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PREFACE

LIKE its predecessors, this seventh issue of *The Socialist Register* covers a wide range of problems and concerns.

The first three essays have their origin in Basil Davidson's *Liberation of Guiné*, which marked for many people the discovery of a peasant revolutionary movement in Africa of very great importance. We felt that Davidson's account of the movement led by Amilcar Cabral had added a new dimension to the analysis of African revolutionary movements, and that it was necessary to carry the discussion further. We therefore invited Victor Kiernan, whose work is well known to readers of the Register, to contribute an appraisal of peasant movements, yesterday and today; and we asked Basil Davidson and Eric Hobsbawm to add commentaries from their own specialist points of view. We should like to draw the attention of our readers to the remarks by Davidson concerning the practical ways in which the revolutionary struggles in Portuguese Africa may be assisted and encouraged; and we hope that 1970 may mark the beginning of a new movement of support by socialists to those who are struggling against Portuguese oppression.

The two articles on Israel and Palestine by Mervyn Jones and Marcel Liebman, which were written independently of each other, offer different perspectives on the conflict in the Middle East. But both seem to us to fall within a socialist spectrum of discussion on an issue which has deeply divided the Left; and we are glad to be able to present them to the attention of our readers.

John Westergaard's essay provides an important corrective to some recent interpretations of trends in the British class structure, and is critically relevant to the discussion of socialist prospects in Britain in the seventies; and Anthony Arblaster's article on the student movement continues the exploration of a subject which has often tended to generate more heat than light. The four other articles in this section, written from different parts of the Left, attempt to chart the problems and tendencies which will affect and confront the Left in the seventies. In the nature of the exercise, much that is said here is tentative and is intended to contribute to a discussion which we hope to see continued in the pages of the Register.

Part III of the volume consists of a number of essays bearing on different aspects of socialist theory, and notably on the question of class consciousness and institutions.

Our grateful thanks are due to our contributors; to Brian Pearce

for his translation of Marcel Liebman's essay; and to Martin Eve, our publisher, who has continued to give us valuable help in coping with the many problems which arise in the publication of a volume of this sort. In one sense, the nature of the articles we publish this year makes it unnecessary for us to repeat the point we have made in previous volumes, namely that none of the contributors to this volume should necessarily be held to share the views expressed by any others, the reason being that some of the articles are clearly at variance with others. All the same, we should like to stress the point, not least because the Editors themselves hold fairly strong views about some of the ideas expressed by a number of our contributors. It should be clear by now that we publish material not because it happens to coincide with our own views but because we believe, whether we agree with it or not, that it contributes to the debate on socialist theory and practice which is the whole point of the Register.

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R.M.
J.S.