The Colonies

The Way Forward

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The Colonies: The Way Forward

A Memorandum

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	5
EXISTING COLONIAL POLICY	7
Government	7
Economic Subordination	11
Backward Conditions	19
Claims for the Colonial System	23
Development of National Movements	26
PROBLEM OF LIBERATION OF THE COLONIAL PEOPLES	27
Tsarist Empire and the U.S.S.R.	30
STEPS TO LIBERATION	33
Economic and Industrial Development	33
Social Measures—Health	37
Education	38
Labour Legislation	38
Political-Constitutional Reforms	39
TERRITORIES UNDER JAPANESE OCCUPATION	45
BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE COLONIES	52
Responsibility of the British Labour Movement	54
Labour Party Colonial Policy	55
Unity with the Colonial Peoples	56
READING LIST	60

THE BRITISH EMPIRE, 1939



BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND =

DOMINIONS =

INDIA, BURMA AND CEYLON =

DEPENDENT COLONIES & PROTECTORATES =

MANDATES =

BRITISH ISLANDS UNDERLINED

I INTRODUCTION

The present world situation brings to the forefront the question of the future of the Colonial peoples. What will be the position, in the general post-war reconstruction, of the countries at present under Colonial rule? In the Atlantic Charter, the signatories declare (Clause 3):

> "They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

Though the charge may be levelled that the declaration was indefinite as to the scope or degree to which these principles would apply and also at what moment they would apply to Colonial Countries, nevertheless, it has set out a principle the realisation of which must increasingly pre-occupy the peoples of the United Nations.

The principle was expressed as a much more concrete and direct intention in the statement emanating from the conference at Teheran:

> "We shall seek co-operation and the active participation of all nations, large or small . . . we will welcome them as they may choose to come into a world family of democratic nations."

This statement, the collaboration between Britain, U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. for peace as well as for war, and the general atmosphere of democratic advance and international collaboration for which this will provide the basis, must inevitably affect favourably the world attitude towards the claims of the people hitherto subject to Colonial rule. The acceptance of China, hitherto a semi-colonial country in many of its relations, as an equal partner of Britain and U.S.A.; the stressing of "the independence, sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Iran" in the Teheran document; the Philippines are promised independence by the U.S. Government as soon as the Japanese are defeated; these advances, though they are restricted in their immediate effect to individual territories, cannot but bring about a far-reaching change in the whole structure of Colonial subordination, and thereby ultimately influence the destinies of all. There exists at the moment a most favourable situation for quick advance of the Colonial peoples.

But in the meantime there is a still more urgent aspect. Fascism

has yet to be overthrown. Gigantic battles still lie ahead. The full resources available to the free world must be mobilised in order to secure the defeat not only of Germany and its Allies in Europe, but of Japan and its Allies in the Far East.

Already in the fight there has been a magnificent response from the peoples of the Colonial countries. These people have shown their political understanding and maturity by their appreciation of the fact that Fascism is the enemy of all mankind, of the peoples still subject to Colonial rule as well as of the peoples defending the freedom and right to self-government that they already enjoy. The Colonial peoples have appreciated that the victory of the world alliance of the United Nations presents the most favourable conditions for their own future liberation.

But after five years of war the peoples and the resources of the Colonies are still far from fully mobilised. Individual and economic obstacles are placed in the way of their mobilisation by the Colonial relationship. These obstacles lie not only in the existing conditions but in understandable doubts and suspicions respecting the future.

A particular responsibility rests upon the British people to remove these obstacles, and to make a beginning in the right direction now, without waiting for an indefinite period after the ending of the war.

The policy of the Communist Party is, in general, the fullest support for the liberation of all Colonial peoples, their "right to choose."

The Communist Party believes that there is no antagonism of interest, but complete community of interest, between the fullest self-development and self-rule of the Colonial peoples, and the freedom and prosperity of the people of Britain. It holds that friendly comradeship, mutual assistance, respect and co-operation are possible only on the basis of speedy and unequivocal according of the "right to choose." To speed this it is necessary for the Labour and progressive movements to strive in every way to further all that may bring this about.

It is the purpose of this memorandum to set out more fully, and in relation to the concrete problems and conditions, the application of that policy as we understand it.

The ground covered is restricted to the "Colonial Empire," that is, the territories coming within the purview of the Colonial Office: Crown Colonies, Protectorates, Mandated Territories. India and the Dominions are special questions, on which Communist policy has been, and will be further, separately expressed.

II EXISTING COLONIAL POLICY

The peoples of the British Colonies cover a wide range and exemplify many differing cultural levels and conditions. There are more than 3,000,000 square miles inhabited by 60,000,000 people in Africa; there are territories such as Burma, Malaya and Hongkong under Japanese occupation; and there are islands in the Atlantic and in the Gulf area off North America, as well as a small territory on the South American mainland. There are also the territories in the Mediterranean area such as Cyprus, Palestine, Malta and Gibraltar. There are peoples of all the principal branches of the human family, peoples who once had developed state systems, and peoples with a primitive tribal economy.

But all alike are subject to the characteristic features of the Colonial system. Three principal characteristics are common to all Colonies. These are:

1. **Foreign rule.** None are self-governing; civil liberties are severely restricted; even where some limited form of representative institution exists, it is devoid of real power.

2. **Economic subordination to the ruling power.** Sometimes directly, by companies enjoying concessions, or by settlers appropriating the best land and resources; sometimes indirectly, under trade relationships, by production for marketing by big outside companies.

3. **Extreme backwardness.** Arrested or retrograde development, low standards of living, inadequate facilities for education, lack of elementary social services.

We will examine these features more particularly.

1. GOVERNMENT

While the constitutional and political status of the various Colonies is as varied as can be, the actual system of government conforms broadly to a set pattern. To a greater or lesser degree all Colonies are governed from Whitehall. The various legislative authorities they boast are bodies whose power is restricted in practice to advice and criticism.

The ultimate authority is the Colonial Office, whose head, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, is—as a member of the Cabinet—ultimately responsible in theory to Parliament and through Parliament to the British electorate. The Secretary of State for the Colonies appoints a Governor, or maybe a High Commissioner, for each Colony, who remains responsible to the Secretary of State. The British Governor or High Commis-

sioner usually has concentrated in his hands complete Executive power. He is sometimes assisted by an Executive Council, consisting of permanent officials appointed, like himself, by the Colonial Office, and "non-official" members whom he himself appoints. In some Colonies there is also a Legislative Council, composed partly of officials and partly of non-officials, the latter in many cases wholly, or in part, elected.

In almost every case the elected element is subordinated to the appointed, by provision that the elected members are numerically inferior to the appointed, the non-official to the official, or by reserving spheres of administration to the Governor alone, or by powers of veto and promulgation of laws without the Council's consent. In all these various ways there are safeguards against any Council going against the wishes of the Governor.

The Governor of Kenya recently announced his intention of appointing an African member to the Legislative Council, but apart from this instance, there are no African members of the Legislative Councils on the East Coast of Africa. Uganda has 7 official, 6 nominated non-official members; Tanganyika 13 official, 10 nominated non-official; Northern Rhodesia 5 ex-officio, 4 nominated official, 7 elected non-official (all European); Kenya 11 ex-officio, 9 nominated official, 11 elected European, 5 elected Indian, 1 elected Arab, 2 nominated non-official to represent African interests.

On the West Coast some Africans are admitted. Nigeria has 30 official, 4 elected and 15 nominated non-official (the non-official mostly African).* For the Gold Coast, constitutional reforms are proposed in which there would be an unofficial majority. The Legislative Council would consist of 6 official members, 9 provincial members, 4 members for Ashanti, 5 municipal members and 6 nominated members appointed by the Governor.

Tribal chiefs and elders are recognised on both West and East Coast. In all cases their authority is subject to that of European magistrates appointed by the Executives; with the exceptions on the West Coast mentioned they have no participation in

* For example, the four elected councillors in Nigeria result from a franchise restricted to an electorate of 5,000 in a population of 20 million. The 15 nominated non-official members include: commercial members for the main ports, members for shipping, banking and mining; no representative of the trade unionists—numbering 20,000—or of the African small traders and peasant farmers, constituting at least 90 per cent of the population.)

Legislature or administration at the centre, and all, even traditional, tribal, elective controls from below upon their authority are discouraged.

The West Indies are administered by Governors, usually with Executive and Legislative Councils (in the Bahamas, Bermuda and Barbados all appointed, in Trinidad half appointed, half elected); sometimes there is also an elected Assembly, though the franchise is severely restricted by a property or income qualification that admits only a small, wealthy proportion of the inhabitants.

A constitution adopted in February, 1943, for Jamaica, while presenting obvious imperfections, is generally regarded throughout the area as a great democratic advance. It provides for a House of Assembly of 24 members elected by universal adult suffrage; a Legislative Council of 15 nominated official and non-official members; an Executive Committee of 10, five chosen by the House of Assembly, 3 officials and 2 non-officials chosen by the Governor, who presides with a casting vote.

Malta had an elected legislature to control local affairs; defence and external questions, including foreign trade were reserved to the Governor and exclusively nominated official Councils; but this Constitution has been suspended. Cyprus had representative institutions, but these were abolished in 1931: the Governor's Council has no elected representatives and municipal elections were held for the first time in March, 1943. Ceylon has an almost universal suffrage with an elected State Council "assisting" the Governor through various executive "Committees." In May, 1943, a declaration was made in Parliament that constitutional reform after the war "will be directed towards the grant to Ceylon of self-government under the Crown in all matters of *internal* civil administration."

The characteristic of these systems is that the Governor and his permanent officials carry out, to the best of their judgment, the policy laid down by the Colonial Office. The machinery of non-official members of Executive Councils and of Legislative Councils provides opportunity for strong representation of local commercial and financial interests to exercise considerable influence.

Nowhere is there democracy as it is understood in Britain, that is, with the right of each adult to vote and elect parliamentary representatives with legislative power and control of the administration.

The national movements, or movements aspiring to enjoy this

right, are in general discouraged, often by penal measures. Civil liberties of speech and printing are limited. In Basutoland the leaders of the peasant organisation, Lekhotla la Bafo, were interned for demanding the fullest mobilisation of the country to take part in the defeat of Fascism. In Nigeria press reporting of labour unrest is prohibited by Defence Regulation and the Nigerian public only learned of the existence of forced labour in a corner of the colony (at the Bauchi Tin Mines) through cabled reports of a debate in the House of Commons. Heavy premiums must also be lodged before the publication of a newspaper can be undertaken.

Although Trade Union organisation has been illegal in many Colonies, up till recently, there is some indication of the growth of Trade Unions. This has not been achieved easily, for example, in the West Indies where strong Trade Unions do exist, the right to organise has only been conceded as a result of bitter strike struggle, and those who took the initiative in organisation suffered imprisonment and other penalties before legality was conceded. In 1930 (September 17th) a circular on the Trade Union question was issued by the Colonial Secretary to Colonial Governments. The Colonial Secretary therein pointed, in a curious phrase, to the desirability of Colonial legislation to provide " that Trade Unions are not criminal for civil purposes." Apparently its purport was to recommend legalisation of industrial action and organisation while still outlawing political strikes, but very few Colonial Governments took action on the suggestion.

Very many arrests, prosecutions and imprisonments for trade union activities took place during the depression period before the war. Similar repressions have been repeated during the war period: instances from Trinidad and Jamaica—the arrest of railway leaders and the deportation of Uriah Butler; Northern Rhodesia—the deportation of the President and General Secretary of the Northern Rhodesia Mine Workers' Union.

Article 241 of the Penal Code of Mauritius:

> " Any coalition among workmen, servants, labourers or others, either in town or in country, to cease from working at the same time or to forbid work, or to prevent others from proceeding to, or remaining at their work, before or after certain hours, or generally to suspend or prevent any work or to raise the price thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment not exceeding three months."

About 1938 a number of Colonies set up Labour Departments, and the same year the post of Labour Adviser to the Secretary

of State for the Colonies was instituted. In 1942 a Colonial Labour Advisory Committee was established with the task of recommending Trade Union and Labour legislation for the Colonies. It issued a report ("Labour Supervision in the Colonies") in May, 1943, showing that at that date there were 300 trade unions formed and registered in various Colonies, and in 20 Colonies or Dependencies Labour Advisory Boards functioning giving some attention to such questions as Minimum Wage, Workmen's Compensation, Recruitment of Labour, Labour contracts and application of International Labour Convention to the Colonies. These Labour Advisory Boards, where they do function, however, by no means necessarily imply aid to the workers in organisation to represent their views on their conditions. In a number of cases Trade Union and Labour "Advisors" have been appointed by the Colonial Office from applicants supplied by the T.U.C.

From these facts and figures it is clear that in the industrial as well as the political field the development of opportunity for the democratic initiative of the inhabitants is calamitously inadequate and slow.

