

The Way Forward *

For the Countries within the Sphere of British Imperialism

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The significance of our conference is very considerably increased by the moment at which it is being held.

It meets at the moment of the present critical situation in South-East Asia, with the now open threats of extended war by Mr. Dulles and the American war camp.

It meets at the moment when the hydrogen bomb explosions in the Pacific—the first warning salvos or preliminary artillery barrage of the new intensified American war threats have aroused anger, horror and indignation among all decent people, and led to the universal demand for the banning of such weapons, as originally proposed by the Soviet Union and now proclaimed by the Pope.

It meets at the time of the Geneva Conference which draws together representatives, for the first time, of the Five Powers, including the Chinese People's Republic, and the Korean People's Republic.

And it meets at a moment when here in Britain the Easter conferences of trade unions and of the Co-operative Party have demonstrated the stirring of the British people on these

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questions and the overwhelming anger and opposition against these imperialist war plans.

The fact that this present critical war situation, which is felt by everyone and occupies the attention of the entire world, centres in South-East Asia and the Pacific, demonstrates that it is a question of imperialism, of imperialist wars of aggression against the peoples and the just freedom struggles of the subject and dependent peoples, which is at the very heart of the world situation today. These are the questions which are the concern of our conference.

It will be the first concern of our conference to proclaim our opposition to these plans for extended war in South-East Asia and Eastern Asia; to demand that our Government shall take its plain stand of opposition to these war plans and proclaim it as definitely as the Indian Government of Jawaharlal Nehru has already done; and to call for lasting peace and a just peace in Eastern Asia, for the realisation of the national aspirations of all the peoples in South-East Asia who are living under imperialist domination.

It has been pointed out to you that our conference meets under certain difficulties. It is not surprising in this situation. It is precisely because of this critical world situation at this moment and of the significance of such a conference as ours at this moment, a significance well understood by the Governments concerned, that our conference has this time to meet under exceptional difficulties, limitations and restraints imposed by Government action robbing us of many of our delegates.

We would say at the outset that these attempts to hinder free movement and interchange of experiences and friendship between the peoples in the countries of the British Empire by the Governments concerned is only an expression of the guilty conscience of the rulers with regard to the real feelings of these peoples, and will not succeed in defeating the aim of our conference to strengthen the co-operation of our peoples for peace and national independence, and for the well-being of our peoples.

I. OUR CONFERENCES OF 1947 AND OF 1954

Seven years have passed since the first conference of Communist and Workers' Parties in countries dominated directly or indirectly by British imperialism met here in London in 1947, on the initiative of the Communist Party of India.

That conference was attended by representatives from twelve countries: Australia, Britain, Burma, Canada, Ceylon, Cyprus, India, Ireland, Malaya, Palestine, South Africa, Syria and Lebanon.

The Declaration of that conference, signed by representatives of these parties proclaimed :

“We greet with enthusiasm the unprecedented upsurge of the colonial and subject peoples in the great struggle for liberation... The fight for the peace of the world, the advance of the subject peoples to independence, the struggle of the workers for socialism are all part of a common fight. The alliance of the freedom movements of the subject peoples and the working class movement is vital for the victory of the aims of both...”

“Our Conference in London has strengthened the bonds of fraternal solidarity of the Communist Parties within the countries of the Empire. The leading role in building the solidarity of the peoples of the Empire countries must be borne by the working class in Britain, the Dominions and the colonial countries. Foremost in this task will be the Communist Parties with their socialist understanding and internationalist spirit.”

Today, after seven years, we meet anew to carry forward these common aims at an enormously more advanced stage in the struggle for peace, national independence and socialism.

If today the representatives of some of the countries which participated in the 1947 conference, such as Malaya and Burma, where the war of national liberation is speeding forward, cannot be directly present to participate in our deliberations, this is a sign not of the weakening of those parties or of the popular struggle but of their advance, and also of the measures of war and repression which the rulers

of imperialism are operating in wide areas of the Empire to maintain their rule and hamper co-operation of the peoples struggling for freedom. The iron curtain of imperialist restriction hinders the full representative character of our conference. Nevertheless we are glad to welcome the participation of accredited delegates of organisations from countries not represented in 1947, especially from the Middle East and Africa. And in respect of those territories not here directly represented, we are the more conscious of our responsibility to voice the struggle of all the peoples who are at present oppressed by the domination of British imperialism.

We are glad also to welcome many observers and guests from other territories, from groups of colonials in Britain, and from British working-class organisation.

Our conference will speak not for the imperialists, not for the Lytteltons, Menzies, Malans and their associates, but for the hundreds of millions of working people who are oppressed and exploited by the British monopolists, who are subject to the extending offensive of American imperialism and the drive to war, and who are striving for freedom and peace, and for the opportunity to build a happier future for their countries.

II. SEVEN YEARS OF CHANGE

Great changes have taken place during these seven years since 1947.

Victory of the Chinese Revolution

Seven years ago China had not yet completed its victory in the war of liberation against Chiang Kai-shek, the satellite and agent of American imperialism. The final victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949 and the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic has transformed the international situation and the balance of forces in the world. The example of the victorious Chinese Revolution has given new inspiration to the national liberation movements throughout Asia and in every continent. The alliance of the USSR, Chinese

People's Republic, and the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe, together with the German Democratic Republic, constitutes a mighty and impregnable alliance of states of the camp of democracy and socialism. It embraces the population of one-third of the world and represents the strongest bulwark of freedom and peace in the interests of the peoples of the entire world. This transformation in the international balance of strength is increasingly affecting the course of world politics, has brought the first beginning of top level negotiations of the Powers at Berlin and Geneva, and is thus powerfully strengthening the camp of peace against the menace of a new world war.

India and Pakistan

Seven years ago India was still a direct colony of the British Empire. That situation ended in the summer of 1947. In the face of the universal upsurge of the Indian people, including the Indian armed forces, British imperialism could no longer maintain its direct rule in India, and the states of India and Pakistan were established.

The full liberation and independence of the peoples of India and Pakistan from the domination of imperialism has still to be won. The stranglehold of British capital still holds the economy of these countries in its grip; the Indian masses are still at the lowest level of colonial standards, and continue to suffer all the miseries of double exploitation at the hands of the foreign monopolists and their own exploiters. The partition of India has imposed heavy problems; and American imperialism is engaged in drawing Pakistan into its military orbit.

Nevertheless, especially since the victories of the Chinese Revolution, with its far-reaching influence on India, and on the whole balance of strength in Asia, great changes are taking place in these countries. The overwhelming anti-imperialist feeling of the people, especially in face of the aggression of western imperialism in eastern Asia, and the struggle equally against the stranglehold of British imperialism and

against the new threat of American imperialism, has brought new trends to the forefront. Even within the limits of the existing regime, India under the leadership of Premier Jawaharlal Nehru stands more and more actively and openly in the cause of peace and against the aggressive aims of the imperialist war camp, and draws towards closer association with the camp of peace.

At the same time within India the democratic front, supported and built up by the Communist Party of India, is winning ever wider support and has gained signal victories in the electoral field and in mass struggles. It stands out already as the advancing alternative national political force in India to the rule of bankrupt Congress regime, representing the rule of big monopolists and landlords. The programme of the Communist Party of India, finally adopted in 1952, marks out the future path for India. We hail the historic advance of the Communist Party of India and its allies, the true representatives of the future of India.

We welcome also the signal of the elections in East Pakistan, where the victory of the United Front and the rout of the reactionary Moslem League leadership has dealt a blow to the policy of making Pakistan a military vassal of the United States and has marked the advance of the supporters of democracy and peace.

Advance of the Colonial Liberation Movement

During these seven years the liberation movement of the colonial and dependent peoples has swept forward through every corner of the world. It is no longer a question of the post-war upsurge which followed the second world war. Today, nearly a decade after the close of the war, the revolt of the colonial peoples is higher and more universal than ever before. If once the colonial territories could be spoken of as the rear and the reserve of imperialism, and the struggle of their peoples as the reserve of the struggle of the working class against imperialism, today the colonial front is at this moment the principal active fighting front against imperialism.

