

SOCIALISTS AND THE LABOUR PARTY

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"What, then, is it reasonable to expect from the Labour Party in the years ahead?

There are two entirely opposed ways of answering this question. The first proceeds from the view that the Labour Party, whatever its past and present shortcomings, can eventually be turned into a socialist party, genuinely committed to the creation of a radically different social order, which would be based on, though not exclusively defined by, the social ownership and democratic control of a prominent part of the means of production, distribution and exchange, including of course the 'commanding heights' of the economy. The second view is that it cannot be turned into such a party. Of the two, the second seems to be much the more realistic."

With these words, Ralph Miliband opens the concluding section of his new¹ postscript to Parliamentary *Socialism*, a work which has deservedly achieved the reputation of a classic, as is witnessed by the remarkable frequency with which it is paraphrased and restated, often shorn of its finer nuances, in the columns of the radical socialist press. The book as a whole has been improved by updating: the same postscript contains a pithy, yet entirely convincing, account of the abysmal epoch which has become known as the "Wilson years". Certainly it would be difficult for a socialist to disagree with Miliband's findings, in this scrupulous balance-sheet of that dismal time. But do such findings merit his conclusion? I think they do not, because I think they reach far wider, and have far more serious implications than he seems to believe. If the Labour Party cannot be turned into a socialist party, then the question which confronts us all is, how can we form a socialist party? If we are not ready to answer this question, then we are not ready to dismiss the party that exists.

It is no use at all to claim that the dispersion of illusions about the Labour Party will produce a climate in which new organizations may take root: for that is not the way that established parties are disestablished in developed political structures. Only when an alternative has already emerged can masses of people change their allegiance in any permanent way. In Britain this is particularly true: it was not by accident that the Labour Party grew up in the shade of

the Liberal Party, gradually (and, for a long time, by no means unequivocally) distinguishing itself in the process. People facing immediate political problems don't just withdraw into a wilderness in order to take counsel with one another and decide what to do next, while people who don't face such problems aren't in political organizations anyway. This is true in any functioning and generally accepted democratic system, although of course, in a structure which is seen and felt not to be democratic, things are somewhat different. Since the collapse of the Independent Labour Party, there has been no group of socialists in Britain capable of maintaining a full-scale political presence outside the Labour Party.² By a full-scale presence, I mean the ability to secure the election of at least a handful of members of Parliament, the ability to present a strong oppositional challenge at least in a certain number of local councils, and the ability to maintain a visible base of organized trade union and community support. That numerous groups have been able to develop short of this capacity is quite obvious, and that many of them do not aspire to this kind of presence is equally clear. But unless their aspirations change, as indeed they might if circumstances made it rational for such change to set in, such groups will not play a macropolitical role. They may influence particular actions, and gain support in certain sectors of the population, but they will not become vehicles for the development of the outlook of a whole social class until they can be seen to have the potential to enable that class to speak for itself at every political level on which its interests are the object of contention. Even the corporate interests of the subordinate class cannot be safeguarded without organization on this scale: and it is manifestly silly to speak about "hegemonic" aspirations developing within such a class unless it has safely passed the point at which its self-defence is relatively assured.

And this is why socialists cannot ignore Parliament. The lesson becomes clear if one takes as an example the non-marxist, or at any rate non-Leninist, radical socialist responses which have bloomed during the years of the Wilson apotheosis. It is convenient to consider two of these. The first takes the form of community action, on a local **scale**.³ Tenants' associations, residents' committees, bodies airing and voicing the complaints of whole populations on council estates, in ghettos or slums, or bodies aimed at particular groups, such as the Claimants' Union which attempts to organize people living on social security, the unemployed, and strikers claiming benefit: all such bodies can draw upon a very real store of grievances. But how are such grievances to be dealt with? Let us take the example of a slum area, in which widespread poverty exists alongside very poor housing, and numerous problems caused by neglectful or absentee landlords, or Rachmanism. Such an area will experience numerous tensions: it will have high