Thus the Nyasaland Minimum Wage Ordinance of 1939 provided that the Governor cannot create Minimum Wage Boards without sanction of the Executive Council. On this council there are, of course, no elected native representatives and employing interests are strongly represented. No action under the Ordinance, therefore, has ever been taken. Meanwhile, the Nyasaland Labour Department report for 1940 claimed that minimum wages have, in effect, risen from 6s. to 7s. per month, plus food.

2. ECONOMIC SUBORDINATION

The characteristic of a Colonial country is that it functions as an agrarian and raw materials appendage of large monopoly interests of the ruling Power. This takes place either directly, by financial exploitation through companies, concessions, etc.; or by settlers and planters appropriating the best land and resources (as in Kenya); or indirectly, under trading forms, whereby production is carried on for big outside companies, such as the Niger Company. The economy is unbalanced and shaped without priority for the interests of the people of the Colony. It is forced into the position of being a supplier of particular raw materials, while at the same time being a market for goods produced elsewhere. Its productive forces are not allowed to develop, its industrial development is prevented or retarded. It becomes

increasingly dependent upon the policies and fortunes in the world market of the monopolies interested in its main products.

Thus, in Ceylon, the most fertile areas are given over to the production of tea and rubber, while the staple foods of the population have to be imported. The West Indies is likewise largely dependent on the export of fruit and sugar; Trinidad, asphalt; Malaya, of tin and rubber, and Palestine upon that of citrus fruit. In 1937 cocoa accounted for 93 per cent of the agricultural exports from the Gold Coast. The sugar industry furnished 95 per cent of the exports of Mauritius. This unbalanced economy results in making the prosperity of the Colony peculiarly susceptible to fluctuations in the world market. Reliance upon one or two staple crops or mining enterprises leaves no alternative to turn to.

The report of the Committee on Nutrition in the Colonial Empire, set up by the Economic Advisory Council, issued in 1939, recommended that Colonial Governments should ensure "that as many people as possible grow part at least of their own food." This recommendation is only a remedy for a symptom, and not a solution of the basic trouble.

To ascertain this it is necessary to see the present economic subordination in the perspective of its development.

When British Industrial Capitalism was in its early development, British Colonies were employed chiefly as markets for the goods manufactured by, and sources of raw material for, British industry. During this period conquest and administration of the Colonies was not carried out directly by the Government, but by Chartered Companies, of which the East India Company, the East Africa Company, the Niger Company and the British South Africa Company are examples. These Companies were given a free hand to open up new territory and establish trade; in many cases they employed their own troops and set up their own administration.

With the further development of industrialisation in Britain, and the rapid accumulation of capital, British financial groups began to look to the Colonies not only as a source of supply of raw materials in exchange for finished consumption goods, but as a fruitful channel for the investment of surplus capital and an outlet for the products of heavy industry. Materials for railways, docks and harbours, irrigation schemes were exported. Financial interests exported huge sums in connection with state and private loans to finance these operations.

The safeguarding of those investments imposed a need for more complete control over taxation and the internal situation in the Colonies. This, together with the pressure and competition

of other nations now developing industrially and seeking colonies, resulted in administration being taken over from the Chartered Companies and the territories being made Crown Colonies or Protectorates.

Inevitably, from the course of this development, investment and enterprises in the Colonies were directed primarily not to help the growth of the human initiative and material prosperity of the inhabitants, but towards exploitation in the first instance of those resources most profitable, upon the world market, to the outside investors, and the structure of Government and administration has fitted in to serve the vested interests thus created.

The Peasantry

The effect of this economic subordination upon the peasantry in the Colonies has been a process of impoverishment. In general, the process has begun (and in places still continues) with the taking of the best land from the peasant and its transfer either to a concession-holding company or to the European settler. Then, with the increase of cheap manufactured imports and the spread of a money economy, the peasant is compelled to enter the world market (under an initial disadvantage which grows greater the more that market is dominated by monopolies) until his whole farm is given over to cash crops and his whole livelihood becomes dependent upon the trader, the usurer and, it may be, the landlord. Under these conditions he must easily fall in debt, with its result in foreclosure of mortgages and evictions; and a vicious circle sets in of further deterioration.

The general tendency towards deterioration of peasant conditions is not, of course, uniform. It takes on the most diverse forms. Even in Africa, where some of the worst features of this tendency are found, the circumstances differ from East to West, and even from colony to colony. Moreover, in Africa the exploitation of the peasantry is bound up with policies designed to secure a cheap and ready supply of labour for the settlers and mining companies, and the problems of the peasant and the wage-worker are thus interwoven.

Forced labour directed towards East African British farmers has no doubt had some effect in denuding African farms and accentuating food shortage.

In Africa, with few exceptions (*i.e.*, West Africa), the best lands have been alienated and the peoples herded into the Reserves. During this century, there has been an alarming development of soil erosion, the spread of cattle disease and a decrease in land fertility. For example, the habitable land of Kenya has been half alienated, and is in the possession of 17,000 Europeans; while 3,000,000 Africans have been left the other half.

On the alienated land the African may work as a " squatter "—but on certain conditions—to pay not rent but labour service to the white settler to work on " his lord's land " for 180 days of the year, to accept the days chosen by the settler, not to run away within the period of a five years' contract lest he incur a penalty under a Master and Servants' Act. Moreover, this serf " on his own land " may grow only those crops that are sanctioned by the settler. Over the whole of Kenya the Government, acting as a collective settler, imposes a £10 licence on any African peasant who wants to grow coffee. The condition of serfdom described is not limited to Kenya, but, with the exception of Nyasaland, is found in other East African colonies.

From the unalienated land the able-bodied man-power is withdrawn through the operation of the Poll Tax, so that land cultivation has to be carried on by the feeble-bodied (e.g., of the man-power of Swaziland, naturally a rich territory, 60 per cent is at any time absent in the Union of South Africa, working down the mines in order to raise the money to pay the Poll Tax). While some of the taxation is necessary, the present form of Hut or Poll Tax is used to secure labour supply.

In trading, the initially weak position of the peasant is worsened by the imposition of special discriminations. In Southern Rhodesia only 10 per cent of railway lineage touches or runs through the Reserves, and peasants are forbidden to cultivate land within a certain distance of the railway line. Freight-charges are discriminatory and bear more heavily on native produce. Tariffs up to near 50 per cent duty are imposed on imported goods required for peasant cultivators such as cotton manufactures, but goods for white settlers, such as machinery and motor-cars, come in for the most part duty-free. The Government of Southern Rhodesia (in which, according to Sir Alan Pym, 30 per cent of the peasant's revenue goes in taxation) fixes two selling prices for maize: the export price (covering one-third of total crop) is half the home consumption price; African peasants must sell 75 per cent of their crop for export. If they buy, they must pay the higher price. On the other hand, the Kenya Government, which in 1931 had loaned a quarter of a million sterling to settlers to enable them to develop maize and other crops, in 1938, when half the loan had been repaid, passed an Ordinance to remit the other half.

These particular discriminations are not found in the West African colonies, where attempts at alienation of land on a large scale have not proceeded far. Here the exploitation of the peasant operates through the diversion of his cultivation to a one-crop economy, such as cocoa, ground nuts, palm-oil, etc. Not

only does this unbalanced agriculture make the peasant dependent on British imports for some of the necessities which he used to grow and consume himself, but it puts him at the mercy of the great Leverhulme monopoly (United Africa Co.). In the world market (West African section) there are tens of thousands of sellers; there is only one Buyer. The Nigerian or Gambian peasant must take the price offered; he has no alternative. The cocoa "strike" of 1938 was temporarily successful, and as a result of the attention directed on this question some form of control was instituted.

The Colonial Office have issued a White Paper, October, 1944, giving an official account of the operation of cocoa control in West Africa. In 1942-3, a surplus of £3,676,253 had accumulated. As from October, 1945, organisations are to be set up in the Gold Coast and Nigeria empowered to purchase the whole cocoa crop, to preserve prices and to be responsible for disposal. In the Gold Coast the organisation will have an Official majority. "The Government majority will represent the interests of the producer and will act as trustees for them"—until their co-operative societies have developed enough to provide their own representation. If this proposal is seriously carried through the buying firms will no longer be able to determine the price at which West African cocoa is bought. There seems no reason why this system should not be extended to other purchases of produce.

The granting of these trading monopolies was a systematic practice of the Colonial Governments of West Africa. It is found sporadically (e.g., Nyasaland Tobacco Board—African peasants excluded) in other parts of Africa, and all these have now passed into the hands of the monopolists.

The Wage-workers

Where the general process resulting from economic subordination has produced a landless peasantry, a supply of wage-labour at low rates has been made readily available. This applies both to the East Indies and to many of the West Indian Islands. But in Africa, with a less mature social economy, with many sections still pastoral, and with chattel-slavery as a widely prevailing previous form of servitude, the creation of a labour supply has taxed the ingenuity of Colonial governments. The main solution has been to use taxation in Africa not for its primary purpose of raising revenue, but as a means of procuring wage-labour for public or private works.

Poll Tax (with the additional wife tax and Hut tax) is set at a level far above the capacity of a peasant to pay, after deriving

subsistence from his produce. He is taxed not on his income, but on his existence, and to force him to acquire an income that will meet the tax. He must leave his home and accept wage-labour in order to earn enough money to pay off this exaction.

It has been stated quite openly by Sir Percy Girouard, a former Governor of Kenya: "We considered that taxation is the only possible method for compelling the native to leave his Reserve for the purpose of seeking work."

Among the various taxes imposed upon Africans, the Poll Tax is described by Lord Hailey in his *An African Survey*. He states, speaking of South Africa, that up to 1925 taxation varied with each province, ranging from 12s. in the Cape to £2 in the Transvaal. Taxes were collected to provide education. But on page 554 of his Survey he states: "As a result, a poll tax of £1 on every male over 18 was imposed; four-fifths of this was to be paid into general revenues and the remaining one-fifth to be devoted to native education and welfare."

In respect of the British Colonial dependencies, Lord Hailey makes the following observations, on page 639:—

> "In the British Colonial territories there has been less disposition to assist recruitment by the adoption of methods outside the normal incentive of wages. But the Poll Tax has also been a contributing and, in some circumstances, almost a determining factor in that incentive. . . . In stating that taxation is a major cause of labour emigration, the Nyasaland Committee on Labour Emigration of 1935 confirms an experience of which there have been numerous proofs elsewhere."

Kenya, as it happens, provides a striking example of this cycle. First, the best lands, the highlands, the only parts well suited for the growth of a main export crop—coffee—are by regulation taken away from the "indigenous inhabitants" and allotted to white settlers, the indigenous inhabitants being restricted to less fertile "Reserves." Next, a regulation is passed prohibiting Africans from themselves producing coffee, lest they might find a means even on the less good soil available of producing enough of this "cash crop" to meet a tax. Then a tax is imposed which the produce of their reserve is inadequate to provide, and which, therefore, has the consequence of returning them to the uplands, from which they have been driven, now no longer as cultivators, but to provide the cheap labour essential for the cash crop reserved by law, as a monopoly, to the white settlers to whom these lands have been awarded. Not only is this so, but only a few British farmers have cultivated the alienated land, although it is still within their control.

From Kenya £1,348,000 worth of coffee and £719,000 of sisal, and from Uganda £3,327,000 worth of cotton were exported annually, while one-third of the whole of the revenue of those two colonies was accounted for by the hut and poll taxes imposed to force the Africans to desert their Reserves and labour in producing these crops. (In Kenya alone 9,000 men were punished in one year for inability to pay the sum, for which their own agriculture provides no cash, and which is in any case equal to two months' wages when they seek employment to pay it.)

Thus Communities are broken up, each generation of strong youth is dragged away from the village precisely at the time when it should be contributing most vigorously to its economy and population reproduction. In Swaziland, for example, where two-thirds of the total area is owned by Europeans, two-fifths of the European owners are absentees, and only one-fifth of the food necessary to support the inhabitants is produced locally, while cash crops are cotton, tobacco and maize—here the annual labour exodus is 10,000 out of an adult population of 26,000.

Forced Labour, as defined (and condemned) by the international **Forced Labour Convention** of 1930, is again in operation in many colonies of the British Empire. In eight colonies (mainly East and West Africa) it is permitted by law; and is resorted to when the Poll Tax fails in its intended effect, or when for any other reason, such as low level of wages offered, the supply of labour for enterprises falls below what is deemed necessary.

This is frankly acknowledged by the authorities in respect of the requirements of the war situation. Thus the report "Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire 1937-1943" after observing that: ". . . in only eight territories (Gold Coast, Kenya, Nigeria, North Borneo, Nyasaland, Sierra Leone, Tanganyika and Uganda) is forced or compulsory labour, as defined by the Convention still permitted by law," explains:

> "The loss of the Malayan and Netherlands East Indies tin fields rendered it imperative that the production of tin in other allied territories should be increased to the utmost. In Nigeria it was found necessary to augment the local labour which the mining companies could secure from the tribes of the Plateau Provinces by labour recruited from other districts, and to provide for the conscription of such labour when this is deemed necessary by the Administrative Director of Minerals Production. In Kenya, the necessity for the provision of foodstuffs for the Middle East and for the needs of the territory itself has required the introduction of conscription of labour for work in essential undertakings. . . ."