In South-East Asia the Vietnam People's Republic advances in the eighth year of its war of liberation against French imperialism, which is now only sustained to continue the war by the pressure and direct support of American imperialism. The Malayan National Liberation Movement carries forward unbroken in the sixth year of its war against British imperialism. The Burmese People's Liberation Movement extends its strength over a great part of the territory of Burma.

The whole Middle East is aflame. The prolonged resistance of the Middle Eastern peoples to the imperialist plans for a Middle Eastern Military Pact, corresponding to the Atlantic Pact, is evidence of this situation. In Iran, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company has had to surrender its half-century-old monopoly, through which hundreds of millions of pounds have been plundered from the Iranian people, and withdraw in face of the popular upsurge and the Oil Nationalisation Law. Today, the establishment of a shaky military dictatorship to stem the popular advance is being utilised to prepare a new oil agreement, in which the American monopolists seek to establish their dominant role; but the advance of the popular struggle will assuredly shatter in the end such renewed attempts of imperialism to re-establish its domination over the Iranian people.

The collapse of the former British colony of Palestine has been followed by the establishment of the state of Israel, which is nominally independent, but in practice a semi-colony of American finance-capital. But there also the popular struggle advances, as seen in the recent election victories of Nazareth, when Easter greeted the rising of the Red Star over Nazareth with 40 per cent of the votes for the Communist candidates.

In Egypt, as in other Middle Eastern countries, the method of military dictatorship has been used to crush the advance of the people; but the instability of this regime has been demonstrated in recent events. The Egyptian people are astir. Their anti-imperialist feeling is deep and hinders every attempted agreement of their rulers with imperialism. Only the absence

of a united Communist Party, leading the Egyptian national liberation movement, delays the victory of the Egyptian people in the heavy struggle which they have still to wage against the parallel offensive of American and British imperialism and their own reactionary exploiters.

The liberation movement in the Sudan has made great strides in recent years, with the working class emerging as a powerful force in the fight against imperialism. In Iraq, the masses rose in revolt in 1948 against the Portsmouth Treaty imposed by British imperialism, and again in November 1952, when a new revolutionary upsurge was led by the illegal Communist Party. In all these countries of the Middle East the power of British imperialism is being undermined.

Most significant of all in the present period is the upsurge of Africa. In Kenya, the whole world has seen with admiration the heroic struggle of the Kenya African people against the armed onslaught of British imperialism; and the shameful criminal barbarities of the imperialists in this war have shocked the conscience of the world and all that is decent among the British people. Nigeria and the Gold Coast have been the scene of large-scale strikes, mass struggles, local uprisings and armed repression during this period. Here the imperialist tactics to divide and confuse the national movement, and to corrupt the upper leadership, taking advantage of the still early stage of development of the role of the working class and of the Marxist groups, have temporarily availed to hold in check the advance of the people. The banishment of Seretse from leadership of Bamangwato people, because of his marriage to an English woman, and the steadfast support given him by the people in face of heavy pressure and intimidation by the British authorities, as also the banishment of the Kabaka of Buganda, because he voiced the demands of his people for self-government—these are all evidence of the universal extending unrest and spirit of resistance to imperialist rule.

In South Africa the Malan Government has established a

Hitlerite regime of racial oppression and anti-democratic legislation which only betrays the guilty panic and hatred of the white exploiting minority against the four-fifths majority of the population, the savagely exploited African, Asian and coloured masses. Against this regime of barbarism the united resistance of the defiance movement has been maintained in spite of all the measures of oppression. In Central Africa the imposition of federation represents a similar attempt to establish a Malanite type of white settler dictatorship, and has met with the united opposition of the entire African population.

All over Africa the African peoples are demonstrating that they are no longer prepared to be the subject of imperialist enslavement and exploitation. They are growing conscious of their strength, once they march forward and fight in unity. The future of Africa belongs to the African peoples.

In the West Indies also, the oldest region of British colonial domination, the torch of freedom is being carried forward by the people. The absolute victory of the People's Progressive Party in British Guiana in an election based on universal suffrage, and the consequent suppression of the constitution and despatch of warships and troops by the British Government, because the newly elected ministers sought to carry out the most elementary democratic and social reforms in accordance with their election programme, has exposed for all time the hypocrisy of the colonial constitutions imposed by British imperialism as a fig-leaf for its rule.

The example of British Guiana has shown that even these restricted colonial constitutions, in which real power is firmly retained in the hands of British colonial officials, become regarded as too dangerous as soon as the people endeavour to use their limited rights under them in order to advance their democratic movement or win reforms. These so-called constitutions are only permitted to operate so long as docile politicians and stooges of the Bustamente or Grantley Adams type betray the people and serve the interests of imperialism. Once genuine representatives of the people endeavour

to utilise these constitutional forms in the interests of the people, the mask is thrown aside and the mailed fist comes down.

In British Honduras corresponding measures are being openly contemplated to prevent an electoral verdict displeasing to the imperialist rulers. New ordinances, anti-democratic legislation and bans on transport and on literature throughout the West Indies reveal the growing alarm and repression of the imperialists in face of the advance of the people.

These seven years have shown, especially in Malaya and Kenya, that there is no limit to the brutality and savagery of modern imperialism in seeking to maintain its colonial domination. All the lying talk of voluntary granting of self-government, based on the enforced evacuation of India or Burma, is shattered by the examples of Malaya, Kenya, Central African Federation, and British Guiana. The dying beast of imperialism grows more ferocious, as it senses its approaching end. While against the 400 millions of India the resources and manpower were lacking to maintain the machinery of direct rule and repression once the half million of the Indian Army could no longer be counted upon, and therefore a strategic compromise with the upper-class national leadership had to be effected, the full force of colonial dictatorship and armed violence is shown against the six millions of Malaya, the five millions of Kenya and the half million of British Guiana.

Offensive of American Imperialism

The British Empire is still the largest colonial empire, extending over one-quarter of the world. But today the British Empire is faced with a new menace to its continued domination not only from the advancing revolt of the peoples within it but at the same time from the extending offensive of American imperialism.

American imperialism had already reached its overwhelming predominant position in the imperialist world by the end of the second world war. But it is these seven years which have seen the unfolding of its offensive for world domination.

Almost in the same month as our conference seven years ago the Truman Doctrine gave the first proclamation of this programme of extending intervention in all countries for the aims of world domination in the name of the "cold war" Through the successive stages of the Marshall plan, the North Atlantic Treaty, the Korean war, the imposition of colossal rearmament programmes on its allies, the trade bans to strangle East-West trade, the plans of rearming German militarism in Western Germany and Japanese militarism, through Point Four and the Military Security Administration, through the new aggressive threats of Dulles in South-East Asia and the brandishing of the hydrogen bomb, the offensive has gone forward. Billions of dollars have been spent in subventions and supply of arms to establish the American grip on scores of countries in every continent. American military, naval and air bases, and over 1½ million American troops had by 1953 been established in 63 of the 97 countries outside the United States.

Just as the previous offensive of the Hitlerite Axis used the slogans of anti-Communism and the anti-Comintern pact to cover its aim of world domination; so the present offensive of American imperialism uses the same slogans to pursue corresponding aims not only against the countries of Socialism and People's Democracy but for the domination of the older colonial empires of the European colonial powers, as well as of the other capitalist countries.

It is above all against the countries of the British Empire, representing the largest colonial world empire, and therefore the principal rival and richest spoils, that this extending American offensive has been directed. In trade, shipping, finance, and investment, the American monopolists have steadily displaced the former British dominance. By 1951 United States exports to the British Empire (Canada and the sterling area), amounting to £1,425 million, for the first time exceeded the United Kingdom total of £1,391 million; omitting Canada, the United States total of £465 million amounted to nearly two-fifths of the United Kingdom total of £1,254 million.

Canada has become in the main a North American annexe of the United States, even though there are contradictory trends to stake out the claim of a secondary imperialist power and to manoeuvre between the United States and Britain for this purpose.