rates of delinquency, and it may well be an area in which prostitution is to be found. At the same time, it will place in juxtaposition poor "respectable" families, Methodists or Catholics, so-called "multi-problem" families, and a succession of waves of immigrants of various nationalities. Uniting such a population in any action at all is difficult. But it can be done, on particular issues: against Rachmanism, or in favour of play-streets, or for pressure on any one of a variety of social welfare agencies. Most of the questions which are within the scope of local authorities may, at some time, give rise to successful community action groups. But how must a *socialist* view such action? Of course, he will support anything which increases the solidarity and self-confidence of working people and their dependents. Yet, having said this, the community action group has frontiers which positively preclude any real struggle for betterment, unless it is linked with a *political* movement operating on the scale of the whole given polity. Slum-clearance? Yes, this is possible: you can make the local authority rehouse everyone, although this is difficult. But when you do, your rent will be trebled or quadrupled, because the authority will build houses on expensive land, at high cost, using funds bearing extortionate interest rates. Cheap houses, or dear houses, are a matter of alternative governmental policies. Higher wages? Well, you can pursue them through your union, if you have one, and if it is strong enough to help you, and if there isn't a freeze or standstill. Even this avenue leads to a need for alternative governmental policies. Better schools, improved transport, more amenable social services are all partly approachable by lobbying to change the priorities of your town council, but will all result, at best, in deteriorations in others' amenities unless Governmental policies are changed. So what consciousness can be aroused in such struggles will remain *sectional* unless it is keyed into an embracing political strategy involving *all* the poor, *all* the ill-housed, *all* the deprived.

The other non-Leninist approach to gain wide currency partly appreciates this problem. It consists of the development of specialized pressure-groups acting precisely for all the poor, or all the ill-housed. The Child Poverty Action Group, or Shelter, are typical cases in point, much to be supported and admired, but suffering from a crucial weakness nonetheless. Each makes the best case it can on its theme, but each can only remain effective while it narrows its scope, for each is limited at all times to the need to pressurize the political system as it exists, by influencing personnel who have every reason to reject any overall attack on the linked constellation of problems which have been separated into single issues for the purposes of the lobby. See the challenge as it is, with all its ramifications, and, once again, you will face the need for an integrated political movement with a coherent set of policies across the board.

None of this argues a *priori* that Parliament could be the effective vehicle for successfully implementing such a set of policies. That question will never be finally answerable until the experiment has been tried, in a context of such an intensity of external agitation as may be realizable. What it does argue is the much more fundamental case that consciousness of class, in the full sense, as opposed to sectional militancy and local activism, crystallizes around the demand for exactly such a programme, which consists not primarily of a set of potential Bills, to be enacted by 350 victorious Governmental delegates, but of an alternative view of society for the mass of the people, a peep at new potentialities and an awakening of aspirations not on a sectional or regional scale, but at a level understood by the whole active part of the subordinate class. Once such visions have been evoked then the socialist movement will be in a position to resolve the ancient Reform/Revolution dilemma, but before then the whole question is almost as remote as that of the nature of the Holy Ghost. Revolutionaries who attempt to set up the barricades against the wishes of their wonted supporters will not prevail. Indeed, we can be sure that the wishes of the working class will define themselves, in the first place, as demands on the given structure, not because of any universal reverence for the dignity of Mr. Speaker, but because sectionalism can only be transcended when all eyes are turned in the same direction, and the given structure is so shaped as to ensure that there is only one direction to which all eyes can be turned at once.

That is why politics, which should never be reduced to Parliamentarianism, will not, in England, readily be separated from Parliament. It is for this reason that few, if any of those people who are equipped to understand Miliband's book are in fact presently engaged in attempting to bring about the alternative party organization which he desires to see. His most sympathetic readers will readily confess, if pressed, that they have no idea how a new socialist party could be brought into existence.

There are, of course, many socialists who feel that they do have the answer to this problem, although Ralph Miliband himself is not to be numbered among them. At a rough count, there must be several thousand socialist activists in Britain who have banded themselves into what they usually regard as Leninist organizations, which bodies, by the time the Wilson administration came to an end, had already proliferated to the point that they could be counted in dozens. Several of these groups represent quite serious assemblies of talents: two, the Communist Party and the Socialist Labour League, are able to produce daily newspapers, which is a feat of organizational skill and dedication that appears totally beyond the powers of the Labour Party itself. At least two more produce weekly journals: one, the Socialist Worker,

claims a readership in excess of that commanded by the organ of the traditional Labour Left, *Tribune*; while the other, the *Militant*, has been growing steadily and exercises considerable influence on the Labour Party's youth movement, through which channel it has secured the election of one of its spokesmen to the Party's National Executive Committee. Other lesser groups produce fortnightly journals such as *Socialist Fight*, irregular ones such as *The Red Mole*, or monthlies representing a variety of Trotskyist, Maoist, and other revolutionary opinions. No-one should dismiss this burgeoning of socialist argument and organization, but at the same time, it is difficult to avoid the conclusions that a great deal of it is peripheral to the real political concerns of working people, that some of it is abstract and doctrinaire to the point of self-parody, and that although there are some exceptions, there are few indeed among the leaders of these currents of thought from whom we may expect either concern for the practical unity of the working-class movement, or rigorous intellectual work of a standard sufficient to advance its cause, leave alone examples of that fused revolutionary praxis to which we are constantly exhorted but seldom shown the way. It is perhaps indicative of the intellectual difficulty in which this fragmentation finds itself that from nowhere within it has come a book which even remotely approaches the stature of Miliband's own study of the Labour Party. As a dedicated and scholarly independent, Miliband can keep his eye on the main scene. But for many of the activists of the organized left groups, factional warfare preponderates over all other activity whatsoever. From within the disciplined ranks of all too many of these split succeeds split with bewildering rapidity and expulsion inexorably follows each inevitable deviation, so that all but the most disembodied fellow travellers are so busy watching for the theoretical knives which may, any day, divide their own shoulder-blades, and few can have time to notice what is really happening in the world outside.

It is true that there have been repeated attempts to link these quarrelsome splinters into one all-embracing movement. In the late fifties, Walter Kendall and Eric Heffer both made attempts to persuade them to sink their differences, when at a time when the Trotskyist and syndicalist groups numbered perhaps 1% of their present adherents, they brought most of them together for a series of abortive conferences on unity. The result was failure. More recently, in the mid-sixties, the May-day Manifesto called all who would come to its banner, and stayed in business for long enough to publish at least one admirable text and to encourage a worthwhile growth of community action groups and women's liberation caucuses.⁴ However, all too predictably, not only did that initiative fail to produce the intended fusion of energies and efforts, but indeed its prime movers

themselves succumbed to the very fission against which they had been pledged to act. This pattern has repeated itself on the fringes of the British Labour Movement so frequently that it surely deserves analysis. It should be said at once that such analysis must begin with the appreciation that the fringe is an important place, not simply an irrelevance, and with the recognition that since 1968 the socialist groupings of the far left have contributed to an unprecedented upsurge of interest in socialist ideas, which has already filtered far deeper into the structure of the Labour Movement than any previous socialist revival. Yet for all that, evolving as it has at a time of unparalleled intellectual bankruptcy in the central councils of the official Party machine, it has largely secluded itself into a ghetto of its own making, so that its practical influence on the policies and personnel of the major unions, and of the Labour Party itself, is greatly less than might have been expected.

Part of the reason for this is to be found in the nature of the half-truths which have played an important role in exacerbating the divisions of the far left. It is true, as Miliband has continually insisted, that there can be no purely parliamentary approach to socialism, and that the Labour Party has always failed to develop anything like a campaigning strategy to mobilize extra-parliamentary action when it has been needed, even if it has been needed to uphold the freedom of Parliamentary choice itself.⁵ But it is not true for a moment that this implies that socialists should ignore parliament, which remains, for all the real powers which have seeped away from it, a focal point of continuing importance for the development of a more widespread political understanding. It is true, as all the revolutionary groups insist, that capitalism, if ever threatened, will put up the strongest possible resistance, by whatever means it has to hand, to prevent its own extinction or harassment. But it is not true that this inevitably means that the scenario of St. Petersburg 1917 is the scenario of London in 1984.

It is certainly true that there will be no development of socialism without a prior development of socialist ideas, and that these demand both organization and intellectual discipline. But it is not at all true that the socialist ideas which are appropriate to defeat late capitalism were all formulated, intact, fifty or a hundred years ago.

It is true that the working class movement has suffered, throughout Europe, years of timid and purblind leadership during which elaborately fortified bureaucracies have developed in all major labour organizations. But it is not true that such bureaucracies are impregnable, or that such leaderships are irreplaceable, and even if it were true, they would need to be opposed and fought on their own terrain if ever they were to be defeated.

It is true that West European Labour has much to learn from the history of the revolutions in Russia and China, and something to learn from many other examples, most notably that of Vietnam. But it is not for one moment true that the sociology of the decadent imperial metropolis is reducible to that of these models, or that the forms of political organization appropriate in their conditions can simply be transplanted bodily and set to work to liberate Germany or Scotland. It will not escape the student of revolution that the differences between the Russian, Yugoslav, Chinese and Cuban revolutions are at least as important as their similarities.

It is above all true that socialism is an international movement, which needs a functioning international organization, co-ordinated action, and a developed exchange of ideas and information between adherents in different countries. But it is equally untrue that such an organization can develop fruitfully without the rapid accession of that degree of material and moral authority which comes from the incorporation of real sectors of working-class opinion in a number of national centres simultaneously, since international action requires serious numbers of supporters if it is to be effective, and ideas which cannot produce action we already have in abundance, which is one of the things we are complaining about.

It is obviously implied in all this that we need to study Marx, Lenin, Luxemburg, Lukács, Trotsky, Gramsci, Mao and many other great figures in the history of socialist thought: but it is equally implied that we need to think for ourselves, and that this is a most difficult task to perform in the manner required to help ordinary workpeople in their struggles, if we remain artificially disengaged from all the major problems which confront the working-class movement, as it is constituted at present, in the organizations which it has evolved in the attempt to meet those problems.

The major assumption, underpinning all the other half-truths which have crystallized the fragments of the New Left, is the assumption that the present crisis is, before all else, a "crisis of leadership". If only the working-class were properly led, this argument runs, then capitalist society, already rotten-ripe for replacement, would be restructured in short order. Connected with this view, and meshed into it, is the theory of "labour aristocracy", put forward by Lenin on the basis of various remarks of Engels as an "explanation" for opportunist politics in Western Labour Movements. The most finished statement of this view was furnished by Trotsky, in his famous "Transitional Programme". This is a work which contains a number of absolutely crucial insights, first among which is the appreciation, conveyed in the popular title of the work, that the conventional social-democratic and communist view of a disjunction between "maximum" and "minimum"

programmes is acutely disruptive of socialist consciousness. The two halves never fuse, and for the very good reason that reform programmes are conventionally structured within the realm of possibility which remains open in the given social order, and so have nothing whatever to do with any overall proposals for recasting that order itself. Trotsky saw the need for a programme of immediate demands which led out of one social order into another, and about this need he was certainly profoundly right. His own actual proposals for such a programme were, however, rooted in the social conditions of the late 'thirties, which are manifestly *not* those of the postwar capitalist democracies. Indeed, both Trotsky and his followers believed the whole evolution of West European and United States capitalism in the postwar period to be foreordained: it would be short, convulsive, dictatorial and terminal. This preconception was quite false, and resulted in the prolonged atrophy of Trotskyist organizations, which were reduced to the merest handfuls of dedicated pietists for a twenty-year period, only to re-emerge to a certain minority prominence in the period of acute instability in Russian and East European institutions which set in after 1956. One distinguished Trotskyist theorist, Felix Morrow, did foresee, at the end of the second world war, that Western Capitalism could experience a prolonged stabilization, in which the working-class would be best-advised to pursue an extended programme of maximally democratic demands, effectively extending the notion of "transitional" politics over a relatively longer period, instead of siting them within a convulsive immediate trauma. He was ignored.

During the same period, the notion of a Labour aristocracy became more and more obviously untenable. Indeed, Sternberg had given Trotsky very clear statistical evidence of the error of this hypothesis during an interview in the mid-thirties but his evidence had been disregarded, perhaps because Trotsky could scarce afford to cultivate "revisionist" conceptions at a time when his position was more and more isolated and vulnerable. Heresy has its limits, as many a heretic has shown. Be that as it may, the prolonged relative post-war quiescence of Western workers' movements was *not* due to the fact that they were misrepresented, but to the fact that, for all too long, they were all too accurately represented by their conventional labour leaders. Of course, the changes in leadership which have more recently been evolving in many countries reflect considerable changes in the economic position of advanced capitalism: a very significant radicalization directly results from the inability of late capitalism to assuage the appetites it arouses. Even so, in the main democracies, it is quite absurd to think that the defence of democratic institutions has suddenly become irrelevant, and if in the 1970s there is any programme of demand which can have a truly transitional meaning, it will be a

programme of systematic democratic advance throughout industry and society.

This requires an altogether different type of socialist advocate from that produced in the old schools. Dedication to revolutionary models established during the first five years of the Comintern does not produce the kind of mentality which can meet the challenges of working-class democracy in late capitalist society: which is not to say that the fundamental insights of the early Comintern were all wrong, but rather that the imitative attempt to re-enact bygone historical events within a radically different context is bound to produce frustrations which all too easily result, first of all, in disenchantment with the actual workers' movement of modern times, and the consequent growth of *élitism*, substitutionalism, and then ultimately in withdrawal of those involved from the real practical political arena. There has been an acute discontinuity in the revolutionary process during our century. That the lessons contained in its books are important is beyond question: but they must be filtered through the experience of subsequent generations if they are really to be digested.

The plain reality is that, however clever individual socialists may be, they need, all the time, to listen to ordinary workers if they are ever to be of any help to them. Of course, their listening mechanisms may vary. As they develop their organizations, they may find themselves elevated to the position in which they can listen by proxy: but only if they have recruited many pairs of observant ears which have been taught to appreciate what it is they hear. Even then, this process is a difficult one, and could not have its difficulties better exemplified than by Lenin, who had to use every art to cajole, threaten and browbeat his highly-trained cadres after the February Revolution of 1917, before they could be brought into line with their constituents, to face the possibility of October.

Today, in every European country, the volatile left groups which see themselves as Lenin's Successors, although they perform invaluable work as publishing houses, seminaries, training schools for young political activists, are almost as bereft of applied strategic ideas, practicable alternative policies, ongoing influence over decisive working-class institutions, as the great brainless dinosaurs of traditional Labour are bereft of principles, morality or socialist orientation.

If one limits one's field of view to the domain of abstract ideas, it is apparent that the young left makes all the running. But if one puts out of mind all interest in, and responsibility for, the major mass-organizations, one then confronts a somewhat barren choice: to opt for a particular groupuscule as being potentially less exclusive, less sectarian, less dogmatic and more hopeful than all the others, or to continue in what has hitherto proved to be a fruitless attempt to persuade all