But the admission of this practice in respect to war needs only disguises the fact that administrative measures and pressure of one kind and another are similarly effective in ordinary times as the quite normal course.

Now the Convention above referred to defines forced labour as all work or services for which a person has not offered himself voluntarily or which is exacted by menace or penalty, with the following exceptions: [1] labour for emergency; [2] labour for minor services for communal purposes; [3] compulsory military labour; [4] service exacted as a result of court conviction. This gives a pretty wide margin for practices that might appear indistinguishable from forced labour and yet lie outside the Convention.

Thus tax defaulters may be forced to work; in Tanganyika and Uganda Africans may provide labour instead of taxes. A form of sentence on conviction provides for imprisonment in labour camps. Penal sanctions actually exist in many colonies, whereby " indigenous workers " may be criminally punished for refusal or failure to commence or perform work stipulated in a contract; neglect of duty or lack of diligence; absence without permission or valid reason; desertion. These sanctions are not just war measures but permanent features; at the same time there is no parliamentary protection or representation.

The Report " Labour Supervision " already cited, states : " All penal sanctions for these specified breaches shall be abolished progressively as soon as possible." Nevertheless they are still part of the legislation of the East African Colonies, the Seychelles, Fiji and the Western Pacific High Commission Territories.

Wages

The wages of Colonial workers employed upon various industries are extremely low. There is no comprehensive comparative record available, but here are some figures gleaned from indicated sources; since these figures were compiled there have been in some cases cost of living increases, but these do not seriously affect figures given :

Ceylon : Plantation workers—Men 7½d., Women 6d., Children over 10 years 4½d. for a 9-hour day; highest skilled industrial worker 6/4 per week.[1] West Indies sugar industry : Unskilled labour daily rate, Trinidad, 35 cents, Jamaica 2/- to 2/6, seven other islands 1/- to 1/6.[2]

The following are monthly rates—N. Rhodesia—clerks £2 to £7, mining 17/6 to 37/6, unskilled and agriculture 6/- to 10/-,

1 Colonial Reports Annual No. 1797 ((1935)

2 Evidence of the Secretary of State, February 9, 1938.

skilled 15/- to 120/-. Kenya: Unskilled 6/- to 14/-; Uganda: Unskilled 5/- to 16/-, skilled 16/- to 150/-.

Daily rate Gold Coast: Mining unskilled 1/- to 1/9; skilled 1/9 to 10/-; Nigeria: porterage 4d. to 6d., other unskilled 4d. to 9d. Yearly—Gold Coast: Agricultural labour £3 to £10 plus rations.[1]

The Annual Report of the "Government Mining Engineer" for 1939 gives figures implying an average wage of £384 for white mine workers and £33 per year for African mine workers.

With regard to copper-ore exports of Northern Rhodesia, whose pre-war value amounted to about £10 millions, we read:—

> "Half of this sum is taken directly out of the country and handed over to shareholders, directors and others. About half a million is paid to a chartered company which does nothing apparently to further the production of copper, another half a million is paid over in taxes to the British Treasury. About £1 million is paid to a few thousand European employees of the company in Northern Rhodesia. The Rhodesian Government is given half a million in taxes and the African workers in the mines, ten times as numerous as the Europeans, receive about a quarter of a million pounds a year—less than the royalties of the Chartered Company."

3. BACKWARD CONDITIONS

The physical condition of many colonial people is, by general acknowledgement, not improving, but declining.

The following typical judgments are all quoted from official publications:

The Government of Sierra Leone:

> "In the 17th Century the people were of fine physique and lived on a mixed diet and apparently had sufficient animal food, although in no great quantity. . . . In the early and middle 18th Century it would seem that they still had a satisfactory diet. . . . In the early and middle 19th Century the diet was satisfactory.
>
> "The present dietary of the people is surveyed and the evidence shows that it is ill-balanced with an undue proportion of carbohydrate, resulting in malnutrition and disease. Schoolchildren were found to be suffering in considerable numbers from malnutrition." (Sierra Leone Review of Present Knowledge of Human Nutrition, pp. 11. 43.44 Sessional Paper No. 5 of 1938, Freetown.)

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[1] Annual Colonial Report, No. 1919 (1933).

The Economic Advisory Council (on Basutoland) :

"According to residents of long standing, the physique and health of the Basuto today is not what it used to be. Malnutrition is seen in every village, dispensary, school or recruiting office. . . . The progressive deterioration in native physique is becoming a subject of considerable comment." (Report, Part 11, Summary of Information regarding Nutrition in the Colonial Empire, pp. 48, 124. Cmd. 6051, London 1939.)

Nutrition Committee, Jamaica, 1937 :

". . . the Committee has come to the conclusion that a very high percentage of the population may be regarded as suffering from varying degrees of subnormal nutrition, and it is our further opinion that the nutritional state of a distressingly large proportion of the labouring classes must be classed as definitely bad . . . the chief causes being adverse economic conditions, low wages, unemployment, illegitimacy and over-large families." (Report of the Nutrition Committee, 1936-7, pp. 2 and 130, Kingston, 1937.)

Preliminary Survey on Nutrition in Tanganyika Territory, 1937 :

"It is recognised that Africans are subject to periodic famines. Serious as famines may be, the recurrent annual shortage of food before the new season's harvest is a much more serious question."

Committee on Nutrition in the Colonial Empire :

"[Gold Coast.] Over 70 per cent of persons in the coast town of Saltport gave evidence of tubercle infection." (Bechuanaland): "The physique and health of the Bechuana are considerably impaired by imperfect dietary conditions. . . . Recently 33 per cent of recruits for work on the gold mines were rejected as unfit." (Swaziland): "The infant mortality rate during the first year is nearly 40 per cent, half of the deaths taking place within the first two months."*

This type of picture, disease and malnutrition in agricultural regions to which is added overcrowding, lack of sanitation when urban aggregations have developed, is characteristic wherever investigation and report has been attempted. It is commonly believed that the Report of the Royal Commission to the West Indies in 1939 revealed a terrible state of affairs and it was on these grounds that it was decided to withhold it from publication.

* It is 40 per cent in Kenya, 35 per cent in Upper Uganda.) (Report, Part 11, Committee on Nutrition in the Colonial Empire, pp. 36, 124 and 52.)

The administrative measures for health and other social services are often insufficient even to arrest the decline. In the Protectorate of Bechuanaland in 1936 there were three Government hospitals, each with 20 beds for Africans, and four smaller mission hospitals, for 265,000 population. Many examples such as this could be given if space would allow.

Government expenditure is totally inadequate for such services, for irrigation, for education. There are other calls on colonial revenue. During earlier stages of development, the Colonies have been dependent almost entirely upon two sources of finance, public long-term issues raised in the London money market by Colonial Governments for purposes such as railway and harbour construction, and private capital invested by British investors for the most part in mining or trading companies.

The latter have to be safeguarded, as we have already seen, by taxes on the native population, ensuring them of an adequate supply of labour sufficiently cheap to continue operations prosperously. But the former have equally to be served as a first charge on Colonial Budgets.

Although from their history, the developments facilitated by these loans have been determined primarily by the interests of the Colonial trading enterprises and not primarily those of the native populations, none the less their cost and a high rate of interest must be met from the productive resources of the Colony before education, health and social services can be considered. It is estimated that up to 1936 a total of £176,000,000 was raised by public issues of Colonial Governments in Africa alone, and that of this 75 per cent was expended on railway construction. The heaviness of incidence of this burden may be judged from an extreme case, Nyasaland, where in 1938 interest charges on the railway debt amounted to 25 per cent of the annual revenue.

Masses of the population are as a result left either totally illiterate or, at best, with but a tiny proportion receiving a mere semblance of education. The quality and availability of education of course varies very much from colony to colony. In Africa, for example, it is far worse on the East Coast, and relatively better, though still absolutely inadequate, on the West Coast.

Where education is provided, the children are often too far undernourished to derive proper benefit from it. Thus a Zanzibar Nutritional Report states: "It appeared to be exceptional for a child to receive any food before coming to school. Furthermore, after returning home, the children often have to wait some hours before they are fed." In his recent report on the West Indies, Sir Frank Stockdale states: "In the primary schools

there is insufficient accommodation. . . . The existing accommodation is, on the whole, in a very poor state of repair and the provision of water and sanitary conveniences is still inadequate. The numbers of teachers employed are insufficient for the work they are called upon to perform, their training is largely defective and the standard of teaching leaves much to be desired." (p. 64).

This last observation should be noted in conjunction with his figures of teachers' salaries in the West Indies: head teachers, £150 to £360; certificated teachers, £36 to £70; pupil teachers, £5 to £30 per annum.

The picture is not complete, however, without the calculation given by Lord Hailey in his *African Survey*, 1938. He compares the average figures severally expended by the Governments of nine British dependencies in East and South-East Africa on the education of each African and each European in those dependencies. The average expenditure on a European schoolchild per year varies from £10 18s. 2d. in Tanganyika to £30 13s. 9d. in Southern Rhodesia. That on African schoolchildren per year varies from 16s. 5d. in Bechuanaland to 1s. 10d. in Nyasaland.

Newfoundland. An instructive case which should be cited before concluding this picture is that of Newfoundland. It is commonly assumed, and sometimes explicitly argued, that the poverty and backwardness characteristic of colonies is due to a basic "backwardness" of their native inhabitants, and that the cultural history of the peoples concerned presents a peculiar problem from which all else derives. Yet in Newfoundland we have an example of a community of basically the same stock as is found in the British Isles, the descendants of "hardy pioneers," having enjoyed self-government—Newfoundland was the earliest British Dominion—but which today presents all the features typical of the colonial relationship; lack of self-governing institutions, economy geared to and dependent on the world market, abject poverty side by side with profitable export by non-native companies. "Over half of Newfoundland's population of 300,000 depend on the sea for their livelihood, and the widespread failure of this industry resulted in 80,000 Newfoundlanders applying for Government relief during the early months of 1939." (*Times*, June 12th, 1943).

The scale of relief granted was the equivalent of 3 cents per day per adult. There were over 20,000 cases of tuberculosis and a lack of sanatoria. At meetings of unemployed, speakers talked of rooms with bare walls, bare floors and insufficient bedding, of naked children and food cooked in tins for want of proper

utensils. 14,000 children of school age received no education whatever. Many were unable to attend school for lack of proper clothing and footwear.

Since in 1933, on the recommendation of a Royal Commission, the Newfoundland Parliament was closed, and Commissioners were appointed from Whitehall with the task of reforming the administrative system, there has been no functioning of democratic native institutions whatsoever, nor encouragement given. Unemployed meetings and discussions were barred, the formation of an embryo youth movement was hindered. At the same time the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company (Harmsworth *Daily Mail*) owning the railway and 30 per cent of the whole forest area of the island, and the Reid Newfoundland Company (Bowater-Lloyd, capitalisation £9,000,000 in 1925), with complete control of timber and logging in the island, secured through the Commission despite local protests, have without interruption produced newsprint and other timber products exceedingly profitable for the newspaper interests concerned in Britain.

A Parliamentary Mission, consisting of Lord Charles Ammon, A. P. Herbert and Sir D. Gunston, visited Newfoundland in 1943, and after their return considerable public attention was focussed on the unsatisfactory situation in that country. The matter was debated in the House of Commons on 2nd December and 16th December, 1943. The Government refused to make any concession with regard to making constitutional changes during the war, but pledged itself that as soon as may be practicable after the termination of hostilities machinery will be set up enabling the Newfoundland people to express their desires as to the future status of their island. The Government also gave an undertaking that proposals which may be put forward will receive sympathetic consideration, whether they be for a return to responsible self-government or for a continuance or modification of the present régime.

4. CLAIMS FOR THE COLONIAL SYSTEM

There is a widespread defence of the Colonial system less often for what it is than for what it is said to be in the process of becoming. The Colonial system is said to be a " trustee " system, in which the welfare of the original inhabitants comes foremost and is promoted at a speed faster than could any alternative system: imperialism is said to be " democratic imperialism," advancing the inhabitants and fitting them for self-government.

To explode these claims it is only necessary to examine the facts. How reconcile such a picture as we have drawn of Kenya, for instance, with the principle of the paramountcy of

native interests? More complete analysis, wider accumulation of details, can only confirm this picture. Nor can the realities of typical colonial administration be reconciled upon any conceivable view, with encouragement to native representative organisation or native democratic control.

Various statements by Government spokesmen have indicated a clear intention not to modify policy in this respect. Colonel Oliver Stanley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, opening the debate in the House of Commons on Colonial Affairs, remarked: "It is no part of our policy to confer political advances which are unjustified by circumstances, or to grant self-government to those who are not trained to its use."

After making the general claim, so often made before, that Britain is pledged to guide Colonial peoples along the road to self-government within the framework of the British Empire, he referred to the promise of a new constitution for Jamaica; of "full internal self-government under the Crown in all matters of civil and internal administration for Ceylon" and of a similar system for Malta—in all three a veto is to be maintained by the Governor, who will reserve rights under Foreign Affairs, Trade Relations, Finance and Defence—and the addition of two unofficial members of the local Executive Council in the Gold Coast, two in Sierra Leone and three in Nigeria. From Colonel Stanley's own choice and presentation of examples it is clear that no change is contemplated in the existing system we have described.

The intention to continue using the control they preserved to maintain priority of home commercial and financial interests in the economic relationships of the Empire was also made clear by the Colonial Secretary. The Government, he said, was against uncontrolled industrial development in the Colonies, and, so far as the starting of secondary industries was in question, the Government was concerned that they should not act adversely on our own exports.

The only change announced is the provision of an increased sum from the British Budget for subsidising Colonial development. The Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 provides for the expenditure on this object of not more than £5,000,000 each year; but the total spent so far is at the rate of £1,000,000 a year, which works out at about 3d. per head per annum. The unspent money is not carried forward. The United States Government is spending in one year more money on the social development of Puerto Rico than Britain contemplates spending for similar purposes on the whole of her Colonial

Empire, with a population thirty times greater than that of Puerto Rico.

This sum is not only trivial in respect to the sums the British Treasury itself has derived from the Colonies in the past, and that British financial interests are extracting from Colonial resources, but it is grotesquely inadequate for the purpose of making any impression in altering the depressed and backward conditions of the Colonies.

A sum of £2,250,000 in the past 36 years has been handed over direct to the British African Company from the single interest of mining in Nigeria, under an agreement of 1898 to furnish 50 per cent of mining royalties. The new subsidy in no way modifies the economic relationship that drains, in favour of exterior interest, the resources of the Colonies.

£5,000 on the reconstruction of a central lunatic asylum in Antigua, £27,290 on the establishment of a modern prison farm in Jamaica, these, while being quite laudable, are types of the expenditure authorised under the Act. Under present Government policy, as Mr. Creech-Jones calculated in the debate: "It will take 600 years before the facilities exist for all children of school age to receive education in the Gold Coast."

A different type of reform began to be advocated some 20 years ago, namely, that the Colonial territories, at any rate in the African and other tropics, should cease to be the preserve of one power but should be transferred to the status of mandated territories, and further that this mandate should be entrusted to the interested powers (unspecified) jointly.

This proposal (revived in the late thirties as a possible appeasement of Nazi claims for the former German Colonies) depended on the assumption that the mandated territories under the Covenant of the League of Nations would not be regarded or treated as colonies. This assumption, however, was not sufficiently borne out by experience; and the substitution of joint exploitation for exclusive exploitation would have little to commend it. Indeed, from the point of view of administration, the existing examples of collective foreign rule (e.g., Anglo-French Condominium in New Caledonia, or Tangier) have been a bye-word for their ineffectiveness. Whatever limited benefits might be conceivable under such a proposed reform would accrue rather to those outside the colony and would be offset by the international mandatory powers tending to act together in delaying the fulfilment by a colonial people of its right to self-determination.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

A feature that justifies every confidence in respect of the general advancement of colonial peoples is the enormous strength gained in recent years by the national liberation movements. In the West Indies, the People's National Party of Jamaica is now firmly established and receives support from all sections of the people, and with its representatives in local Government, it is playing a decisive role. In Trinidad, British Guiana and other islands, the people are establishing progressive organisations that are playing an increasingly important role, demanding the extension of democratic rights and putting forward demands on behalf of the people.

In respect of West Africa, there are such organisations as the National Congress of British West Africa, and the West African Youth League, and various citizens' associations. When Col. Stanley visited West Africa in 1943, he was presented with a detailed Memorandum drawn up jointly by these bodies and putting forward demands in respect of constitutional reforms and social advancement.

In Ceylon, there is the Ceylon National Congress and in many of the colonial countries the Communist Parties are establishing themselves. Along with these movements is the growing strength of the Trade Union movement, as mentioned by Col. Stanley in the debate on Colonial Affairs in July, 1943.

III PROBLEM OF LIBERATION OF THE COLONIAL PEOPLES

The policy of liberation as put forward by the Communist Party is summed up in the phrase: "The self-determination of all colonial people."

We believe that this is the only final democratic solution of the colonial question, and that democratic policy should be directed towards the speediest fulfilment of this aim.

Self-determination means that the people in each colonial territory should have the right to decide their own way of life and to establish their own forms of government without any coercion or interference from outside. For each colonial people within the British Empire it would mean the winning and exercising of this right, and the democratic establishment of their own form of State. For Britain it would mean replacing the present colonial system by voluntary forms of association into which each former colonial people would be free to enter or not to enter. It would be a voluntary fraternal association of the British people with the liberated colonial people, in which the British people would have the possibility of assisting in the rapid development of each former colonial country which so desired.

While pressing forward this aim as the only final democratic solution, we strive to co-operate with all democratic and progressive opinion in carrying out such immediate measures as can be carried out for the improvement of the economic and social conditions of the colonial peoples, and for the development of their democratic rights and possibilities of organisation, as steps to the goal of liberation. These immediate measures are discussed in the next chapter.

What are the objections that are raised to the policy of self-determination under present conditions? Actually, the objection that it would not be to the advantage of British monopolist and other vested interests, is not put forward with the same blatancy as it used to be twenty years ago. Yet this objection is often behind more specious arguments, and there is no question but that a difficult struggle both of the democratic forces in Britain and of the colonial peoples will be necessary to overcome the opposition of those who maintain this objection.

Of the objections usually voiced in the press and general discussion, the most frequent is that which asserts that "the colonial peoples are *not yet fit* for self-government." The colonial peoples are declared to be "unripe for democratic institutions," and requiring first to go through a period of tutelage and train-

ing at the hands of the ruling Power. This argument is often propounded from quarters which have an obvious interest in maintaining the subjection of the colonial peoples. But it is also sometimes put forward from progressive spokesmen, philanthropically concerned for the progress of the colonial peoples, but convinced of their unfitness for self-government. It therefore requires candid examination.

All historical experience shows that it is necessary to view with considerable suspicion the arguments of "unfitness" and "unripeness" when applied to a subject nation by a ruling nation, which may be suspected of being economically interested in maintaining the existing system of domination. There is always the obvious danger in such an argument that the ruler is setting himself up as judge in a case to which he is a party.

To attempt from above to decide about the when and how of self-determination and under what circumstances this right shall be applied, is to deny self-determination. Even if it were conceivable that a Colonial people would decide that it was "not yet fit for self-government," even then it would be for them and for them alone to take such an improbable decision, not for the present foreign rulers. Therefore any such general objection is really an assertion in a concealed form of Lord Brentford's famous phrase: "We won it by the sword, and by the sword we shall hold it."

This assertion is sometimes made in an even less reputable form; as when it is stated that only Europeans, or only white races, are fully capable of self-government. It is difficult for those who make this assertion to explain why Cyprus and Malta are denied self-government and why the Dominion of Newfoundland has been for the last ten years deprived of self-government.

It is unnecessary to deal with all the variants of the "not yet fit" argument. But mention may be made of one which presented British Imperialism to itself as a model of paternal benevolence. Kipling wrote of the "White Man's Burden" and of:

> "The new-caught, sullen peoples,
> Half devil and half child."

Twenty years later in the Labour Party there was talk of "non-adult races" and a solemn pursuit of this false analogy between stages of individual and stages of social development. It was left to Hitler to modernise the other part of Kipling's false analogy by the description of certain "inferior races" as "sub-human."

But actually it is clear that assertions of this kind derive from racialist theories whose final and foulest expression is seen in the propaganda of Hitlerite fascism. As it turns out, there is

no middle way between following the logic of democracy to its conclusion and following the path that leads to a fascist repudiation of democracy.

Concretely too, the " not yet fit " argument does not hold water. There is no example of Colonial peoples within the British Empire who have been granted self-government because it was judged in Whitehall that the " not yet fit " stage had been passed. Yet with the great diversity of stages of development of peoples within the British Empire some such example there should have been, had the argument been seriously intended as a description of a policy consistently pursued.

The objection to self-determination of the Colonial peoples is sometimes put forward on a lower plane of argument. It is said that " Britain " must possess colonies because of the foodstuffs, mineral wealth and other raw materials; and that " Britain " cannot " feed herself." Only ignorance of the flow of world trade (and of the potentialities of food production in Britain) can sustain this argument, which, of course, derives from the demagogies of monopolist interests. According to this argument, the foodstuffs that come in large quantities from the U.S.A., both in peace and in war-time, would have no existence because the United States have long ago ceased to be British colonies; and the peace-time regular supplies of Swedish iron-ore would be impossible till Sweden became part of the British Empire.

What seems hardly yet realised by many of those who linger over the objections to self-government is that the question is one of urgency. The choice is not between some *status quo* of stability and a future leap in the dark. The *status quo* is not stability but accelerating deterioration. The choice is between a process that denies democracy and is already far-gone towards the conditions of servitude, and the stopping of this downward process and the upbuilding on a democratic basis of a new civilisation.

When Henry Wallace, Vice-President of the U.S.A., said in May, 1942: "This is a fight between a slave world and a free world. Just as the United States in 1862 could not remain half-slave and half-free, so in 1942 the world must make its decision for a complete victory one way or the other," though he was not making a specific reference to problems within the British Empire, the relevance of it was understood quite clearly in the colonial countries. In his book, *One World*, published in 1943, Mr. Wendell Willkie outspokenly raised the question of colonial liberation in a context which unmistakably referred to British Imperialism.

But it is not only from the standpoint of the whole future of mankind or the interests of the colonial peoples that self-determination is essential as an immediate policy. It is also in the interests of the British people themselves. So long as the monopolists hold their grip on the colonial peoples, so long the British people will find it hard to be masters in their own country. It is well-nigh 80 years since the famous utterance of Karl Marx: "A people that oppresses others cannot itself be free." What was true then is doubly true in the epoch of monopoly capitalism.

TSARIST EMPIRE AND THE U.S.S.R.

Finally, any uncertainty as to how the old democratic and socialist principle of self-determination would apply in practice has been completely removed by the example of the U.S.S.R. The Tsarist Empire in this respect was fully comparable with the British Empire. The peoples of the Tsarist colonies were deprived of self-government, and denied democratic rights: they were economically subordinated to the capitalist centres in European Russia; their development was arrested and the most elementary social services were lacking. As in many British colonies a system of "indirect rule" played a part; while settlers, merchants and industrial capitalists from "Great Russia" were given a privileged position. There was a Viceroy in Russian Turkestan, a Viceroy in the Caucasus; and the use of the opprobious word "alien" to describe the Uzbeks, Turkomans and others exactly paralleled the contemptuous use of the word "nigger" in many parts of the British Empire.

To the nationalities inside this "prison-house of peoples" Soviet power brought liberation. The principle of self-determination of nationalities was proclaimed in a document of November, 1917, signed by Lenin and Stalin; and to ensure the application of this principle as an immediate policy, a *People's Commissariat of Nationalities* was established. In addition, special measures were taken to redress the balance of inequality and backwardness imposed by years of Tsarist oppression. In the tasks of building the new Soviet State and developing its resources particular emphasis was laid on the most rapid development of the former colonies; and economic measures to further this were prominent in each budget and in each five-year plan.

The revised Constitution of the U.S.S.R. of December, 1936, set the seal on this transformation of the former Tsarist colonies. The Supreme Soviet, directly elected, sits in two chambers—the Soviet of the Union, whose members are chosen from electoral areas on the basis of one deputy for every 300,000 of the population; and the Soviet of Nationalities, whose members are elected from Union and Autonomous Republics, Autonomous

Regions, and National Areas on the basis of twenty-five deputies from each of the 16 Union Republics, 11 deputies from each Autonomous Republic, five deputies from each Autonomous Region, and one deputy from each National Area. The people have full representation both on the basis of the general population and of nationalities including even the smallest national minorities. Thus Soviet Asia, as a whole, has more than 125 deputies in the Soviet of the Union and more than 170 in the Soviet of Nationalities. The electoral system is defined by the Constitution thus :—

> "Elections of deputies are universal; all citizens of the U.S.S.R. who have reached the age of eighteen, irrespective of race or nationality, religion, educational and residential qualifications, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies and to be elected, with the exception of insane persons and persons who have been convicted by a court of law and whose sentences include deprivation of electoral rights."

What has this freedom brought to these peoples previously under Tsarist Imperialism? Take the example of Turkmenia. Under Tsardom the peasant share-cropper, poverty stricken, had to surrender half his harvest and pay the landlord for every drop of water. Now landlordism has been abolished, the peasants have organised themselves in collective farms, modern methods of agriculture have been introduced and new systems of irrigation built. The gross yield of cotton has increased 5½ times. New industries have been established : and Turkmenia is no longer a mere agrarian appendage.

Before the revolution only 0.7 per cent of the population were literate. Now, after 25 years, 80 per cent are literate. There are now 1,347 schools, of which 1,186 are in rural areas. There are four Universities with a total of 2,000 students; four teachers' training colleges and 38 technical colleges; 18 scientific research institutions. There are flourishing theatres, music schools, concert halls and dramatic schools. Large sums of money have been spent on municipal improvements, modern houses built, parks, hospitals and clinics established.

Turkmenia is no exception but typical of all the areas which were previously colonies under Tsarist rule. Even amongst the Chukches of the frozen North, whose life was little better than that of a Stone Age people, an advance that might seem to require centuries has taken place in less than a score of years.

Molotov, reporting on the Third Five-Year Plan to the 18th Congress of the C.P.S.U., paid special attention to the steps to ensure the further economic and cultural advancements of the

national republics and regions. The tremendous results from industrialisation of these areas is shown by the part played in the resistance and expulsion of the Nazi advance from the U.S.S.R. In the Third Five-Year Plan three-fourths of all blast furnaces to be built in the Soviet Union were to be allocated to the Eastern Districts. This was in accordance with the decision of the 18th Congress of the Bolshevik Party that: "The further economic and cultural advancement of the National Republics and Regions must be safeguarded, in harmony with the fundamental aims pursued in the distribution of productive forces under the Third Five-Year Plan." Thus the highest modern technique is made available to peoples enjoying the highest modern type of self-government. It is these developments referred to in Molotov's speech of February, 1944, which have made possible the establishment of armies and foreign relations for each of the main constituent republics of the U.S.S.R.

The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. states that: "Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of citizens on account of their race or nationality or conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of their race or nationality, is punishable by law, as well as an advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred or contempt." This presents Soviet democracy as the antithesis of fascism and bears out Stalin's words: "All nations and races, irrespective of their past and present position—irrespective of their strength or weakness, should enjoy equal rights in all spheres of economic, social, political and cultural life."

IV STEPS TO LIBERATION

In furtherance of the policy of self-determination of all colonial peoples, which is our aim, the Communist Party supports all measures, political, economic and social, which can strengthen the colonial peoples and assist their advance.

1. ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The subjection of the colonial peoples is rooted in the exploitation of their country and themselves in the interests of monopoly capitalism. The political measures proposed for constitutional reform will be of very little avail unless they are accompanied by measures to restrict the present forms of exploitation and by positive measures to assist in the development and control of resources by the colonial people themselves. This is shown by the fact that certain countries possessing a nominal independence exhibit the familiar features of colonial degradation because their economy is in the grasp of foreign monopoly interests.

The first measure necessary is a restriction of the present forms of exploitation which work against the interests of the development of colonial countries. The land and its minerals should be placed under the control of the administration. Where land has been alienated, its ownership should be resumed. Mineral and other companies operating from London should be registered in the colonial country and be under the control of its laws.

Secondly, the fullest assistance must be afforded from Britain for productive development of resources. This assistance must not be limited to such measures as normally fall outside the sphere of private capitalist exploitation—such as improvement of irrigation, endowed research into agriculture, prevention and cure of soil erosion, port and railway facilities for marketing. The sums necessary for full development of mineral, industrial and agricultural resources must be made available in such a way as to prevent any domination of foreign capital within the colony.

Detailed measures and plans under the control of the government of the colony would in most cases include:—

1. Balance between export crops and crops for local consumption; development of internal markets; development of industry to balance development of agriculture and mining.

2. The above balance to be determined on a basis of adequate nutrition standards for the colonial peoples.

3. Revision of taxation, which (as well as long-term labour

contracts) operates detrimentally to native industry and agriculture and harms the economic and social life of tribes and villages.

4. Provision of land for agriculture, with security of tenure and with prevention of exploitation by landlords, middle-men and usurers.

5. Encouragement of co-operation in agriculture by supply of capital, equipment and machinery, through the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. The encouragement of a co-operative movement both for producers and consumers.

6. Special attention to Scientific Research in all aspects, especially in respect of food crops and mineral research.

7. Effective technical guidance and training under Government control.

Thirdly, the frequently proclaimed aim of the Colonial Office to make the interests of the colonial peoples its primary concern in each colony should be rescued from the realm of unreality and made effective by placing the material resources of the colony at the disposal of the people. This implies a system of economic planning for developing industry and agriculture in the interests of the inhabitants, in order to raise their standard of living in a properly balanced economy. Each colony should be encouraged to set up a Commission, composed mainly of inhabitants of the colony, to investigate its economic potentialities and plan accordingly.

There are tremendous possibilities for accelerating the process of industrialisation in many countries outside the older manufacturing areas of the world. Our task must be to facilitate this process in respect of the Colonial countries. In the past and at present, monopoly interests look upon the Colonies as their rightful prey for profitable investments, while restricting or preventing industrial development taking place.

The possibilities for such development in respect of Africa is shown by the following facts: Africa produces one-fifth of the world supply of manganese ore. The total world production of managanese ore for 1938 was 5,198,000 metric tons, out of which Africa produced 1,121,120 metric tons.

The Gold Coast manganese deposits are very extensive, but the only mine working is the Nsuta Mine at Dagwin, 34 miles from the Port of Sekondi. This is probably the largest single manganese mine in the world. The usual production is 500,000-600,000 tons per year. The ore reserves are proven up to 10,000,000 tons. The ore bed is about 100 feet thick and occurs along the tops of disconnected ridges over a distance of two miles. To date the total production is well over 2,000,000 tons. The

principal ore minerals are psilomelane, pyrolusite, manganite and polianite. (*The Mineral Resources of Africa,* by A. Williams Postel, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1943).

In respect of chromium, the total world production of crude chromite ore in 1939 was 1,150,000 metric tons, out of which Africa produced 299,843 metric tons. The figure for Southern Rhodesia alone is equal to 18 per cent of the world's production.

Practically the entire world supply of cobalt is produced in Africa. The world production for 1938 was estimated at 3,500 short tons, of which Africa produced 3,290 short tons.

The copper province of Northern Rhodesia and Katanga, Belgian Congo, constitutes the largest copper deposit and reserve in the world. This belt runs southeast from Kambove in Belgian Congo to Bwana M'Kwuba in Northern Rhodesia, a distance of 200 miles. The area is about 40 miles wide.

Good bauxite (aluminium ore) deposits occur in Africa, but until very recently they were not exploited. Two regions are potential sources of bauxite: the Gold Coast and Southern Rhodesia.

The total world supply of tin for 1940 amounted to 237,800 long tons, out of which Africa produced 22,635 long tons. For the first nine months of 1942, the Amalgamated Tin Mines Company of Nigeria had produced 5,430 tons of tin ore. Other companies for the same period had produced 2,520 tons of ore. Known ore reserves for immediate working in the tin fields amounted to 17,370 tons.

As regards coal, total world production for 1938 amounted to 1,466,000,000 metric tons. Of this, Africa produced 18,592,000 metric tons. (*Ibid.*)

Potential water-power may be regarded as Africa's greatest resource. At the present time, not one-hundredth of this vast reservoir of energy is being utilised. Considering the natural fuel deficiencies in Africa, the future development of the continent may be determined by water-power as the energy source.

The total water-power resources have been estimated at 274,000,000 horse-power. This is quoted by the *Economist,* July 8, 1944, from the United States Geological Survey, which also states that only 210,000 horse-power, i.e., 0.3 per cent, is developed so far. This is more than three times as great as the European water-power potential.

Utilisation of water-power in Africa would make possible an aluminium industry, using local ores.

The Congo River, 4,200 kilometres long, probably accounts for half of Africa's potential water-power. Other river systems,

whose power resources can be developed, are the Niger, the Zambesi—with Victoria Falls, the Limpopo, and the Nile, not to mention other similar systems. Some of the African countries have bad dry seasons which would hamper continuous power production (as in the Gold Coast), but if dams were constructed, reservoirs would be created for the dry seasons.

The Governments of Britain and U.S.A. in particular have a very big responsibility in the immediate post-war period to assist in the development of the Colonial countries. The old policy of exclusive exploitation must end, but in its place there must not be developed an agreed policy of exploitation; in its place we must have agreement on the part of the United Nations that they will assist in the development of the industrialisation of the Colonial country in the interests of the peoples of the Colonial country.

In order to make possible this development, large-scale capital expenditure will be necessary, loans need to be arranged, not by monopoly interests, but through either of the Governments concerned or through the International Investments Bank. High rates of interest which once prevailed in relation to Colonial loans are completely unnecessary and special low rates should be fixed.

The Government of the colonial country concerned, in consultation with representatives of the United Nations, should decide on the steps to be taken. The introduction of mechanisation in the field of primary production, motor-tractors and mining machinery, would require workshops for maintenance. Then would come the training of skilled and semi-skilled workers. Each country would have to work out its special aspects.

Industrialisation must take place in an organised way, first, probably, the development of light industry, such as textiles, clothing, simple tools, hardware, etc. For this, manufacturing plant would be required and the installation of equipment. It is essential that every facility should then be given for the development of medium and heavy industry. The peoples of the colonial countries must have a major voice in whatever organisation is used to carry such a policy forward.

The question of the development of the Co-operative movement in the colonies would be valuable in this direction. The example of the Chinese industrial co-operatives for the development of industries in respect of backward countries provides a very useful illustration.

Our policy in relation to industrial development in the colonial countries, linked up with the political changes which we demand, would definitely result in improving the economic conditions of

the peoples of the colonial countries. The demands that would be made not only for machinery but for all commodities with the improvement of wages and economic conditions generally, will create the new needs and new markets which will bring prosperity to Britain.

2. SOCIAL MEASURES—HEALTH

The standard of health in the colonies, only recently seriously studied by Governments, gives the following picture: Complete inadequacy of medical facilities; generally low standard of sanitation; appalling housing conditions with serious shortage and overcrowding; high incidence of tropical and other diseases; in places an infantile mortality of 50 per cent; and, above all, wide malnutrition and hunger.

The expenditure of £327,684 as assistance to deal with these immense problems is totally inadequate. The Government of each colony should immediately prepare plans for each of these pressing questions and the necessary funds be found to carry out these plans. Such plans would cover the training of doctors and nurses, building of hospitals, special attention to midwifery, establishment of health services in schools, preparation in each case of a housing programme, with special attention to sanitation and proper town planning. The following are some of the most urgent needs: —

1. Collection of reliable vital statistics to show state of public health and efficiency of health services.

2. Improvement of nutrition of population, depending on carrying out the economic measures already outlined.

3. Operation of public health services for prevention as well as cure of diseases.

4. To staff an adequate mobile medical service and to extend the hospital and dispensary services, considerable numbers of Africans and peoples of the other Colonies too to be given the necessary medical training.

5. Campaigns against specific diseases, especially sleeping sickness, malaria, leprosy and tuberculosis.

6. Maternity and child welfare centres for advice and assistance.

7. For health services generally, international co-operation should be sought; the co-operation of the United Nations Governments on this question to be continued after the war.

3. EDUCATION

To put an end to illiteracy immediate measures for the training of adults and for universal elementary education for children are necessary; and also for the establishment or extension of secondary, higher and technical education. The recent (November, 1943) memorandum of the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies (Colonial No. 186) proposes :

(a) The wide extension of schooling for children with the goal of universal school within a measurable time.

(b) The spread of literacy among adults, together with a widespread development of literature and libraries without which there is little hope of making literacy permanent.

(c) The planning of mass education of the community as a movement of the community itself, involving the active support of the local community from the start.

(d) The effective co-ordination of welfare plans and mass education plans so that they form a comprehensive and balanced whole.

It should be noted that although these proposals are devised only for " Mass Education in African Society " similar, though not identical, plans are necessary for practically all the Colonial countries. Secondly, it should be noted that these are as yet only proposals, and that the corresponding Sargent Plan for education in India was rejected by the new Viceroy on the ground that such plans must wait on the development of Indian industry and economy to find means of covering the cost. It is necessary, therefore, that the proposals become immediate measures; and that the cost be found if need be from the Exchequer. This applies to the " Mass Education in African Society " proposals, and to corresponding plans which should be forthwith prepared in the other Colonial countries.

4. LABOUR LEGISLATION

The first immediate measure necessary is the liberation of trade unions from repression or restrictive legislation, ordinances and regulations. The body of trade union law existing in Britain (with the exception of the *Trades Disputes and Trade Union Act of* 1927) could be immediately adopted in the colonies; and there is nothing to hinder an instruction from the Colonial Office to this effect being put into operation immediately.

Where, as is too often the case, the existing rates of wages are so miserably low as to render the workers almost incapable of trade union organisation and action (as was the case in many of the sweated trades in Britain at the beginning of the century) it is necessary to set up minimum wage boards, on which the workers, industrial and agricultural, receive equal representation

The body of labour legislation built up in the last century in Britain and the Dominions should immediately be adopted in the colonies, especially :

Factory Acts, Mines Regulations Acts, other acts protecting the labour of women and children.

Workmen's Compensation Acts, with raising of compensation rates in those colonies where a beginning of workmen's compensation is in force.

Social Insurance Legislation, covering sickness, incapacity, old age and unemployment.

Finally, it is necessary that there be enforced immediately in all colonial countries the various international conventions, some of which though ratified by the British Government have not yet been applied by Colonial Governments. Especially important are the Forced Labour Convention of the International Labour Office, which aims at abolition of forced labour in all its forms; and the Convention of 1939 for the regulation of contracts of employment and for the abolition of penal sanctions for labour offences. Only when these conventions and laws are enforced will conditions in the colonial countries cease to resemble the harsh conditions of European countries a century and more ago.

5. POLITICAL—CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

The first step to self-government is immediate and far-reaching change of the constitutional position in the colonies. Instead of despotic or semi-despotic rule by a Governor appointed from and responsible to Whitehall, there should be responsible Government. That is, the executive power in each Colony should be responsible to a popularly elected assembly or Legislature. This assembly should possess full legislative and budgetary power. Responsible government and a popularly elected assembly with full legislative powers are the minimum requirements for democratic self-government.

The application of these principles, the precise form in which a constitution is granted or established in each colonial country, will naturally show a certain range of variation. Thus there may be a greater or lesser degree of federalism, there may be a merging here and there of frontiers artificially drawn in the course of earlier annexations, or there may be separation of one portion of an existing colony from another portion. These, and many other such questions, can only be settled in the course of practical working out. The main thing is to allow full scope for the initiative of representatives of the colonial people to mould the constitutions that will be most suitable.

The question also as to whether the existing forms of West African tribal Governments could be utilised or democratised is

a question for the African people. There are at present definite tribal units with linguistic and other characteristics; they could fit in administratively with a democratic constitution.

But everywhere the system of official members or nominated members of public bodies should be abolished. Inner departmental committees are one thing: to have them presented as an example of popular control or check upon the otherwise despotic powers of a Governor is merely a travesty of democratic principle. Existing legislative councils and executive councils, pending decisions as to their structure and function by popularly elected assemblies, should be filled by representatives elected by the people of the colonial country, or the existing tribal forms of representation should be developed.

The same principle applies to local government, where officials exercising full executive or judicial or other powers should be replaced by representative persons or bodies. This applies to villages, where any attempt to retain nominated headmen or salaried chieftains should give place to popular choice.

How distant existing colonial policy is from this goal may be seen from examples of colonies where constitutional reforms have been under discussion for some years and where projects of change have been put forward.

JAMAICA. The example of Jamaica has been used as a proof of the Colonial Officers' sincerity in their announcements about constitutional reforms. The proposed constitution for Jamaica (presented to the House of Commons on March 23rd, 1943) has as its main features :—

(a) A House of Assembly of not fewer than 24 members selected on the basis of universal adult suffrage.

(b) A Legislative Council consisting of 15 members nominated from officials and unofficials.

(c) An Executive Committee consisting of ten members presided over by the Governor, who shall have a casting but not originating vote. Five of these members shall be chosen by the House of Assembly, the remaining five (three officials and two unofficials) shall be nominated by the Governor.

(d) Formation of five small Committees in House of Assembly to concentrate on General Purposes; Agriculture and Lands; Education; Social Welfare and Communications. (The five chairmen might be appointed to the Executive Committee.)

(e) Power of certification shall be exercised in accordance with the advice of the Executive Committee; the Governor retains power of " veto."

(f) The Constitution if accepted will be tried for a term of five years and thereafter come up for review.

While this Constitution as at present framed has come under criticism of the People's National Party of Jamaica, nevertheless, these main provisions undoubtedly represent an advance on those offered in 1941, and rejected by the Legislative Council. It concedes the bi-cameral Legislature demanded; it institutes a Committee system which, but for the retention of the power of veto and certification by the Governor, would go far towards establishing ministerial responsibility. It also sets a time limit, the importance of which has been stressed by the People's National Party. On October 11, 1944, the Legislative Council of Jamaica accepted the new Constitution and Elections for the New House of Representatives takes place in December.

But in order to make this constitution a satisfactory immediate step, it is necessary that the memorandum submitted in October, 1942, by the Elected Members of the Legislative Council, the representatives of the People's National Party and the representatives of the Federation of Citizens' Associations, for the appointment and control of the Local Civil Service by a Local Civil Service Commission, should be put into operation. Further, it is absolutely essential that the powers of the Governor should be restricted and that he should be bound by the majority decisions of the Executive Council.

To secure the amendment of the above proposed Constitution along the lines advocated by the People's National Party of Jamaica, and to apply such an agreed Constitution to all other islands in the West Indies is a step which brooks no delay. In the meanwhile proposals are being made for the extension of the Franchise in Trinidad and British Guiana.

CEYLON. Ceylon has possessed a restricted "constitution" for some years. A statement was made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (House of Commons report, May 26th, 1943) outlining a new projected constitution for Ceylon, whose main features appear to be less democratic than the Donoughmore Constitution. Although universal adult suffrage remains under the proposed constitution, the elected representatives will only be responsible for matters of internal civil administration—"full responsible government under the Crown, for matters of internal administration." The Governor, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, will retain control of the provisions for defence, relations with foreign countries and parts of the British Commonwealth, currency and finance; and will also be responsible for all trading interests and commerce. Moreover, this "reform offer" has raised the question of "balanced representation"

which would operate against democratic practice of majority decisions.

On July 5, 1944, a statement from the Secretary of State for Colonies was published to the effect that (a) a Royal Commission was coming out to examine the question of Constitutional Reforms and consult the "various interests"; (b) fresh election to the State Council to be postponed for a further eight years. The Board of Ministers, with one dissentient, stated that this declaration was a retreat on that of May 26, 1943, in that the 1943 declaration envisaged that the sole purpose of a Royal Commission or conference was to decide whether or not the constitution framed by the Board of Ministers and accepted by 75 per cent in the State Council, came within the framework of the declaration. The Board of Ministers have now withdrawn the Draft Constitution as a protest to the announcement of the Commission.

The All-Ceylon Congress Committee, of the Ceylon National Congress, July 9, 1944, considered the new declaration which it characterised as an attempt to "take away from the people of Ceylon the undoubted right that they have to draft their own constitution and impose upon them a slave constitution drafted by the foreign ruler" and urged the State Council and the country to (a) reject the "reforms declarations"; (b) boycott the Commission; and (c) "make a united demand for the immediate recognition of Ceylon's right to independence and a free constitution."

In conclusion, the Communist Party, in contradistinction to those who welcome the Royal Commission and those who call merely for a negative boycott of it, appeals that there should be no separate or sectional representation to the Commission, but that all parties, organisations and sections should come together now so that they can negotiate with the British Government or its representatives as a united nation with the single uniform demand for (a) Co-operation with the United Nations as an equal partner to defend the country and carry forward the common struggle for victory over Fascism, and the creation of a world family of free and equal nations, as laid down at Teheran; (b) Recognition of Ceylon's right to independence and a free constitution, to be approved by a new State Council, at the end of the war.

MALTA. In the case of Malta, the Island whose three years of exemplary defence brought it the award of the George Cross, the constitution which had been in existence since the end of the 1914-18 war was suspended in 1933; and the island was governed despotically up to the spring of 1939, when it was announced that by Letters Patent representative Government had been granted. As this amounted to ten persons elected to a body composed also

of officials and nominees, the term "representative government" hardly seems to be justified.

CYPRUS. The "constitution" of this island, whose population are in a majority Greek-speaking, was suspended after the rising of 1931. Here not only is there despotic government, but (presumably through a well-grounded fear that the population might vote for union with Greece) the right of self-determination or any popular machinery through which Cypriot aspirations might be voiced is sternly withheld.

These examples, whether of colonies in a relatively favourable position, or of colonies inhabited by Europeans, can scarcely be considered proofs of general rapid progress towards a satisfactory constitutionalist standpoint by the Colonial Office.

Franchise

The right to vote in most colonies lags behind the general constitutional position, utterly unsatisfactory though this is. In most colonies there is no right of franchise whatever. In the Dominion of South Africa the right of franchise is possessed by the white inhabitants and denied to the African natives; in the case of Cape Province existing franchise rights amongst a small section of the African population were cancelled. In some colonies (*e.g.,* Southern Rhodesia) the deprivation of franchise takes the form of imposing a property qualification, which in practice is not possessed by one African in ten thousand. This is also true of Bahamas, Barbados and Bermuda, although in Barbados this has been lowered to an income of £20 per annum.

The right of franchise, on the basis of universal adult suffrage, is a necessary immediate step to colonial liberation. It should be applied in local, provincial and national elections.

Civil Rights

Apart from denial of political rights of voting and representation, the peoples in many colonial countries do not possess the ordinary civil rights which used to belong to every subject of the Crown. The position is not dissimilar to the Hitlerite laws establishing second-class citizenship in the Reich. Of these deprivations of ordinary civil rights the most outstanding is the *colour bar,* which exists in its most flagrant shape in parts of Africa. Not only is the African native denied the franchise and right of representation but he is subjected to exceptional laws and regulations. He is segregated in Reserves except in so far as he is required to serve as a worker in the economic interests of the European; he is barred, as much as possible, from all skilled and better paid occupations in order to prevent his competition with European workers; unlike Europeans he is

subject to Pass Laws and penal labour laws which are used to emphasise his inferior civil and economic status.

The colour bar should immediately be abolished; and every kind of legal or administrative discrimination on the ground of race, colour, or religion, should end. The following are some of the more important measures to be taken:—

1. Discrimination, directly or indirectly involving inequality in political machinery, representation and responsibility on the grounds of race, should be progressively abolished.
2. All racial discrimination in the fiscal system should be abolished.
3. All restrictions on the right to own, buy, lease or sell land on racial grounds (other than restrictions designed to protect the peoples of the countries concerned) should be abolished.
4. State funds should not be granted to any school or educational establishment, entry to which is restricted upon racial grounds.
5. Safety regulations, in so far as they are used to keep a colour bar in force, should be amended.
6. Administrations should be instructed to set an example in Government services (postal, telegraphic, etc.) of good wages and conditions for Africans and to provide technical education and training for Africans in order to break down the economic colour bar where it exists and prevent its extension to other colonial territories.
7. Grants of funds should not be made for schemes which benefit the economic interests of small racial minorities.

It needs to be emphasised that the colour bar is very powerful in certain colonies, particularly in Barbados, the Bermudas, and the Bahamas. In West Africa there is nominally less racial discrimination, but in practice it operates; for example, in the difference in salaries as between white and coloured employees, in the filling of administrative posts and in education and in hospital provisions. Worst of all, the colour bar is operative in discriminatory punishment between coloured and white troops. The coloured troops are flogged for many alleged offences. This does not apply to white troops.

The establishment of Civil Liberties (such as freedom of movement, organisation, speech and press) should accompany the removal of the colour bar. This means the repeal of all repressive laws. Examples of these are the Poll Tax, Pass Laws and Masters' and Servants' Acts; and the ordinances used to deport persons for Trade Union and legitimate political activity or to prevent the free receipt and distribution of political literature. Forced labour in all forms should be abolished, as well as taxes and other levies making for personal servitude.

V TERRITORIES UNDER JAPANESE OCCUPATION

Since the Japanese occupied the British Far Eastern colonies in the spring of 1942 they have endeavoured to consolidate their conquests both politically and militarily. In Burma, for example, they have set up a puppet Government under Dr. Ba Maw and they permit this Government to hold cabinet meetings in the Burmese language. They excused the peasants a year's land rent and permitted Burmese to set up small factories and banks. Under the puppet Government they have organised a "Burmese Army" which they claim numbers 100,000 men. In August, 1943, the Japanese formally recognised the "independence of Burma" and the puppet Government declared war on Great Britain and the United States. At the same time the Japanese have increased their own military occupation of Burma, have smashed all independent Burmese committees and have forced all political parties and groups to join one political party run on fascist lines or else dissolve or go underground. Press, publications and all instruments of propaganda are all rigidly controlled in the interests of the occupation forces. Another Japanese move has been to transfer two Shan States and four Malay States to the puppet Government of Thailand.

United States policy has gone some way to counter similar Japanese moves in the Philippines. In August, 1943, and again in October, 1943, President Roosevelt declared that the Philippines would be independent the moment Japanese military power had been destroyed, and that the U.S. Government would not wait till 1946, their pledged date for independence. In 1944 this was confirmed by Act of Congress. China has also endeavoured to counter Japanese moves by declaring, in the words of her Foreign Minister, that China, fighting for her own independence, *aspires to the freedom of all Asiatic peoples.*

Britain (and similarly the Netherlands and Free France) has made only vague and limited statements. On November 19, 1942, Mr. Amery said in the House of Commons that "They (the Burmese) have had an assurance that their country will have self-Government after the war." But there has been no further Government statement, except on the question of compensating companies with property under Japanese occupation, and no interpretation of what was meant by self-government. On June 6, 1944, the Colonial Secretary said in Parliament that staffs on the War Office were preparing plans for Far Eastern territories under Japan following "recapture" but gave no details.

As far as actions are concerned, the United States Government

on September 22, 1943, appointed Mr. Charles Taft as head of all U.S. rehabilitation work in the East Indies and Malaya, under the State Department. The British Government has set up a Burmese Reconstruction Department in India under the Governor, Sir Reginald Dorman Smith, with which are associated a former Burmese Prime Minister and a former Minister of Finance, and with U Tin Tut, secretary to successive Burmese prime ministers as Reconstruction Advisor. A similar department for Malaya has been formed in London. In Australia the Dutch have also formed a training school for administrators, whose trainees are already taking over in areas freed from the Japanese.

These are the official declarations and plans. In respect to Burma and other former British Eastern colonies they hold out no hope to those Burmese and others who at great cost are trying to build up resistance to Japan. They are quite inadequate to rouse the people of these countries to fight on the side of the United Nations, and are equally inadequate to meet the needs of the people when the Japanese have been defeated. Nor do they fulfil the pledges of the Atlantic Charter.

In addition to official declarations there have been several semi-official projects. Lord Hailey, leader of the British delegation to the Institute of Pacific Relations Conference in Canada in December, 1942, put forward a proposal of a Pacific Council "consisting not only of colonial Powers, but other nations interested in the area" (*The Times*, December, 1942). Similar proposals have been put forward by Field Marshal Smuts, the South African Premier, and by *The Economist*. In the Far East the proposed council is sometimes designed to include the whole area, including China and Australia and sometimes limited to south-east Asia, possibly including the Netherlands East Indies and the Philippines, as well as British colonies.

The most noteworthy and unsatisfactory feature of such schemes is that they all start off, not from the point of a council of representatives of the peoples who live in the area, but a council of representatives of the Colonial powers. None of the peoples of the area would support such councils. However anxious they might be, when independent, to play their part in a proper international organisation, at present they would view such schemes as these as an additional barrier to their freedom.

BURMA

The demand of the people of Burma, expressed for many years, is for independence. Burmese spokesmen who have escaped from the Japanese occupation insist that this is still the demand of the people, who, while absolutely opposed to the

Japanese occupation, are opposed to any scheme of British "reconquest." Rather they want to fight as equals for the real liberation of their country.

Resistance to the Japanese occupation, led in Burma by the pro-United Nations section of the Thakin Party (the progressive section of the most militant of Burmese nationalist parties, some of whose Right-wing leaders went over to the Japanese) and by the growing Communist Party in Burma is handicapped not only because they have received no arms from Britain but also because of the lack of progressive British pledges about the future of Burma. Up to 1944 only some of the hill tribes had received arms and encouragement to resist the Japanese (Kachin levies, etc.).

The position of the Government, as put by the Governor of Burma, Sir Reginald Dorman Smith, is that after Burma has been reconquered, the 1935 constitution will be again put in force. This constitution was far from democratic. Voting was by property and other qualifications so that only 23 per cent of the population had voting rights. Key subjects like Defence, External Affairs and Monetary Policy were under the absolute control of the Governor, who also had powers to override the decisions of the Legislature on other subjects, and complete power in a "state of emergency."

At the same time there have been semi-official hints of a new, even less democratic, constitution being drawn up; while journals, such as *Great Britain and the East*, have editorially opposed the 1935 constitution on the grounds that, as the Burmese helped the Japanese, they must be allowed no say in their own Government for a long time. Such proposals as these play directly into Japanese hands, and provide arguments for Japanese propaganda.

The only democratic position is to recognise the Burmese demand for independence. This would require the recognition of the Burmese national movement now in forms other than that of the two or three ministers of the former Burmese Government now in India. From Burmese refugees now in China and India it would be quite possible to form a committee sufficiently representative and in touch with movements inside Burma to discuss with Britain and other allies the liberation of their country and to raise a Burmese force to fight alongside the Indian, British, Chinese and American forces of Admiral Mountbatten's South East Asia Command. Such discussions, and such a Burman Committee and force, would greatly facilitate the re-opening of the Burma Road to China and other offensives contemplated in South East Asia.

After the liberation a Burman Constituent Assembly, with adequate representation for the smaller nationalities in Burma, would have to be called to devise a democratic constitution for the new Burma, under which the present reserved powers of the Governor will be transferred to the Burmese Government, provision be made for the elections by universal suffrage to all seats in the legislature and autonomy granted to the smaller nationalities. When a Government had been constituted, then it would be necessary to negotiate an Anglo-Burman treaty defining the relationship between the two countries. A precedent for such a treaty exists, for example, in British relations with Egypt.

In addition to political matters, such a treaty would have to cover economic ones. In the first place, Burma would need a loan for purposes of reconstruction, of building up a national industry and of assisting agriculture. Similarly the position of British-owned companies would have to be re-defined and provision made for their purchase by the Burman Government.

Before the war, the oil, mining, timber, shipping and rice exporting industries were all in the hands of big British concerns, who were virtual monopolists. In Rangoon, for example, there was not a single banking, insurance, shipping, manufacturing or import firm of any size owned or managed by Burmese.

The most important immediate internal problem facing the new Burmese Government would be to improve the position of the peasantry by the rapid formation of really democratic co-operative societies, which could arrange the provision of credit to the peasant, acting as his buying agency for manure, improved seed, machinery (whose introduction into Burmese agriculture is necessary if agricultural technique is to be improved), etc., and as the selling agent for his grain. In the fertile, but as yet uncultivated, area it is important that the land opened up should be as far as possible in the hands of the co-operative units who could farm on a large scale with modern equipment and technique.

A further problem facing the new Government would be that of landlordism. Perhaps the easiest solution would be by the provision of loans on low terms by the Government to the peasant to buy his land, coupled with the control of land prices by the Government and the end of sales of uncultivated land to landlords and private companies. The problem of usury would disappear with the growth of agricultural credit co-operatives, provided they were democratically run and not dominated by landlords or rich peasants, and provided sufficient credit was made available to them by the Government. In addition, the rice mills of Rangoon would have to be taken over

by the Government to prevent any more profiteering by them at the expense of the peasant.

Such measures would insure the political and economic development of Burma and her people. While decisions on them must be matters for the Burmese Constituent Assembly and the resulting Government, the British Government and people must be prepared to assist the Burmese in the solution of problems which are so largely the result of British rule. In addition to the treaty with Britain it would be necessary for Burma to negotiate treaties with her two great neighbours—China and an independent India, and also with independent Thailand, her neighbour to the south.

MALAYA

The chief political problem in Malaya is to build up common interests between the three different peoples of the country . . . Malays, Chinese and Indians. The past division of the country into three areas differently ruled (the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States, and Unfederated Malay States, all with mixed residential populations); the lack of a common citizenship and the absence of any kind of elected assembly, has prevented the emergence of any common political movement or even of common interest and nationality. Only in the Communist Party and in the Trade Unions, both illegal until a few weeks before the Japanese occupation, did any form of common action exist.

Neither the Chinese nor the Indians desire that the rule of the Malay sultans should be continued, nor do the Malays. Those sultans have shown that providing they are allowed to retain their privileges and wealth, they are equally willing to serve either Japanese fascism or any other ruler. The power of the sultans needs to be transferred to elected assemblies of the residents of each state, and provision made for an elected assembly of the whole Malay peninsula. It is important that the constituencies should be territorial ones, as in Britain. Any attempts to impose constituencies along the lines of race or religion, would only exacerbate divisions and frustrate the emergence of common interests upon which the peace and happiness of the people of the peninsula depend. It is equally important that the right to vote and sit, should be free of property qualifications, which, if introduced, would prevent the majority of Indian and Chinese workers and many Malay peasants from voting.

The assembly would have to work out a system of controlling immigration, that would be fair to the three different communities, and give confidence to the Malays that they were not going to be squeezed from their land through the rapacity of

plantation and mine owners with their thirst for a ceaseless supply of cheap labour.

In the beginning at least some members of the executive would have to be elected by, and be responsible to the Assembly. Once the system was working well more power could be transferred to it.

In the past Malaya has been the great world centre for rubber and tin and the main base of Britain's monopoly of both these commodities. During the war the expanding production of artificial rubber and the use of substitutes for tin, has broken that monopoly. Nevertheless the rubber and tin resources of Malaya will continue to be of great economic importance; and this is not wholly unconnected with such projects as that for a "South-East Asia Council." Comment upon the desirability or otherwise of such a project can be left to the peoples of Malaya and of the Philippines, Indo-China and the Netherlands East Indies, with none of whose countries this memorandum deals. But it may be said that no regional council designed to delay the self-government of the peoples of South-East Asia, and place them under the control of an international body, interested not in people, but in rubber and tin, will meet with the approval of the people of this area. Similarly the proposal of the 1944 Philadelphia Conference of the International Labour Organisation for a separate Asiatic conference seems designed to ensure the continuance of lower standards for Asiatic workers.

Indeed, one of the tasks of the elected assembly in Malaya will be to see that the tin and rubber resources of the country are controlled and operated in the interests of the people of the country, and that the economy is made more diverse so as to raise the standard of living. In the past the world price of rubber has been kept low, except when raised by monopoly action, by the wretched wages paid to the Chinese and Indian workers, averaging during the 1930's about 1/- per day. This requires to be remedied. It will only be so when all workers are encouraged to join trade unions and these unions have the right of negotiating with the employers and forming committees on each estate and in each pit to protect the interests of the workers, and be in free contact with the trade unions of the rest of the world.

In addition it will be necessary to raise the taxation of the plantation, mining and other companies so that revenues are secured for the proper and adequate provision of schools, hospitals, houses, etc., by the Government and not by the plantation owner. In the past these companies have escaped all but the lowest level of taxation and, during the first two years of the war, they successfully resisted any application of excess profits tax.

HONGKONG

Hongkong must be returned to China. The way forward was indicated by the Anglo-Chinese Treaty of January, 1943, by which the former British and International Concessions were returned to China. That treaty contained a provision for the negotiation of a thorough-going treaty of friendship after the war between the two countries. It is inevitable that in those discussions the position of Hongkong will be raised. Until Hongkong has been returned to China, the territorial integrity of China, the preservation of which is a long standing pledge, will not be complete. Nor will it be possible to build secure Anglo-Chinese friendship until that is done.

The area covered by Hongkong was taken from China at various times and by various treaties, but any attempt to return it in a similar piecemeal fashion (e.g., by returning the Kowloon Leased Territory first, etc.) would be most unsatisfactory.

BRITISH NORTH BORNEO

(British North Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak)

These territories are little developed, even as regards their oil, mineral and agricultural wealth. Their future is bound up with the future of the whole of Indonesia, which again leads outside the scope of this memorandum. The political development of Indonesia, with its considerable level of organisation and ability has as yet affected Borneo but little. However, within a few years these British areas will be drawn into a common movement with the Indonesian nationalists of the Dutch areas.

The rule of part of North Borneo by a private company sitting in London is a grave anachronism that should long ago have been abolished. Nor is there any case for the return of Rajah Brooke or the Rajah of Brunei as absolute rulers once the Japanese have been driven out. The development of the people of North Borneo requires that all three territories should be brought under one unified system of Government, that democracy in the villages and towns be encouraged and that from the elected village councils, representatives should go to a general assembly to which power should be gradually transferred. This general assembly, from revenue drawn from taxes on the oil, rubber and other industries, could press ahead with plans of education, of building communications and improving agriculture, which are the fundamental basis of any further development.

VI BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE COLONIES

Just as in the last century the ending of chattel-slavery in the British Empire and the subsequent emancipation of the slaves in the U.S.A. was rightly regarded as vital to the welfare and advance of the working class and the peoples of Europe and North America, so today the liberation of the colonies is a vital interest not only of the working class, but of the British people as a whole. And just as in the last century specious arguments were put forward to prevent the abolition of slavery, so today there are to be found those who argue for the retention of the present colonial system on the ground that it benefits the working class and the people of Britain.

Certain interests, with a show of frankness, defend Colonialism as indispensable to the imperial country, whatever the consequences to the people inhabiting the colonies. They cannot claim that without the colonial system there would be no raw materials for British industry or market for finished goods, for the greatest part of the import and export trade is done not with the Colonies but with the rest of the world. But they point to the specially high profits from the Colonies as an inducement for the British people to maintain the system.

It is true that the profits of loan flotations and of trading companies are enormous, and that these profits flow outside the colony concerned. But what benefit do the people of the imperial country derive from this wealth accruing to a limited financial group? The interests of this very small section are represented through monopolist organisations (such as Lever Bros. & Unilever Ltd., Tate & Lyle, I.C.I., etc., etc.) and subsidiaries of the "Big Five" banks and financial houses. What community of interest in the matter can there be between this very small section of monopolists and the mass of the British people?

On the contrary, the conditions within the Colonies constitute a perpetual menace to the British people. The impoverishment of the Colonial peoples, their illiteracy and disease, malnutrition, slum housing, low wages and long hours and all the other harmful consequences of the Colonial régime are all directly and adversely related to the conditions of workers in Britain. Cheap labour of Colonial workers threatens the standard of living in the imperial country, clearly exemplified in the case of the textile industry and sea transport.

Again, anti-democratic forms of rule in the colonies cannot but

prove an infective menace to civil liberties and democratic representation in the imperial country. The particular groups enriched by Colonial profit are invariably to be found amongst the most stubborn opponents of progressive development at home; and Colonial officials whose lives are spent in the exercise of despotic rule seldom take kindly to a democratic framework of political life in Britain.

The prevention of the ordinary development of the productive forces in the Colonies has a serious effect, not only on the prosperity of Britain but on the whole world. For it cannot be disputed that the development of the prosperity of the Colonial peoples, the development of their resources and industrial possibilities in their own interest in place of the restriction and disorientation of their economy in the interest of monopoly, must enormously increase the exchange of goods, the availability of raw material, the demand for manufactures.

What tremendous results would accrue from a happy and prosperous people inhabiting the various areas of Africa; the West Indies; Malaya and the East Indies; Ceylon and other places. The full development and prosperity of these countries can only be fully realised when the dead hand of monopoly control is removed, and the undemocratic Colonial system brought to an end.

In such a world of free democratic countries, the demand for raw materials would increase commensurate with the increased prosperity of the people. Correspondingly, the improvement in the economic conditions of the people at present in colonial countries, and the improvement of housing, removal of illiteracy, and so on, would increase the demands for manufactured goods.

Teheran establishes the agreement of the United Powers to co-operate and work together in peace as in war, while the International Conferences such as Hot Springs, Bretton Woods, and Dumbarton Oaks, lay the initial basis for that peace-time co-operation. Britain, America, the Soviet Union, China and the other United Nations can co-operate in assisting the development of a free India and the Colonial countries.

The freeing of the colonial countries would bring in its wake prosperity for the people of this country and also for other countries. Unprecedented demands, in these circumstances, would be made on industries such as engineering (including both heavy engineering and also motor car, cycle, etc.), textile. Increased trade from this side plus increased demands for raw materials such as rubber, jute, tin, etc., and foodstuffs would naturally employ shipbuilders, seamen, transport workers, dockers, etc.—to say nothing of the tremendous effects of this prosperity

on clerical and office workers, and in fact on everyone. Trade relations with the West Indies, with various parts of Africa, with Malay and the East Indies, with Ceylon and other places must be on the same basis as our trade relations with the free democratic countries today.

The chaotic methods of production and distribution of raw materials which marked the period prior to the war must not be allowed to recur. How far the United Nations can help in this direction remains to be seen. Experiences during the war have proved useful. Great Britain and the U.S.A. established a Combined Raw Materials Board in January, 1942. The Board's first Annual Report drew the conclusions "that it has been possible to make very real progress towards a planned and expeditious utilisation of the combined raw material resources in the prosecution of the war." If such machinery was useful and effective during the war, how much more effective and essential it would be after the war. It would be a hundred times more effective if it were fully representative of all countries concerned.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT

The British Labour movement has a special responsibility in connection with this. The Labour movement has, as a result of struggle and over a long period, built a set of standards; principles of democracy, freedom of organisation, speech and press; minimum wage rates for workers; improved hours of labour and working conditions, and many other things which it would go a long way to defend. Sections of the Labour movement have on many occasions strongly protested when their attention has been drawn to the denial of democratic rights in the colonies, and have identified themselves with and directly assisted workers in the colonies striking against low wages and bad conditions.

Therefore, in their own interests, in order that their economic standards and political freedom should not be in continual jeopardy, the Labour movement should take up the cause of the colonial peoples and consider far-reaching changes in the present methods of colonial rule.

Justifiably proud of our standards of education and culture, we look forward to victory over Fascism and aspire to big advances on our present standards. Can we seriously expect such hopes to materialise, when we consider the position in the colonies, and acknowledge that, so long as they are ruled from London, we must share a very large proportion of the responsibility. The Labour movement, therefore, has this great responsibility, to win wide support for the immediate steps—an

immediate programme or charter—leading to freedom for all colonial peoples.

In this they will be following the best traditions of the movement from the earliest times to the present day. It is true that there have been two trends of policy in British Labour. The one, taking up the best tradition of the earlier democratic movements, stood solid for the principles of freedom and democracy being applied to all peoples. It was represented by the Chartists, by socialists like William Morris sixty years ago, in this century by leaders like Tom Mann and Keir Hardie, by repeated decisions of the political parties of the working class, by many of the great trade unions giving practical help, and by the self-sacrificing activity (as in the Meerut case) of thousands of British trade unionists.

The other trend in the Labour movement has supported the subjection of the colonial peoples as supposedly in the interests of the British working class. This trend found expression in Ramsay MacDonald's support of the "civilising mission of capitalism" in the colonies in the international debate on the question in 1907 and was disastrously expressed by him in practice over twenty years later as Prime Minister. This open policy of maintenance of the Colonial system was in the main the standpoint of a relatively small number of leading personalities, such as J. H. Thomas, the last "Labour" Secretary for the colonies. But MacDonaldism was not rooted out with the disappearance of Ramsay MacDonald: and the trend he represented still reappears in the speeches of some Labour members of the Government. There is no question that the former trend is the true expression of a Labour outlook and requires only to be developed and put into immediate practical application.

LABOUR PARTY COLONIAL POLICY

The Colonial policy of the Labour Party, as set forth in a report endorsed at its last Annual Conference (June, 1943), contains many valuable proposals for immediate steps to be taken for improvement in social services, health, education and similar questions.

But in the goal set before the Labour Party the Report falls short. Indeed, it appears to retain some of the conceptions first put forward twenty-five years ago. This policy document purports to deal with "backward peoples or peoples of primitive culture" mainly in Africa. The key question of liberation of the colonial peoples is still, as in 1918, shelved to a dim future in the phrase "for a considerable time to come these peoples will not be ready for self-government." With this unaltering premise,

the conclusion follows that these " territories should be administered by the Colonial powers as a trust."

Thus while the concrete proposals (as well as the portion of the 1943 Conference resolution which declares that the terms of the Atlantic Charter and the " Four Freedoms " should be active principles in Colonial administration) are progressive, the broader issues of policy remain embedded in the tradition associated with the Ramsay MacDonald period. It is necessary for these broader issues of policy to be revised and brought into relation with present-day realities and needs. The reference to self-government merely as "an ultimate aim " was a wrong policy 25 years ago, but is still more wrong today. A quarter century's experience of the Chinese Revolution, the Indian liberation movement, not to speak of the prodigious example of the U.S.S.R. in relation to the former Tsarist colonies, should have compelled revision of the " not yet fit " argument applied to colonial peoples.

The proposed form of administration, by a modified application of the mandate system, is also similar to that advocated in 1918. But the ground on which this is put forward in the 1943 policy report is the danger of war arising from colonial rivalry between the possessing powers and the need of removing this danger by a method which (redistribution being ruled out) will lessen the incentives to rivalry. It is proposed to " put all the states of the world upon a footing of economic equality in colonial territories, e.g., in regard to access to raw materials, markets and capital investments." To effect this, " all Imperial Powers should guarantee the Open Door " and a colonial commission of the International Authority would see that it is kept open.

The interest of this proposal is not so much in its remarkable similarity to suggestions emanating from the Republican Party of the U.S.A. as in the reasons on which it is based. For, whatever be its merits or demerits, this proposal and the reasons for it alike ignore the wishes of the colonial peoples in determining the destiny of their country.

UNITY WITH THE COLONIAL PEOPLES

It may be seen, in contrast, that the wishes of a colonial people are taken fully into account in a number of resolutions of trade union bodies. These resolutions usually deal with whatever specific issue has come to the forefront. In respect to India, the 1944 Trades Union Congress was concrete in its decisions. The Resolution expressed the feelings of the overwhelming majority

of workers in Britain, recognising the right of the Indian people to full self-government and self-determination; the role of India in the fight against Fascism; and the imperative necessity of bringing India and her people into full alliance in the war against Fascism in the interests of total and speedy victory. The Resolution called upon the Government to end the deadlock, open negotiations and make possible the establishment of a national government.

The National Union of Railwaymen at their Annual Conference, passed a Resolution which expressed grave concern at the situation, demanded the release of political prisoners and the opening of negotiations on the basis of the establishment of a National Government in India. The Shop Assistants, the Clerks, the Amalgamated Engineering Union, Constructional Engineers, and the Building Workers were among the many powerful individual Trade Unions which passed similar resolutions. The organised workers' movement of Scotland recorded in one voice through the Scottish T.U.C. the demand for a National Government for India, release of prisoners and recognition of freedom and self-determination.

All these expressions indicate the deep feeling and alternative policy to that expressed in the Labour Party official memorandum.

More than ever, at this moment, there is the need for the Labour movement to express itself in a united way with an agreed policy on the colonial question. The basic principle of such policy can only be the unflinching and whole-hearted acceptance of self-determination for all colonial peoples and the furtherance of a programme of positive immediate demands. The Labour movement of this country can be a powerful force, acting in co-operation with the people of the colonial countries, to change the present policy and frustrate the plans of monopoly capital to continue colonial exploitation. Our task is to rouse the whole Labour movement to draw from the Government a declaration that the principle of self-determination in the Atlantic Charter will apply to all colonial countries. This secured would be the greatest single step in the present situation, would win immediate response from the colonial peoples and make possible the maximum mobilisation of resources and man-power for the war effort. Such a declaration from the British Government, would make easier adjustments with other members of the United Nations, who could work out an agreed policy to carry forward and apply the principles of self-determination to all colonial countries. An agreed policy in this respect would help to eliminate problems that may arise from the claims of rival powers. This is particularly applicable in the case of Africa, where recently there has been

evidence of desire for expansion on the part of the South African Government (the speech of General Smuts proposing regional control of Areas of Africa) and where the future of the colonial peoples of the north is likely to be jeopardised.

Such a policy is not only important for the immediate results that must accrue; but will definitely prepare the United Powers for the tasks facing them in the post-war world. This declaration made, progressive opinion in Britain and America together with the declared policy of the Soviet Union and China, can be relied upon to guarantee to the colonial peoples that their aspirations for self-determination will be satisfied.

Many complicated and difficult questions will present themselves for solution. Whatever they may be, solutions must be found. In whatever machinery is established, as a guarantee of good faith and protection of colonial countries over any period which may be necessary, the peoples of the colonial countries must have full direct representation. This should be the case whether the machinery is Regional or on a world basis.

For these reasons the Labour movement must initiate a wider campaign to win the peoples of this country for such a policy, to popularise and win support for :—

(1) A clear declaration from the British Government that the principles of the Atlantic Charter apply to the colonial peoples with special emphasis on Clause 3.—

"They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

(2) A comprehensive programme of immediate reforms to be applied to each colony at once. Such reforms to cover: The removal of restrictions upon civil rights; freedom of organisation and press; the abolition of the Poll and Hut Tax; abolition of Pass Laws; the securing of universal adult suffrage to the legislative council and local Government; elementary education to be made accessible and compulsory for all children of school age, the extension of secondary, technical and higher education; the introduction of adequate public health services; the introduction of minimum labour and social legislation; access to the land and a comprehensive housing programme.

A great campaign should be conducted throughout the country, the press, radio, meetings and Parliament, to popularise and win support for such a programme by the Labour movement. Similarly, through the Trade Union movement, a strong campaign should be initiated of education among the workers to

show the common interests between the workers of Britain and the workers of the colonies.

Trade Unions, in urging complete freedom for colonial peoples, can also give direct assistance, both financial and organisational, to help build and strengthen the colonial Trade Unions. Trade Unions in Britain should be in contact with Unions in the colonies, catering for workers in the same industry or trade, with regular exchange of fraternal delegates. The Trades Union Congress should arrange for trade unionists with organising ability to stay for a given period in the various colonial countries. British Trade Unions should utilise all opportunities to see that Labour Advisers sent to the colonies are trade unionists with experience in the movement in this country. On the other hand, Conferences could be called of representatives of organised workers in parallel organisations in Britain and the colonies, to prepare a programme of equal pay for equal work; standardisation of hours of work; adequate workmen's compensation; protective industrial legislation; and social insurance. Trade Unions in the colonies should not only be encouraged, but assisted, to send delegates to world meetings of Trade Unions.

If these principles become the accepted policy of the Labour movement of this country, and the great mass of people in Great Britain are won in support, then we can be assured that through victory over Fascism, the foundation for the building of a better world will be guaranteed.

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