Australia and New Zealand have been drawn into the American orbit through the Anzus Pact, with the pointed exclusion of Britain. Nor has the device of a royal visit availed to change this real trend, which has been carried forward by the American-financed projects to exploit oil and uranium resources in Australia. In all these dominions and in South Africa, United States investments have been advancing faster than British, and the American proportion of their markets has been in general increased, despite imperial preference. The General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs imposed by American pressure, has prevented the extension of imperial preference, and has thus been used to extend the American offensive.

In India the United States first displaced Britain in the larger share of the market in 1951; and while the main field of capital investment is still in Britain's hands, active United States financial penetration has begun.

In all the British colonies the first stages of American financial penetration have developed, mainly in the form of buying a controlling interest in existing concerns, especially mining.

The total of U.S. investments in the British Empire and in British spheres of influence (i.e., including the Middle Eastern countries within the British sphere) rose from \$2,689 million in 1936 to \$5,685 million in 1950, or more than doubled. The Point Four programme has been devised to extend American technical missions and prepare the way for American penetration in all the so called under-developed, i.e., colonial and semi-colonial, territories. The Paley Report has set out the aim to extend the American hold on all the raw material resources of the world. Even where these raw material resources remain in British hands, and are re-

garded as valuable dollar earners, as with Malayan rubber and tin, the dependence on the American buyer, and on American stock-piling programmes or sudden cessation of buying, leads to extreme economic instability, with the United States holding the whip hand.

This offensive of American imperialism has extended also to Britain, with the first stages of economic intervention and penetration through the Marshall Plan machinery from 1947, the dependence of every British Government since the war on American loans and grants, the imposition of trade bans, and the beginnings of military occupation with the establishment of the bomber bases and troops in 1948. U.S. direct investment in Britain was officially recorded to have reached £300 million by 1950, or the highest figure of American investment in any European country. This figure of direct investment considerably understates the real penetration.

At the same time the contradictions between American and British imperialism are rising, as predicted by Stalin in his *Economic Problems of Socialism* in 1952. These contradictions have found partial expression in official policy, as in the Churchill speech of May 11, 1953, in the proceedings of the Empire Finance Ministers' Conference at Sydney in January 1954, and in the current efforts to obtain some partial relaxation of the bans on East-West trade. In popular feeling the antagonism to American domination and military occupation has reached a very high point.

Deepening of the Crisis of British Imperialism

As a result of all these conditions, the crisis of British imperialism has very greatly deepened during the seven years.

At the time of our conference seven years ago the full conditions of crisis were only beginning to reveal themselves. 1947 was the first year of crisis of the balance of payments, which led to the rapid exhaustion of the American loan, and acceptance of economic subjection to the American Marshall Plan. 1949 saw the devaluation crisis which registered the victory of the dollar over sterling as the single

world currency in the capitalist world. 1951 saw the renewal of the crisis of the balance of payments, despite all the previous claims that it had been overcome. The temporary unstable recovery of the balance of payments during 1952 and 1953 has been based, not on any underlying change in the situation, but initially on a heavy contraction of imports, and mainly on a temporary shift in the terms of trade (lower prices paid for imports from colonial and semi-colonial countries and relatively higher export prices) alongside a deterioration of living standards in Britain, as well as in the colonial and dependent countries. The onset of economic decline in the United States during the latter part of 1953 and beginning of 1954 throws its shadow over the British economic situation.

The measures adopted by the British imperialists to meet this crisis of their economy have been based above all on the heaviest increase of colonial exploitation. This has been partially reflected in the continuous and accelerated growth of the sterling balances owed to the dependent colonial territories, from a total of £454 million at the end of 1945, to £1,222 million at the end of 1952, or an increase of £768 million in seven years, representing an annual rate of £110 million a year extracted from the colonial peoples in this form, without current return of goods. This is more than the total net deficit of the balance of payments in the same period. Britain's net invisible trade earnings were raised from £121 million in 1947 to £474 million in 1953, or a four-fold increase. Despite the recurring deficits in the balance of payments, and the dependence on American loans and grants, the export of capital to the sterling area has been forced up, and during the six years 1947-1952 amounted to £1,083 million, or an annual rate of £180 million a year.

The consequences of this policy of intensified colonial exploitation have shown themselves in catastrophic deterioration in the standard of living of the colonial peoples. This in turn has further strengthened the revolt of the colonial peoples.

To meet the revolt of the colonial peoples, and the consequent colonial wars, as well as the requirements of the rearmament programme imposed by American imperialism, the arms expenditure of Britain and the overseas military expenditure have been enormously increased. British arms expenditure has risen from £263 million in 1938 on the eve of the second world war to £1,776 million in 1953, or a seven-fold increase on what then represented a heavy rearmament programme. The two-year period of conscription has been imposed and maintained to meet the ceaseless demands of overseas military commitments. By January 1954 the British Minister of Defence, Lord Alexander, stated that no less than one in eleven of the population were engaged in the armed forces or in their direct supply, and that even so there was still no available mobile strategic reserve to meet any new commitments. United Nations statistics have shown that this is the heaviest military drain in proportion to population on any major country in the world. While the net deficit in the balance of payments during the eight years from the end of the war to the end of 1953 amounted to £314 million, the total overseas military expenditure in the same period amounted to £1,313 million, or over four times as much. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Butler, stated at the Finance Ministers' Conference in Sydney that Britain's arms expenditure represented a burden of £350 to £400 million a year on the negative side in Britain's balance of payments.

Thus the deepening crisis of British imperialism is reflected in the deepening of the crisis within Britain. The need for a radical change of policy arises equally for the British people as for all the peoples in the countries of the British Empire, both the self-governing dominions and the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

III. AIM OF THE CONFERENCE

Our conference meets at a time when all the contradictions arising from this crisis of British imperialism are advancing

to their sharpest point. The choice before the peoples in all the countries within the region of British imperialism stands out more clearly and inescapably than ever before.

American imperialism is driving headlong in the direction of a new world war. The Dulles Doctrine, promulgated in January 1954, has proclaimed the "new look" strategy of a world atomic or hydrogen bomb war to be launched by the United States and its satellites at any moment when the American rulers think fit to designate the advance of national liberation or socialism in any part of the world as "Communist aggression". The British Government has, up to the present, passively acquiesced in this doctrine, although it is universally recognised that such an atomic war, which would make Britain the main American bombing base in Europe, would inevitably make it the main target and lead to the destruction of Britain. The dread consequences of the explosion of the American hydrogen bomb in the Pacific in March have aroused universal concern among the peoples of the entire world. But no effective steps have yet been taken to break free from the death-grip of the American alliance. British policy still supports the re-armament of West German militarism. The older dominions are equally tied in their policy to the United States. Alone, India has taken the first steps towards an independent policy away from the American war alignment. The colonial peoples are dragged against their will in the wake of the war camp.

All the colonial and semi-colonial peoples are facing intolerable conditions of life. Imperialist policy is strangling the development of their countries, and has brought the steady worsening of their already murderously low standards of life. In Malaya, the sixth wage-cut since the war is being imposed, although it is officially admitted that the rising prices have brought the level of real wages heavily below pre-war.

The United Nations has coined a new name—"under-developed territories"—for the colonies and semi-colonies, which embrace over 1,000 million people, the majority of whom are within the sphere of British imperialism. But it cannot

hide the fact that in these countries infant mortality reaches levels running in some cases as high as 400 per 1,000 compared with 27 in Britain. The average expectation of life is 30 years compared with 65 in Britain.

Its Food and Agricultural Committee Report for 1952 admits that the average daily diet in these countries was still substantially below the already inadequate pre-war standards, and the latest 1953 Report indicates that it has fallen lower still. The latest annual report of the Colombo Plan for South-East Asia reminds us that even if the plan is fulfilled in the next three years (of which there is grave doubt) it will do little more than maintain the existing low standards of life.

The average annual wage of Africans in Kenya is £27, and the income per head only £5 18s. A study of Egypt conducted by the Rockefeller Foundation for the period 1948-52 revealed that expectation of life at birth was only 15-20 years, and 50 per cent of the children died before reaching the age of five years.

In plain words, in the British colonies and semi-colonies hundreds of millions are hungry, disease-ridden, ill-clothed and ill-housed from the cradle to the grave.