relevant tendencies to regroup into a viable political formation. Neither is at present a very plausible bet. The groups may unite, but only if some event is traumatic enough to take them by the scruff of the neck and make them, and then sufficiently persistent to keep them together for long enough to achieve something recognizably useful. Where events *might* succeed, persons are quite unlikely to substitute. To join together and integrate such disparate forces requires a degree of charisma which is just not available to any man or group of men presently in opposition to the system of advanced capitalist society. Orpheus could silence the birds with the sweetness of his music, but he would undoubtedly have gone deaf in the effort to secure a hearing in this tumultuous world. If the intellectual giants of socialism, now dead, cannot inspire co-ordinated effort from their disciples, how will living men succeed? There is, of course, a way: if socialism were to come into being in any one advanced country, its example would clear the way to an unprecedented convergence of socialist forces in all the others. But in the meantime, such transitory unity as may be realized before that happens is of very great value, and in general, it will result from the development of successful examples in action, which themselves are the precondition for the real advance of thought. In the beginning was the deed.

The force of this argument is greatly fiercer in Britain than in many other European countries, although, in a modified form, it is bound to apply there as well. This fact stems from the nature of the Parliamentary system in Britain, which, except in the principalities, is essentially a two-party system in which voting is to an overwhelming degree polarized on class lines. Whatever the ultimate role of Parliament in the socialist transformation of society, and about this I am even more agnostic than some of the professedly revolutionary groups, it remains profoundly true that people who can't win by-elections can't win **socialism**.⁴ It is always possible to kick up a row, and sometimes possible to brawl in a manner which, on balance, is socially educational. But you can't win adherents to a new view of society without political organization, and that will never leave the domain of fantasy until it is compelled to address the issues of the day, in a manner which defends and advances the felt interests of working people.

These interests can never be experienced as interests, rather than separate appetites or sectional demands, unless they can be generalized into some form of overall political platform. For all the deep ruminations about "consciousness" which have covered reams of paper in socialist journalism during the years of the New Left, there have been few attempts to trace the actual movement of socialist ideas and their organic relation to institutions. This fault is particularly to be charged against the very people who have made the most noise about abstract

"consciousness", in the present circle which surrounds the journal *New Left Review*.⁷ When Tom Nairn takes issue against nationalism and in favour of the healthy disorder of the European Economic Community, as a catalyst of hoped-for socialist reaction, this lacuna is made openly evident. For Nairn, nationalism is a particularly pernicious form of "false consciousness", comparable with, say, the condition of commodity-fetishism, as a source of mystification and support for capitalist social forms. Leaving aside for the moment the fact that capitalism in Europe will undoubtedly stimulate a wholesale resurgence of particularist nationalism, as capital is concentrated to the centre, and the periphery bleeds, the diagnosis could not be more wrong. To the extent that the established political institutions of Europe do not operate at the scale of the economic organization of the block, this will impede rather than assist the process of crystallization of oppositional forces. Consciousness of class may reach out to embrace international criteria, but it always originates within a given political structure, and finds its primary criteria in the struggle to identify itself against its *national* adversaries. Even when nations are merged into supernations, as is projected in Europe, this process will continue to apply, with two counteracting pulls to impede its development. A *European* working-class will evolve with the greatest difficulty, for the good reason that opposed to the process will be, not mystificatory figments, but rational choices. The first counter-pressure will be that already mentioned, of peripheral nationalism, which will certainly be reinforced by the economic difficulties of neglected regions, and which will provide a key challenge to socialists, who will need to identify with it to the extent that it enlarges the scope for self-determination and self-activity on the part of working people concerned, and at the same time to uphold internationalist perspectives before it in an attempt to subvert the world beyond the narrower new frontiers. Irish nationalism provides one convoluted example, in this part of the world, of the link between socialist action and national independence movements, but new examples will emerge, if the adherence of new states to the EEC is not reversed, in Scotland, Wales, and elsewhere, just as they have already emerged in Southern Italy and Wallonia. Some examples will prove negative, as has the Italian. Others will not.

The second great pull on the working-class organizations of all European States will be that of solidarity with workers and the peasant poor in the rest of the world. The contradictions in which the trade union movement now finds itself can exemplify this problem. At this time, international trade unionism is organized in two heavily bureaucratized federations, one of which has until recently benefited from funding and advice from the C.I.A., while the other has not been outside the reach of the appropriate desks in the Soviet Foreign

Ministry. European economic integration raises the demand, which will become increasingly insistent, for an integrated European trade union federation cutting across both the old Cold War union structures. Up to a point, this would represent a certain advance. But then, when one confronts the recent example of Chile, one sees the disadvantages. When the Kennecott Corporation was nationalized, it began a complex process of law-suits to obtain control of Chilean copper exports. This continues. But in his speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations, President Allende⁸ was at particular pains to point out that, following an appeal by Chilean unions, the French dockers refused to unload copper consignments from Chile until litigation was completed, and the rightful ownership by the Chilean Government vindicated. More and more the transnational corporations will impose, the necessity for such actions, for such an appreciation of the identity of interests between workers in the metropolitan and underdeveloped 'areas. It is difficult to see how consciousness of "Europeanism" necessarily conduces to such responses, if it is assumed that Englishness or Frenchness do not.

In all true internationalist actions, national consciousness is a felt reality, and must remain so until nations themselves have withered away. The Chilean upsurge itself is successful to the extent that it is a national repudiation of imperialism, and at least in this it replicates the Cuban experience. Indeed, if one wishes to see a paradigm case of the connection between the resurgence of nationalism and socialist internationalism, one only needs to look at Vietnam. If one is willing to assume that the nation is a progressive phenomenon in the third world, one has to explain why it is a reactionary event in the first world. There is such an explanation, which is to be found in the morphology of imperialism. But since Europe will be a super-imperialist state, if it ever evolves to reach the degree of integration involved in Statehood, it is hardly an advance on the beleaguered and separate imperialisms of England, France, or Belgium, which have already been largely transcended by transnational companies in a new form of colonialism.

Meantime, such areas of authority as States retain, remain the focus not only of important residual powers of national capitalist classes, as yet unintegrated into a transnational class: but also of oppositional activity by working classes, even further from such integration. There will not be a European working-class in any meaningful sense until there has been such a degree of interpenetration of national capitals that it makes real sense to speak of a European capitalist class.⁹ Until then, class responses by the workers should be oriented at inter-nationalism, but will define themselves in relation to national challenges, national opponents, national strategic programmes.

In Britain only two established groups describing themselves as revolutionary socialists have recently attempted political action on this plane. The Communist Party loses all its electoral deposits, and is further away from success on parliamentary terms than it has ever been. This is partly because for long years of the Cold War the Communists paid for both their virtues and their vices in a prolonged political isolation. Their virtues included a dedication to internationalist principles in such terrible affrays as the Korean War: their vices included all the paraphernalia of apologetics for every act of stupidity and brutality which was performed by the Soviet Government. But in recent years there has been far less vice, and a great deal more virtue, none of which has been rewarded at the polls. Why? The answer surely, is to be sought in the complete absence of strategy in the communist electoral effort. Asked why he stands for Parliament, the average Communist candidate is in the same position as Sir John Hunt, and can only reply "because it is there". But while this may not be a totally silly answer in connection with the goal of climbing distant mountains, which might be thought to impose a certain degree of irrationalism on any potential contender, it is quite inappropriate as a justification for any form of political activity. And what makes matters worse is the fact that Sir John Hunt's sherpas did in fact get him and his friends up their mountain, while every communist parliamentary foray simply enriches the State to the tune of £150 per deposit lost. The real reason the Communist Party needs to go through this debilitating business is that it wants to be a serious political force, and it has been prevented from obtaining its ends in what would have been a rational way, by the means of affiliation to the Labour Party, and the election of a group of Communist Labour members. It is only very partly the Communist Party's fault that this is so, and it could with a fair measure of justice claim that it had tried to make things otherwise. However, in enforced isolation, what sensible things might Communists do about elections? