policies. It requires spreading throughout the country an understanding of socialism, of political power, of the role of the monopolies and how to overcome them.

We have emphasised earlier the immense role played by the mass media, the TV and radio, and the national press, all aided by the right wing leaders. To undo this great damage to people's way of thinking, to break through the lies and

distortions of the capitalists and clear away the cobwebs of right wing ideas, requires two things.

It requires that people, through their own activity and participation in struggle, learn from experience more about the nature of our society, the role of the State, the power of the monopolies, and the immense power of the working class, once it is united and knows clearly what is to be done. Secondly, alongside this experience, there needs to be constant explanation by word of mouth, speeches and the written word, of what is happening, what needs to be done and the whys and hows of socialism.

For this latter task the *Morning Star* is indispensable. This becomes strikingly clear as soon as one considers the great role played by the *Morning Star* over the past period.

In contrast to the millionaire Press, it campaigned against the Industrial Relations Act from the very beginning. While Fleet Street attacked the miners, the railwaymen, the building workers and others, the *Morning Star* supported them. It stood firmly at the side of the Pentonville Five and backed the dockers. It has supported the engineers in their present conflict with the Industrial Relations Court and can be confidently expected to do the same for any trade union which is victimised for sticking up for trade union principles.

The *Morning Star* is the champion of the old age pensioners, the tenants, the immigrants, the women, the students; of all sections, in fact, which are oppressed by the monopolies. It carries on a consistent fight against the Tory Government and its policies and campaigns for its resignation.

The *Morning Star*, from the very beginning, condemned the US aggression against the people of Vietnam and month after month rallied the British people to protest against the war.

The same with repression in Northern Ireland, apartheid in South Africa, the repeated betrayals by British Governments of the African majority of Rhodesia, and the Israeli aggression against the Arab states in the June 1967 war.

The *Morning Star* has always championed the cause of all peoples struggling for national liberation and socialism, and has consistently propagated the ideas of world peace and peaceful coexistence between states of different social systems.

It has made itself the voice of every progressive cause and

opened its pages to representatives of labour, peace and other progressive bodies.

We are making no exaggerated claim when we say that without our Party and without the *Morning Star* there would never have been such a level of struggle in 1972 as there has been.

While the right wing Labour leaders performed their classic role of trying to hold back the rising movement and divide and disarm the working class in the face of the offensive of the Government and the monopolies, the Communist Party gave day-to-day leadership in all the momentous events.

If ever there was an argument for a stronger Communist Party here it was. We not only assisted the working class to beat off the immediate capitalist offensive, but we provided ideological leadership, too.

We exposed the false arguments about "respecting the law", showing the class nature of the State and the legislation brought in by the Government. We helped those engaged in struggle to see that their enemy was not just their immediate boss but the Government, the State apparatus, the mass media, the entire establishment, in fact.

We sharply posed to the working people the need to go beyond fighting for immediate aims, and to challenge the capitalist system and carry through sweeping social change.

If we could achieve so much with the present membership of our Party and the present readership of the *Morning Star*, then how much more could we achieve with a bigger Party and a larger readership for the *Morning Star*?

Such an expansion is not the narrow interest of Communists. It is absolutely indispensable for the British working class and the people if they are to make decisive progress and set Britain on a new course towards socialism.

For over fifty years the struggle of the British working class has assumed, in a sense, a two-fold aspect. First, it has taken the form of direct action, including strikes, to improve conditions, and on this it has won some successes. A major instrument in this field has been the trade unions. Secondly, in the political field, the British working class has largely limited itself to voting for a Labour Government.

The assumptions on which the activities of the workers in

these two fields have been based are now being questioned by the very nature of the problems facing Britain.

First, the effort to maintain and improve conditions now requires a greatly intensified scale of struggle.

Secondly, the traditional political solution of voting for a Labour Government can now be seen, more clearly than ever before, to be really no solution at all. In fact, active militants in the Labour Party are most concerned about the prospect of another Labour Government following the same disastrous path as the last.

If the working class is to make a decisive break with the past and open up a new future for itself, it must end the situation in which the trade unions are left to look after its industrial problems, while for its political future it depends on the Labour Party.

It is Communist politics which is the key to socialist change in Britain.

Left unity

In no sense do we see the growth of the Communist Party in opposition to the rest of the labour movement, but rather as an essential part of the struggle to defeat the right wing and assist the left to become the dominant trend in the movement.

At a first glance it may seem that the prospect of a bitter struggle between the left and right wings of the labour movement is a recipe for division at a time when the movement needs to be united. In fact, however, the fight to defeat the right-wing is essential if we are to build unity.

For Communists, the unity of the working class movement is not an abstract slogan but a very real need and a basic principle of all our work. To defeat the powerful numerical superiority of the working class the capitalists have always relied on divisions in the ranks of the workers. They strive to pit men against women, skilled and higher-paid against unskilled and lower paid, white against black.

It is therefore essential for the workers to unite their ranks, irrespective of race, creed, sex or outlook, in order to present the strongest force against the employing class.

But unity divorced from pursuit of the class aims of the workers is meaningless. After all, if the left forces in the

movement were to capitulate to Wilson, were to rally behind him and his policies of class collaboration, the working class would suffer heavy defeats.

That is why the tendency of many Labour Party members to rally behind Wilson's leadership in response to his specious plea for "unity" is a tragic mistake. The unity of the movement that is required is not the false unity of class collaboration but the unity of struggle against the capitalist class—and not only for concessions and improvements now, but for ending capitalist class rule altogether.

All experience shows that a stronger left, and more left forces in the leadership, leads to greater unity amongst the workers. This was clearly shown at UCS where the left leadership of Communists and other left wing shop stewards strengthened the unity and militancy of the entire UCS labour force; and beyond that it inspired the fighting unity of the British working people, especially in Scotland.

It was the same with the miners; it was the left leadership of the militants on the union executive, in the areas, and in the pits that made possible the great united struggle of the miners—and to achieve that unity the opposition of the right-wing had to be overcome. With the Pentonville Five, it was the same story—the militant fight of the left inspired the whole movement to unite against the Tory Government.

Unity is forged by discussion, argument and education. It is forged by patience, tact and hard persistent work. Above all, it is forged in struggle—and in its turn it helps to widen and deepen the struggle itself.

The right-wing will not be easily defeated. When it comes to the test it will be able to count on considerable support from the establishment who regard the right wing leaders as essential for their system. We need only consider the treatment given to right wing leaders by the mass media to see this.

When Peel, a right-winger, was defeated for his position on the General Council of the TUC, the Fleet Street papers rushed to the defence of this "moderate" and "responsible" trade union leader, and uttered their cries of anguish over his defeat by the democratic verdict of the majority of trade unionists.

When the right wing leader of the electricians and plumbers,

Frank Chapple, was unable to deliver his speech at the TUC conference, the capitalist press printed it in its entirety as an "undelivered" speech.

The main strength of the right wing, as we have seen earlier, lies in two additional factors. One, their institutional grip over the various parts of the apparatus of the labour movement, reinforced by undemocratic procedures and practices, including bans and proscriptions. Two, the outlook of the majority of the working class which is still wedded to the existing system, even though prepared to give battle and fight with determination to win particular advances or defend existing gains. The unity of all left forces is therefore required in order to overcome the formidable strength of the right.

Some degree of unity has already been achieved, and substantial results have followed as a result. There are better relations between the trade unions, left Labour people and Communists. Communists and Labour MPs speak on joint platforms, or co-operate in the same broad campaigns.

Such unity has been seen, for example, in the campaign against the Housing Finance Act, at the time of the UCS struggle, in working for a European Security Conference, in various anti-imperialist bodies and campaigns, in the peace movement, especially over Vietnam. It finds expression, too, in support for the *Morning Star*.

Unity of the left is seen particularly in the trade union movement, where the joint efforts of left Labour, Communists and other militants helps to secure the election of different left candidates to leading trade union positions and to the adoption of progressive policies.

Such unity between Communists and other left forces has also developed in the student movement, and in some important Co-operative Societies. The highpoint of unity on the left has been the big industrial battles of the past twelve months, although a weakness here has been the insufficient link between the industrial struggle and the Parliamentary Labour left.

If agreement could be reached, in an appropriate form, between left Labour people, Communists and others on the left, on the basis of a common policy and aims, measures could then be worked out to give the whole movement

greater cohesion, to provide it with a perspective of what it was fighting for instead of being limited to day-to-day objectives, to defensive battles, and to piece-meal activities.

In other words, what is required is an overall alternative policy to the right wing, and an alternative strategy, around which all the forces of the left could muster in order to win a majority of the movement for a working class standpoint and for decisive challenge to the capitalist class.

It is in fighting for such an alternative and by turning the edge of the fight sharper and sharper against the ruling class that millions can be won for the aim of basic change, for the aim of socialism.

A strong, united, determined and responsible working class movement which is capable of meeting the challenge of the monopolies, becomes a pole of attraction to the midde strata in society. Far from these sections being alienated by a united militant left, they can be detached from their traditional support for ruling class policies and parties once they see the existence of a force in society which has a policy that is in their particular interests, and an obvious capacity to realise it.

The right wing argues that watering down policy to suit the "floating voter" is essential in order to defeat the Tories at the polls. All past experience shows that the more the Labour Party abandons the fight against the rich the more disillusioned become its supporters; but the more the policy is directed against the industrialists and the landlords, the more the fight is made on behalf of the low-paid workers, the old age pensioners, the women, the youth, the immigrants, the vast mass of workers who, after all are the overwhelming majority of the nation, the more possible it is to win over the decisive millions who can rout the Tories.

End bans and proscriptions

An important contribution to unity will be the ending of all bans and proscriptions in the Labour movement. These have been imposed in the past, some as long ago as the 1920's. Their main purpose was to strengthen the right wing. The removal of these restrictions on the movement has become more urgent and possible because of the big developments in the British working class and progressive movement.

How out of date and harmful these bans are is increasingly being appreciated by wide sections of the movement. That is why the Labour Party ban on the Labour Research Department, a body that has given such yeomen service to the movement for over 50 years, has at long last been lifted. Of welcome significance, too, is the decision of the 1972 TUC annual conference to end the ban on Communists representing trades councils at the annual conference of trades councils. At a time when the valuable work of Communists on so many trades councils throughout the country has been recognised by their colleagues, it was obviously absurd to continue such an illogical and harmful ban.

Unfortunately there are other bans which still remain. Amongst these is the regulation which insists that trade unions affiliated to the Labour Party can only send delegates to Labour Party conferences or Constituency Labour Parties if they are *individual* members of the Labour Party. To be an affiliated member, and to pay for that affiliation through the political levy does not, under the present rules, permit one to represent one's union at Labour Party conferences.

All trade unionists paying the political levy are allowed, through their various trade union bodies, to participate in discussions on Labour Party policy, propose resolutions and amendments for Labour Party conferences and other Labour Party representative bodies, make nominations for the Labour Party National Executive, and sit on trade union selection committees for Parliamentary panels and prospective union candidates. But they are not allowed to attend the various Labour Party conferences and other bodies to argue in support of or to vote for their proposals, unless they are individual members of the Labour Party.

This means that millions of affiliated Labour Party members, who pay the political levy to the Labour Party, are deprived of their rights—and the unions through which they are affiliated are likewise deprived of the right to choose whom they like as their delegate. Individual membership of the Labour Party is about 750,000, but the affiliated membership is approximately $5\frac{1}{2}$ million. The unions are the main financial basis of the Labour Party, and the main source of its strength—yet when it comes to electing their delegates to the Labour Party they are virtually disenfranchised. This

affects more than Communist trade unionists, for the vast majority of trade unionists including shop stewards are not individual members of the Labour Party. Thus the question of ending this particular ban is an issue of the democratic rights of all trade unions in relation to the Labour Party.

A main source of the strength of the British trade union movement is that, with a few outdated and undemocratic exceptions, our unions are united bodies, open to all workers irrespective of political affiliation. Labour, Communist, Liberal, even Tory workers are members, side by side, of the same trade union, together with others who belong to no political party.

It is this basis which allows our unions to develop united action, including strikes, in a way which is achieved only with difficulty by unions on the Continent where the usual pattern is one of different trade union centres linked to different political organisations or trends.

If bans against non-members of the Labour Party were to operate throughout the trade union structure what a serious weakening this would mean for the unions, which would be gravely handicapped from operating as united working class bodies.

It is only logical, just, and from a working class standpoint politically necessary too, that the unions should enjoy the full democratic right to elect whom they wish to attend Labour Party conferences and bodies. The argument that this might lead to a conflict of loyalties where the delegate is concerned ignores the fact that no such conflict arises when delegates are elected to trade union conferences and other bodies.

Communists attending trade union gatherings as delegates from their trade union represent that union and act in that spirit; they are not there to represent the Communist Party. Communist trade unionists and other left wing delegates who are not individual members of the Labour Party, if elected to represent their unions at Labour Party conferences, would behave at such meetings as part of a trade union delegation, not as delegates of anyone else.

The irony of the situation is that if anyone is defying the democratic decisions of Labour Party conferences today it is, in fact, the right-wing. A blatant example was the voting

in Parliament over the Common Market. But this is by no means the only case of right wing leaders flouting the decisions of Labour Party Annual Conferences.

The lifting of all bans and proscriptions is not the narrow concern of Communists, nor of any others directly affected. It is part of the total fight to strengthen the left wing in the labour movement and defeat the right.

A democratic alliance

Building a wide alliance of forces opposed to monopoly control of our society is a democratic task.

It is democratic in its intentions, since its aim is to end the dictatoral domination of our society by big business and its political organisations.

It is democratic in its methods, since it strives to bring about revolutionary change by the democratic assertion of the will of the millions of working people who comprise the overwhelming majority of the population of Britain.

It is democratic in its deepest sense, since its ultimate purpose is to construct a society in which people have full power to exercise their democratic rights and to take all major decisions concerning their own lives and the shape of society as a whole.

In class terms, the alliance will embrace the working class, together with the intermediate non-monopoly sections of industry, along with individual small shopkeepers, farmers and artisans, and including also the intellectual forces in society comprising students as well as professional people and technicians. Part of these latter two categories are already part of the working class, employed in production by monopoly or State firms, or otherwise engaged in wage and salary earning occupations. Clearly, therefore, this alliance will embrace the overwhelming majority of the population.

The wider the alliance, the greater becomes the democratic majority, and the more does the relatively peaceful way of advance become possible. A massive display of its strength by the total forces of the people is the best way to minimise the resistance and violence of the ruling class.

The ruling class is able to maintain its domination partly because it possesses a form of alliance of its own, since it has been able to persuade sections of the people to back it and

its Tory Party. The aim of the working class and progressive movement must be to win sections of this traditional Tory support over to the side of the democratic alliance, thus increasingly isolating the monopolies and their political backing.

It is the historic role of the working class to create and lead this alliance.

The transitional changes that such an alliance will commence to introduce are democratic in character, for they will weaken the economic grip of the big monopolies, weaken the political power they wield, weaken their domination over the mass media.

More, they will involve millions in struggle, acting through their mass organisations and throwing up new forms of organisation in the midst of their activities. They will seek to develop the most direct forms of democratic activity that really enable the people to use their power.

The British people have long traditions of freedom and democracy. These will take on a new meaning and significance as the people begin to travel faster and faster along the road to socialism.

It is time that Britain changed course and began to travel this democratic road to socialism. The capitalist class today is facing many acute crises. Each step which it takes to overcome them creates new problems for it. But if it is allowed to go unchallenged it can continue to hold on to its power, staggering from crisis to crisis, meting out more and more damage to the people in its desperation to retain its power and its profits system.

It is time for the British people to declare: "Enough!". The British people are sufficiently strong to take power and run Britain for themselves. They have the capacity to build a new Britain, a better Britain, a socialist Britain. A Britain in which men and women have a real purpose in life, where no one is a cog in a machine owned by the millionaires, where the talents of every individual are treasured and encouraged by society, where there is no more exploitation of one person by another.

A Britain in which poverty, homelessness and unemployment are nightmares of the past, where the young can face the future with confidence and joy, and the old folk can end

their days without material shortages and with the possibility of still making a valuable contribution to human progress. Where women are no longer slaves in the home, and where they have equal opportunities to pursue any career or work they desire. Where racialism and other backward ideas are being eradicated in people's minds.

Where pollution and environmental nuisances are tackled promptly by an alert community which has the power to do so. Where tyrannical bureaucrats are no longer allowed to rob people of their rights. Where people—at their place of work, in their localities, and in the country as a whole—are the real arbiters of power, take all the decisions concerning their lives and democratically determine their own future.

Yes, we can achieve all this. We can build a prosperous, happy, free, progressive, and independent Britain, a Britain without capitalists, a Socialist Britain.

JOIN THE PARTY OF SOCIALISM

The aim of the Communist Party is to achieve a socialist Britain in which the means of production, distribution and exchange will be socially owned and utilised in a planned way for the benefit of all.

This necessitates a revolutionary transformation of society, ending the existing capitalist system with its exploitation of man by man and replacing it by a socialist society in which each will contribute according to his ability and receive according to his work.

(from: *Aims and Constitution of the Communist Party*)

I wish to join the Communist Party/Young Communist League (delete whichever is inapplicable)

Name .....

Address .....

Age (if under 18) .....

Send to: Communist Party, 16 King St., London, W.C.2