It is against these conditions that the colonial peoples are struggling.

These conditions are in all the more striking contrast to the unparalleled social, political, economic and cultural advance achieved by the liberated countries which were formerly colonial territories of the old Czarist Empire. These countries, on the basis of the alliance of their peoples with the Russian working class, won freedom from imperialism a generation ago, and have now established socialism and are speeding forward in the direction of Communism. From the most backward levels still in Middle Eastern countries or India, they have advanced to an economic level comparable with industrialised European countries, and a far superior level in every social measure. From being exploited agrarian sources of raw materials they have developed balanced economies of large-scale industry and mechanised agriculture; they have

increased the real income per head over twelvefold; they have not only liquidated illiteracy but they have three to four times as many university students as Britain in proportion to population; they have more doctors in proportion to population than in Britain; and 150 times as many as in Nigeria. Such is the achievement of the triumphant alliance of the working class and the liberated colonial peoples. In the Chinese People's Republic already during these few years since liberation, the first beginnings of a corresponding advance have been made.

It is not surprising that the colonial peoples everywhere are in revolt to win their freedom, to win new conditions of life, to improve their economic and social conditions, to win democratic rights and national independence, to end imperialist exploitation and to rebuild their countries. All the savage repression of imperialism, the penal ordinances, mass arrests and concentration camps, the naval guns and the bombing planes, can never crush this just revolt, which grows and extends everywhere.

From this platform we proclaim on behalf of the militant working class and all true supporters of democracy and socialism in the imperialist oppressing countries our unity and solidarity with the colonial peoples in their battle for our common victory against our common enemy, imperialism.

The crisis of imperialism strikes also at the living conditions, the national existence and the whole future of the British People. It imposes on them the worsening of their economic conditions and standards to pay for the endless colonial wars and military expenditure; it conscripts their youth not for defence but to fight in shameful colonial wars against people struggling for their freedom; it subjects them to American domination; it drags Britain towards an American-imposed world war.

The advance of the mass movement in the recent period in Britain and the development of the left in the trade unions and the Labour Party have shown that the British people are stirring to change these conditions arising from the crisis of imperialism.

This imperialist system of domination of Britain is neither in the interests of the colonial peoples nor in the interests of the British people. It is in their common interest to end it.

The aim of our conference is to help to build our alliance for this common aim of victory over imperialism and its replacement by fraternal co-operation of the peoples.

Our conference sets itself the aim:

1. To proclaim to the world the needs and demands and aspirations of all the people of countries at present under the domination of British imperialism.

2. To draw closer our unity and co-operation in the struggle for peace against the war policies of American and British imperialism.

3. To draw closer our unity and co-operation in the struggle for national independence of all the peoples who are at present held in colonial and semi-colonial subjection or whose national independence is threatened or subverted by American penetration.

4. To build the alliance of our peoples for common victory in the struggle against imperialism, and for fraternal co-operation and mutual help after victory in the reconstruction of our countries on the basis of national independence and equal rights.

5. To strengthen the co-operation of the Communist and Workers' Parties in our countries as the vanguard of the struggle of our peoples for freedom, peace and the aims of socialism.

IV. THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

In the present world situation the fight for peace stands in the forefront for all of us. The struggle of the peoples in the countries under the domination of British imperialism to end the present colonial wars, banish the menace of a new world war, and win the victory for peace, is a part of the common struggle of the world camp of democracy and peace.

The war camp in the world to-day is the camp of imperialism. The Atlantic war alliance is the alliance of the im-

perialist colony-owning powers, of American, British, French, Belgium, Dutch imperialism and their associates. The wars in progress in the present world situation are colonial wars of imperialist aggression against the national independence movement of the peoples. Such are the colonial wars in Vietnam, Malaya, and Kenya. The Korean war also represented the aggression of American imperialism, together with its satellites, against Korean national freedom and with the aim to turn all Korea into an American colony. The menace of a new world war arises from the aggressive plans of the imperialist powers, led by American imperialism, and from the deep contradictions of the imperialist powers. They are preparing to rearm West German and Japanese militarism. They finance and arm their war-mad puppets, the Chiang Kai-sheks, Syngman Rhee and Bao Dais, as their agents for war. They are piling up armaments at an unparalleled rate. During the last three years the Atlantic Pact powers have trebled their arms expenditure. They openly proclaim their intention to use atom bombs and hydrogen bombs, and are preparing for germ warfare.

The fight for peace is thus the most urgent common concern of all peoples in the world.

The fight for peace in the present world situation is closely bound up with the fight for national independence of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples.

This follows from the nature of the present world situation. The wars now in progress are colonial wars. History has shown that such local wars can prove the breeding ground, if they are not stopped, to extend to major conflicts and to world war. The Dulles doctrine of "instant retaliation" has demonstrated that American imperialism is prepared to use such local conflicts as the starting point for its plans of major world war. The American war makers are exercising the most extreme pressure on the French Government to continue the war in Vietnam, and to prevent an armistice, at a time when the entire French people, no less than the people of Vietnam, demand an armistice and the opening of

negotiations. Behind British and French imperialism, which are conducting these wars, stands American imperialism.

To end these colonial wars is an imperative necessity in the fight for peace. These wars of imperialist aggression against peoples struggling for freedom are unjust wars. The national liberation movement of the peoples who are fighting to free their countries from foreign invaders and foreign domination are conducting just wars which correspond to the true interests of world peace.

We call for an immediate cease-fire in Malaya, the lifting of the emergency regime, and negotiations with the leaders of the Malayan National Liberation Movement in order to establish the national independence of Malaya.

We call for an immediate cease-fire in Kenya, the release of arrested and imprisoned leaders and national patriots, and negotiations with the leaders of the Kenya African people on the basis of the recognition of their just national demands and the right of their people to the land of their country.

We call for the withdrawal of forces from British Guiana with restoration of democratic rights, and restoration of the elected ministers who have been wrongfully deposed, in order to reach agreement with them for the advance of British Guiana to full democracy and national freedom.

We call similarly for the withdrawal of troops from Egypt, Sudan, Cyprus, Iraq, Jordan and other Middle Eastern countries, and from all the bases of occupation where they serve the interests of colonial subjection and of the war plans of imperialism.

At the same time the fight for peace must extend to the wider aims to endeavour to reduce international tension and to end the American programme of the cold war. We need to work for the aims of top-level negotiations and co-operation of the powers for a five-power pact, the recognition of the rightful place of China in the United Nations, the restoration of the role of the United Nations as an instrument of peace on the basis of the co-operation of the leading powers, the banning of atomic and other weapons of mass destruction and the all-round reduction of armaments.

In some quarters, it is argued that these wider aims of international co-operation of the powers and of a five-power peace pact are of less direct concern to the colonial and semi-colonial peoples who have still before them the foremost task to win their national independence.

It is even argued in some quarters that the fight for peace does not correspond to the vital interests of the colonial peoples who are striving for their national independence, since the division of the powers may make easier their fight for freedom. Did not the first world war lead to the first great colonial upsurge in a wide series of countries? Did not the second world war bring a still greater colonial upsurge? Would not a third world war, these advocates argue, lead to the downfall of imperialism and the victory of liberation?

Or again, the argument is put forward that the colonial peoples cannot concern themselves with the fight for peace until *after* they have won their national independence, since, so long as they are subject, they have no control over the policies of their governments. Therefore, it is argued that the fight for national independence must come first, and the fight for peace can only come at a later stage.

These arguments are false and dangerous. They are calculated in practice, whether consciously or unconsciously, to separate the colonial peoples from the world camp of democracy and peace, and thereby to weaken their struggle by isolating them from their strongest allies. Thus, these arguments, while noisily proclaiming the aim of national independence as the supreme objective, in fact serve the interests of the war camp of imperialism, to disrupt the anti-imperialist camp of the peoples, and are in consequence contrary to the real interests of national independence.

It is true that the full strength of the peoples who are at present subject to colonial or semi-colonial domination can only be finally exercised without limit or restriction on the side of peace when they have won their national independence. But it is now that the fight for peace is the most urgent. The fact that national liberation has still to be won

does not mean that these peoples cannot play, and do not need to play, a powerful role in the common struggle for peace already in the existing conditions, even at the same time as they are fighting for their national independence.

The example of India has shown how the pressure of the people against the war plans of imperialism and for peace can exercise its influence, even though its government still has close links with imperialism. India today stands out as an increasingly active and potent force on the side of peace in the present world situation, and will still more exercise that role in proportion as the democratic peace movement advances in India. Thus it was not without reason that G. M. Malenkov, in his recent speech on March 12, paid tribute to "the valuable contribution to the strengthening of peace being made by the great Indian people".

Similarly, it is true that in the past, when imperialism ruled the entire world, before the victory of socialism and the formation of the world camp of peace and democracy, in that past period the divisions of the imperialists represented in a certain measure the opportunity for those oppressed by them to revolt. But this is no longer true in the same way of the present world situation. The world today is divided between the camp of imperialism and war and the camp of socialism, democracy and peace. The interests of all peoples, equally in the imperialist countries and in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, are bound up with the camp of socialism, democracy and peace, headed by the USSR and the Chinese People's Republic, and with the victory of the aims of peaceful co-existence.

It was not the fact of the first world war, the outbreak of which was a disaster for all peoples without exception, but the victory of the first Socialist Revolution, born of the fight against the imperialist war, which led to the mighty colonial upsurge following the war. It was not the fact of the second world war of Hitlerite aggression, the outbreak of which was equally a disaster to all peoples, but the victorious anti-fascist struggle of all the peoples of the world, with

the Socialist Soviet Union in the forefront, and the subsequent victory of the Chinese People's Revolution which gave the impetus to the present mighty upsurge of the colonial peoples throughout the world.

The menace of a new world war threatens all peoples without distinction. No corner of the globe no territory, is immune or even remote from its menace. The strategic war plans of imperialism are especially concerned with the colonial and semi-colonial areas of the world. This is seen in the concentration of attention on the Middle Eastern countries to build a so-called Middle Eastern Defence Organisation or military alliance of puppets and dictators under Western imperialist control. It is seen in the lavish expenditure to develop Africa as a war base. It is seen in the American moves to draw Pakistan into its military network not only because of the key character of the position of Pakistan from a strategic point of view but in order to put pressure on India.

Africa, the Middle East, India, Pakistan and South East Asia are all seen as key strategic areas for the global war planned by American imperialism and its Atlantic partners. Further, the economic burdens of the war drive and rearmament fall with merciless severity on the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Here are seen the decisive areas of strategic raw materials required for rearmament. The spoliation and plunder of the colonial peoples is intensified to supply the needs of the war drive. The hypocritical "development" and "aid" plans are openly transformed to become part of the war drive and fall under the Military Security Administration. The cost of the drive to war is paid for above all with the ceaselessly intensified exploitation of the colonial peoples.

As against this menace of the imperialist war drive to all peoples, the victory of the aims of the peace camp, of peaceful co-existence and of co-operation of the powers, and the consequent reduction of inter-national tension and limitation of armaments, would provide the most favourable conditions

for the advance of the struggle of the colonial and dependent peoples for national independence. The main basis for the present inflated level of armaments and of armed forces, which in practice are principally used at the present time against the colonial peoples and national liberation movements, would be removed; and the incentive would be increased to seek a peaceful settlement with the national demands of the colonial peoples. The functioning of the United Nations would be transformed from its present distortion as a rubberstamp machinery for imperialist aggression into its proper role as a machinery for peace and for the rights of nations. The victory of the peace camp against the most reactionary war-making imperialist sections would mean the powerful advance of the democratic and progressive forces in all countries.

Thus the peoples in the colonial and semi-colonial countries have an equal and common interest alongside the peoples in the imperialist countries, the British people and the Canadian, Australian and New Zealand peoples in the fight for peace.

Nor is the real strength of their contribution to the common fight for peace paralysed by their lack of political rights. Just as the fight for peace is closely bound up with the fight for national independence, so is the fight of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples for national independence an integral part of the front of the fight for peace. The revolt of the Kenya African people has shattered the British war plans to make Kenya, alongside Cyprus, their base in the Middle Eastern region in the place of Suez. The heroic struggles of the Vietnam and Malayan peoples, alongside the liberation war of the Korean people, have held up the openly proclaimed plans to make these conflicts the starting point for a major war in the Far East.

At the same time the heaviest responsibility in the fight for peace falls on the British people. It is British imperialism which is conducting two of the three main aggressive wars at the present moment, in Malaya and in Kenya. British imperialism is the principal associate, even though as

junior partner, of American imperialism in its war drive. Britain is the principal American offensive base for war in Europe. All this is completely contrary to the true interests of the British people. The British people can play a decisive and pivotal role at the present time in the fight for peace. If the British people can compel their Government to take an active initiative for peace, alongside the existing peace leadership of the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic and India, such an initiative would rally united support throughout Europe and Asia, isolate the American war-makers, and open the way to the victory for peace. This is the great opportunity and the great responsibility which rests today upon the British people.

Thus the fight for peace can be truly described as a joint fight in which all the peoples of the countries represented at this conference, and of all the countries dominated by British imperialism, can play their part, in order to defeat the war plans of the American and British imperialists and their satellites, and to win the victory for peace in common with all the peoples of the world camp of democracy and peace.

V. THE FIGHT FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

If the fight for peace has advanced to a new intensity at the present moment, so also the fight for national independence has advanced to a new stage.

At our 1947 conference we spoke of the battle for national independence as having come to the forefront in a series of countries, especially in India, Burma, Ceylon and the Middle Eastern countries, while in a series of other countries in the British Empire the stage reached was that of the battle for elementary democratic right in order to develop the popular movement, the beginnings of organisation of the national movement and of the working-class movement, and to advance to the struggle for national liberation.

Such a distinction no longer applies in the world to-day. The struggle for national liberation is breaking out in every territory of the British Empire, without distinction of so-called

backwardness of development. What is happening today in Kenya could happen tomorrow in any other subject territory of the British Empire. In this sense the era of backwardness is over. Whatever the variations in the stages of development, political conditions or forms or character of popular organisation, the aim of national liberation as the supreme objective is seen more and more clearly among all the peoples dominated by British imperialism.

There is a further new feature in the modern situation. As a result of the policy of their rulers, and of the dominant role of American imperialism in the imperialist world, the British people have lost in practice no small part of their national sovereignty and independence, and fallen into a state of very considerable political and economic and military subordination to the rulers of the United States. The same applies to the peoples of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The conditions of the American loan, then of the Marshall plan with its elaborate machinery of American economic supervision of the internal policies of Britain, of GATT, of the trade bans and the Battle Act, have placed Britain in an American economic straitjacket. The inflated £4,700 million re-armament programme, which practice showed impossible of fulfilment, was imposed on Britain by direct American pressure. At international conferences the British representatives are drilled beforehand under American supervision and appear only as docile echoes and puppets of their American masters. American financial penetration of Britain has been followed by American military occupation, and Britain has been turned into American Base No. 1 in Europe.

Hence the battle for the national independence of the peoples of the British Empire has taken on a new and extended significance. Previously the struggle for national independence was expressed only in the struggle of the colonial and dependent peoples of the British Empire and it was the true interest and responsibility of the British working class, and the working class in the older dominions, to give support in this struggle. But now the struggle for national independence,

whatever the variations of form and stage of development, has become the common struggle of all the peoples of the British Empire, including that of the British people, and of the Canadian, Australian and New Zealand peoples. The links are drawn closer. The old declaration of Marx that a nation which enslaves other nations forges its own chains has been proved true in a new and developed fashion. At the end of the road the price of imperialism has led to the loss of national independence of the British people. These conditions are deepening the understanding among the British people of the meaning of the fight for national independence.

This new world situation has brought also a further new factor in the struggle for national independence. Previously the struggle of the peoples of the British Empire for national independence was essentially a struggle against British imperialism alone, just as the struggle of the people of French North Africa was against French imperialism, or of Puerto Rico and the Philippines against American imperialism. This situation is now changed. American imperialism has established its predominance in the imperialist world and drawn the British and French empires into its orbit. Hence the struggle of the peoples of the British Empire for independence is not only a struggle against British imperialism but simultaneously a struggle against American and British imperialism.

Failure to recognise this new stage of the struggle can lead to the destruction and defeat of the aims of the national liberation movement, if its leadership falls into the trap of regarding the American imperialists as the rivals and enemy of their own enemy and oppressors, and therefore as potential allies to be welcomed. Just as the camp of Axis fascism before and during the second world war, of German, Italian, and Japanese imperialism, used every method of corruption and demagogy, and of pretended sympathy with national aspirations, to seek to penetrate the national movement in colonial countries, and thus facilitate conquest, so today American imperialism pursues the same methods. The American imperialists are ceaselessly active to seek to insert their agents

or buy or win over a section of the reactionary leadership of the national movements in all colonial and semi-colonial countries. The example of Israel has shown how a former colony of British imperialism has become in practice a colony of American imperialism, so that the vaunted independence has turned out to be a change of masters and not yet real independence. In Pakistan a similar menace develops. The battle for national independence in the countries of the British Empire is a combined battle against the immediate domination and oppression of the British imperialists and against the penetration of the American imperialists.

A further new feature consequent on this new world situation is a deepening of the understanding of the meaning of national independence. Previously, as at our conference in 1947, we had to draw a sharp distinction between real national independence and pseudo-independence or fake "independence" which was beginning to be increasingly used as the new technique of imperialism. The essence of this new technique of imperialism was to confer formal juridical independence and sovereignty upon a state, while in practice establishing a closely linked reactionary regime of its own choosing, and maintaining a close economic and strategic hold on the new state, so that the label of "independence" covered the reality of satellite dependence. The examples of Egypt, Iraq and Jordan, and more recently Libya, have all demonstrated this method. Earlier the partition of Ireland and the establishment of the Northern Ireland Government, with British military occupation, alongside the Irish Republic had illustrated the method of thwarting the aims of national liberation while appearing to grant them. In a more advanced and complex form, corresponding moves were conducted in 1947 in relation to India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon.

Today the decisive test of real national independence requires to be measured not only in the actual relationship to the former ruling imperialist power but in relation to the whole camp of imperialism. No state that is tied to the

imperialist war camp dominated by American imperialism has any longer national independence.

This applies also in its own form to Britain, so long as the rulers of Britain maintain the present subjection to American domination and the acceptance of American military occupation.

Conversely, in proportion as the people of any state are able to compel a separation from the imperialist war camp and an alignment in support of peace, they are thereby carrying forward the advance along the path towards real independence. This is most clearly seen in the case of India, which emerged in 1947 as very much still an economic and strategic dependency of British imperialism, despite the formal independence. But since the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, with its far-reaching effects on the position of India and the increasing development of Indian policy to a certain measure of differentiation from the imperialist war camp, this has meant the beginning of a greater measure of independence of India's role in world politics, although the fulfilment of independence requires the ending of the still crushing domination of British capital in Indian economy, and of the still continuing close political and strategic ties with British imperialism, as well as of the increasing penetration of American financial interests.

The experience of these seven years, and especially in the Chinese People's Republic, has further deepened the understanding of the most effective form of real national independence.

Previously the conception of the aim of national independence found expression in the aim of the independent bourgeois democratic republic, having won separation from the former ruling imperialist power. But the experience of the Irish Republic, or of the Burmese Republic, nominally outside the British Empire, or of the Indian Republic, still inside, has shown how the closeness of the economic and other ties of the upper circles of the bourgeoisie in an advanced colonial country with the ruling imperialists can result in a

bourgeois democratic republic under their leadership, becoming not the fulfilment of real national independence but only a more skilfully hidden form of continued association with imperialism.

Full independence, therefore, requires the defeat of those upper sections of the bourgeoisie or feudal or other exploiting sections which are lined up with imperialism, and the breaking of the grip of imperialism on the economic resources of the former colonial country. This can only be reached not under the leadership of the reactionary sections of the bourgeoisie allied to imperialism but under the leadership of the working class, in alliance with the peasantry and with all sections, including the national bourgeoisie, prepared to resist imperialism.

The political form of this has been demonstrated during this period, especially since the experience of the Chinese People's Republic, as the form of People's Democracy. At our 1947 conference the new experience of people's democracy following the second world war was mainly confined to the countries of Eastern Europe; and its application to colonial and semi-colonial countries was still a matter under discussion. Today the experience of the Chinese People's Revolution has abundantly shown the path forward for all colonial and semi-colonial countries which have obtained a measure of economic and social development and class differentiation. The Chinese People's Revolution and the Chinese People's Republic, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, have shown the way to build the united national front of the four classes, the working class, the peasantry, the intellectuals and urban petty bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie, for the victory of the democratic, anti-feudal, anti-imperialist revolution, and for the establishment of the new type of state of People's Democracy upon this basis. They have shown how, on this foundation, to carry forward the reconstruction of the country, to begin to solve the problems of backwardness arising from feudal and semi-colonial conditions, to complete the agrarian revolution, to enter on

large-scale industrialisation, to raise living standards, to draw the entire people into democratic activity for rebuilding their country, and so to prepare the conditions for the future advance to socialism. The People's Democratic Republic is revealed as the most favourable form, equally for real national independence and for progressive internal development.

The programme of the Communist Party of India, as also the recent programmes of the Communist Parties of Indonesia, Iraq and other semi-colonial and dependent countries, have formulated this perspective of People's Democracy for the realisation of their aims of national independence, democratic advance, and economic and social reconstruction.

Important lessons flow from this for the development of the national liberation movement. These lessons point the way to the building of the broadest democratic national front, with the leadership of the working class, and the alliance of the working class and the peasantry as its core, and drawing in the widest sections for the victory of national liberation against imperialism.

Experience in a wide series of countries in the most recent period since the victory of the Chinese Revolution, notably in India, has shown the path of development of such a broad democratic national front, with the leading role of the working class. Experience has shown how in certain conditions the development of the struggle along this path of advance can open the way to the formation of People's Governments of democratic unity, based on a broad democratic front, for the furtherance of immediate aims in the struggle for democracy, peace, economic and social demands, and national liberation, as a transitional stage on the road to full national liberation and the establishment of People's Democracy.

At the heart of such development is the role of the working class and of the Communist Parties. Modern imperialist development has inevitably brought the increasing formation and extension of the working class in all colonial and semi-colonial countries. Also, in the conditions of Africa this advance has been markedly demonstrated in West Africa,

in South Africa, in the Rhodesias, in Kenya. In the face of every obstacle the colonial working class has carried forward its struggle, built up trade unions and political parties, striven for elementary economic and social demands and democratic rights, and played its active part in the national liberation struggle as the most consistent and courageous anti-imperialist fighter.

It is significant that in Kenya, where the forms of the national liberation struggle are closely linked to the traditional tribal forms of organisation, the first forms of the role of the working class have been illustrated not only in the part which the trade unions played in the earlier development of the movement, until they were proscribed, but also in the present part played by the Kenya African industrial workers, who have had experience on the railways and in military service, in providing personnel of leadership and organisation. Imperialism has shown its very sharp understanding of the significance of the role of the colonial working class by the attention paid to the problem arising from this new development. At first, they endeavoured to suppress and prohibit all trade union organisation. After this had failed they set their main aim to disrupt and break up any independent trade union organisation and substitute controlled forms of leadership approved by imperialism.

The same policy has found expression in the disruption of the World Federation of Trade Unions because it included the colonial trade unions alongside the trade unions of the imperialist countries. Under American imperialist inspiration the ICFTU was established as an agency above all concerned with the task of penetrating and disrupting the early trade union movement in colonial countries. At the same time lavish funds have been provided and the most elaborate machinery of labour officers, etc., for the same purpose.

A stage has thus been reached in a very wide series of colonial and semi-colonial countries in which the role of the working class stands out more and more clearly as that of the most consistent leader of the struggle for national liberation

and for all the interests of the majority of the people, in opposition to the compromising actions of the upper strata of the colonial bourgeoisie.

The successful fulfilment of this role requires above all the formation and development of Communist parties, of political parties of the working class, drawing in the most militant sections of the peasantry and of the national liberation movement, and based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism, such as can lead the struggle of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples to future victory.

From this follows the general conclusion at the present stage for the development of the national liberation movement. Wherever the conditions of class differentiation have reached a considerable stage, with the emergence of a colonial working class, there the most effective organisation and leadership of the struggle for national liberation requires not only the broadest unity of the national front against imperialism but also within this the fulfilment of the leading role of the working class and its political party in building up the alliance of the working class and peasantry as the core of the broadest united national front embracing the working class, the peasantry, the intellectuals and urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. Within the framework of this general principle, particular developments will need to correspond closely to the actual forms and stages of the particular development in the given territory.

But the national liberation movement in any given territory cannot conquer in isolation. The struggle against imperialism is international in its character. And in the case of the struggle against the domination of British imperialism, it is of especial importance that the closest alliance should be built up between the British working class and the national liberation movement in all the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

VI. ALLIANCE OF THE PEOPLES

The teachings of Marx, carried forward by Lenin and Stalin in the imperialist era, in dealing with the problems of British

working class have always laid the greatest emphasis on the necessity of the alliance of the British working class with the national liberation movements of the countries subject to British rule as the essential condition, equally for the liberation of these countries and for the victory of socialism in Britain.

They showed how Britain's imperialist world monopoly, so far from corresponding to the interests of the British workers, was the main basis of strength of the British capitalists against the British workers. They showed how acceptance of the imperialist world monopoly, in order to share in its fruits, was the main basis of corruption of the upper sections of the labour movement, and the main reason why the British labour movement had failed to advance to socialism and, despite its strength and numbers and organisation, had fallen behind and lost its previous vanguard role in the international working-class movement.

If this were true in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century, when British capitalism and imperialism still appeared to be prosperous, it is still more true today when the imperialist system is in deep crisis.

Twenty years ago Stalin said :

"The victory of the working class in the developed countries and the liberation of the oppressed peoples from the yoke of imperialism are impossible without the formation and the consolidation of a common revolutionary front.

"The formation of a common revolutionary front is impossible unless the proletariat of the oppressor nations renders direct and determined support to the liberation movement of the oppressed peoples against the imperialism of its 'own country'." (J. V. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*)

It will be noticed how sharply Stalin placed this question. The victory on either side is "impossible" without the alliance.

In the present conditions of the deepening crisis of British imperialism this teaching is of greater importance than ever. The alliance is the indispensable condition for victory against our common enemy, British finance-capital, and for the future of our peoples.

It is the undying shame of the present dominant leadership of the British Labour movement that they have spurned this elementary teaching of Socialist internationalism, and have united with the Tory imperialists against the colonial peoples. there is no infamy of imperialist barbarity against colonial peoples which they have not supported under the Tory Government or practised themselves when in office.

Imperialism is the real basis of the veiled coalition of Toryism and right-wing Labour which temporarily dominates the present political situation in Britain and thwarts the aspirations of the rank and file of the Labour movement.

The Tories and right-wing Labour leaders claim that the maintenance of Empire domination is the essential economic basis for the employment, the standards and the social services of the British workers. Malaya is declared to be Britain's best dollar-earner. Therefore, the revolt of the Malayan people must be ruthlessly crushed to protect the gigantic profits of the rubber and tin monopolists. The revolt of the Kenya African people must be crushed to protect the interests of the big land robbers who have stolen their land and built up fortunes out of their labour. All this, according to the argument of the Attlees and the Griffiths, as of Bevin and J. H. Thomas before, is supposed to represent the interests of the British workers.

This shameful argument, worthy of Hitler and of the exponents of theories of the master race, is false even on the narrowest economic grounds. The profits of Empire go to the big monopolists, the exploiters of the British workers. The crumbs that may reach a section of the workers, in the shape of social concessions in order to buy off their militant struggle, are outweighed many times over by the costs which fall on the entire working class, the costs of inflated arms expenditure and worsening conditions, and of colonial wars and imperialist wars with their terrible toll of blood.

The Tories and right-wing Labour leaders claim that they are carrying out a civilising mission in the Empire to promote economic development and assist the backward and

poverty-stricken peoples in the colonial countries to advance by the aid of schemes of Colonial Development and Welfare, Point Four, Colombo Plans, and the like.

A special variety of this propaganda is conducted by the Labour imperialists, as in the recent colonial broadcast of James Griffiths, or in the mass of Transport House literature put out under such deceptive slogans as "War on Want".

Heart-rending pictures are drawn of the terrible poverty of the colonial peoples in order to call on the British workers to make sacrifices of their own living standards so as to provide money for the development plans to aid the colonial peoples. Thus the genuine sympathy of the British workers for the colonial peoples is criminally misused by these tricksters in order to assist the employers' offensive in Britain, damp down the class struggle in Britain and impose new burdens to pay for the cold war and colonial wars.

This argument also is as false as it is hypocritical. What sort of civilising mission is it which has been shown in the role of Captain Griffiths? The colonial system is the main cause of the economic backwardness of the colonial peoples. It is the main obstacle to their economic development. It distorts and hinders any progressive economic development of their countries for the interests of the inhabitants, in order to plunder their natural resources for the benefit of foreign monopolists. The dribblets of money which are voted for so-called "development" (in practice mainly for schemes to provide cheap public services, power, transport, irrigation, and so facilitate more profit from private investment, or for strategic purposes, remote from the real needs of the people) are a tiny fraction compared with the hundreds and hundreds of millions of pounds of tribute which are drawn every year from these colonial countries for the benefit of foreign exploiters. The ending of this tribute is the first condition for tackling the poverty of the colonial peoples and beginning real economic development.

Similarly the Tories and right-wing Labour leaders claim that they are guiding the colonial peoples forward along the

path to self-government and freedom by gradual stages under the benevolent control of their imperialist rulers.

But experience has shown that no concession has ever been made to any subject people in the Empire save in the face of the revolt of the people. If peaceful constitutional development to freedom were the law of British imperialist rule, then Jamaica, the oldest British colony, which has been ruled by Britain for three centuries since 1665, would be the most advanced today on the road to freedom—which is far from being the case. The enforced evacuation of India or Burma in the face of the upsurge of the people, and cosequent elaborate compromise manoeuvres to find the best means to continue the protection of British economic and strategic interests in these countries, has been accompanied by the most ruthless colonial wars against the national liberation movement in other territories, as in Malaya and Kenya.

The hollowness of the fig-leaf colonial constitutions imposed by the Colonial Office in the subject countries to cover the reality of their dictatorship has been exposed once and for all by the example of British Guiana, where the people endeavoured in lawful, constitutional forms and by an electoral majority, to use these very limited possibilities in their own interests, and were met with the dispatch of gunboats and the suspension of the Constitution.

All these pleas and excuses presented by the right-wing Labour leaders, the Attlees, Morrisons, Griffiths and Creech-Jones, for the maintenance of Empire domination, are couched in the language of limitless philanthropy and benevolence. But the reality is seen in the hideous colonial wars and repression which have shocked the conscience of the world. All these colonial wars have still the support of the official leadership of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress.

The Declaration on Foreign and Commonwealth Policy, adopted at the Labour Party Conference last year, which was sprung on the conference without any opportunity of discussion by the membership, and to which amendments were not allowed, directly supports the wars in Kenya and Malaya.

Every protest of the Labour movement against the bestial outrages committed by the Tory Government in the colonies is met with bland assurances to show that these practices were initiated by the Labour Government. The Labour Government began the war in Malaya. The Tory Government continues it. The Labour Government imposed the ban on Seretse. The Tory Government makes it permanent. The Labour Government began the use of bombing planes against the peoples in revolt, the wiping out of villages, the imposing of collective punishments, and the placing of prize money on the heads of patriots. The Tory Government has continued these same practices.

The Trades Union Congress Council has performed a corresponding role in the trade union field, with the use of specially levied funds drawn from the trade unions, nominally to assist colonial trade unionism, in reality to disrupt any independent militant trade union movement in the colonies and to collaborate closely with the ruling imperialist authorities for the development of controlled trade union organisation under a docile leadership.

When the Tory Government removed the democratically elected ministers in British Guiana, the Labour Party leadership, not only supported Lyttelton's denunciation of the People's Progressive Party which had won the absolute majority of votes in the elections, but even imposed a ban on representatives of the People's Progressive Party presenting their case to organisations of the Labour movement. Fortunately the majority of the Divisional Labour Parties concerned refused to accept this ban, and the campaign of Jagan and Burnham throughout Britain had the most far-reaching effect in awakening a new understanding of the colonial people's struggle, and aroused sentiments of solidarity and comradeship.

Today there is a stirring among wide sections of the Labour Party and the trade unions against the policies of colonial repression maintained by Toryism and the right-wing Labour leadership, and demands for solidarity with the struggle of the colonial peoples. Over 20 resolutions from constituent

organisations on the agenda of the Labour Party Conference last year raised the colonial question and demanded in varying forms a policy of unity with the colonial people's struggle. This was a new feature without previous parallel in the agendas of earlier years, even though the manipulations of those controlling the conference prevented these resolutions being discussed.

This stirring is linked with the left-wing revolt in the Labour Party and the TUC which has won votes of 2 to 3 million for a progressive policy on all the key issues against the policy of the right-wing leadership. It is becoming more and more widely understood that the present policies of imperialism are leading Britain to disaster, to endless worsening of economic conditions, extension of military burdens, subjection to American domination and the prospect of a new world war. Therefore, the demand is spreading for a radical reversal of these policies and their replacement by a programme for national independence and peace, and for united action with the colonial peoples against imperialism, as the indispensable condition in order to free Britain also and prepare the way for the victory of socialism.

Nevertheless there is still the most serious lag between the level of response in the Labour movement in Britain and the height of the struggles of the colonial peoples as they are developing today. This is a problem which requires the most urgent consideration here in Britain, and we of the Communist Party in Britain recognise our special responsibility in this respect.

At the same time as we recognise how far short the present stage of achievement falls of the urgent needs and possibilities of the situation, we can claim that the Communist Party stands in the forefront in the development of this campaign for solidarity with the struggle of the colonial peoples, and in the strengthening of this fight. There is no question that it is above all the agitation of the Communist Party and the exposures in the *Daily Worker* which have played a leading role in arousing opinion throughout the Labour movement to

the crimes which are being committed by imperialism in the name of the British people.

The Communist Party in Britain takes pride in its 34 years of ceaseless anti-imperialist struggle alongside the colonial peoples, as the only political party in Britain which stands without qualification for the national independence of all the peoples subject to British imperialism. We are proud of the role of such anti-imperialist fighters as Shapurji Saklatvala, sprung from the Indian people and elected by the workers of Battersea to the British Parliament, where he voiced without compromise the fight against imperialism and for the rights and freedom of the colonial peoples; of William Gallacher and Phil Piratin in the Parliament after the last war; or of Ben Bradley and George Allison who helped in the building of the early foundations of the working-class movement in India.

The programme of the Communist Party, *The British Road to Socialism*, adopted at our Congress in 1952, shows the path forward to build in action the alliance of the British working class and of all the peoples oppressed and exploited by British imperialism, in a common struggle for the aims of national independence and peace and against the reactionary combination of American and British imperialism. The programme *The British Road to Socialism* shows how through such a fighting alliance the way can be opened to win a new and different future, to replace the Empire of domination and exploitation by co-operation of the peoples, not only in the present struggle against imperialism, but after victory to help one another in the protection of this freedom, just won, and in the rebuilding of our countries. British skill and industry can help to provide the means of rapid industrial development and mechanisation of agriculture in countries whose economies have been distorted by colonial conditions; while the supplies from these countries in exchange can help to ensure the trading needs, employment and advancing economy of a People's Britain.

In this way the programme *The British Road to Socialism*

looks forward to a future voluntary close fraternal association of all countries on the basis of national independence and equal rights as corresponding to the interests of all the countries in the period of advance to the victory of socialism throughout the world.

But if we are to make this vision of the future a reality, the immediate task before all of us is to build the alliance in action now. We are deeply conscious how much remains to be done here in Britain to arouse the British working class and the British people to consciousness of the crimes which are being committed in their name by the imperialists against other peoples; to draw the widest sections of the trade union, Labour and co-operative movement into active unity and co-ordinated action with the colonial peoples; to raise the level of our struggle to advance alongside the heroic struggle of the colonial peoples, and so to build the alliance which can alone ensure our common victory. On behalf of the British Communist Party we pledge ourselves to intensify our efforts for these aims.

The solidarity between the working class in the imperialist countries and the struggle of the colonial working class and the national liberation movement of the colonial and dependent peoples needs to find expression not only in words and resolutions but in practical action. When the Scottish Area of the National Union of Mineworkers voted money to help the Nigerian miners after the Enugu shooting, or when a progressive lawyer like D. N. Pritt goes out to Kenya, Pakistan or British Guiana to defend colonial fighters under attack by imperialism, or when Lieutenant David Larder refused to carry out atrocities against the Kenya African peoples and faced courtmartial for his refusal; these are declarations of practical solidarity the extension of which can alone make the alliance a living reality and a power capable of defeating the imperialist enemy.

We are confident that our conference will be able to make its contribution to help towards building this alliance.

VII. CO-OPERATION OF THE COMMUNIST AND WORKERS' PARTIES

Our conference is a conference of Communist and Workers' Parties. We are aware that the range of popular organisations not only of the working class, of trade unions and of peasant organisations but of the broad national movement engaged in the battle against imperialism, extends very much wider than the Communist and Workers' Parties here represented.

The influence of the ideas of communism, of the teachings of Marx and Lenin and Stalin, and of Mao Tse-tung, and of the examples of the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Revolution, now reaches more and more widely to every country and is engaging the attention of all progressive elements in all colonial and semi-colonial countries without exception. In many territories the conditions have not yet developed when the militant sections of the working class in association with the revolutionary elements of the national liberation movement have found their way to form a Communist Party or political party based on the teachings of Marxism-Leninism. But these conditions are rapidly developing in varying degrees in almost all colonial and dependent territories. The first endeavours are being made in these countries, in the face of all difficulties.

In these countries the paramount necessity is to establish unity of all those who base themselves on the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, to strike roots in the heart of the working class, of the mass struggle and of the militant national movement, so as to lead to the formation of Communist or Workers' Parties, firmly based on the working class, with close links with the peasantry and with all sections of the militant national movement, and capable of fulfilling their leading role within the broad national movement.

We believe that the Communist and Workers' Parties equally in the imperialist countries, in Britain and the older dominions, and in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, under the domination of British imperialism, have an indispensable vanguard role to play in carrying forward the advance

of the mass movement against imperialism and for the aims of national independence and of peace, and in building the alliance of our peoples for these aims.

We greet the Communist and Workers' Parties of other countries under British imperialist domination who for special reasons are not able to be represented by nominated delegates in our conference, though nationals from these countries as from many others are able to take part in our proceedings in a consultative capacity.

We greet the Marxist groups and supporters of Marxism who are preparing the way for Communist Parties in a wide series of countries within the range of British imperialism.

We greet the heroic struggles of the Kenyan people, of the Malayan people, of the people of British Guiana, of all the peoples who are fighting for freedom against imperialism. All the bestialities of imperialism can never crush such heroism. The battle of the peoples is rising higher every day to its approaching victory.

In the present historic situation we are more confident than ever in the advancing invincible strength of the freedom struggle of the colonial peoples, and in the joint victory which will be won by the unity of the British people and all the peoples under British imperialist domination against our common enemies for our common goal of political and social emancipation.

May our conference serve the common aims and interests of all our peoples to strengthen our alliance for the ending of imperialist slavery and exploitation and wars, and for the fraternal co-operation of our peoples in building a new future, based on national independence, peace and the advance to socialism.

Along this path we look forward with confidence to the future when the quarter of mankind who are at present held under the domination of British imperialism, and on behalf of whom our conference meets, will march forward alongside the one-third who have already won freedom from imperialism, and thereby help to hasten the final victory of peace and socialism throughout the world.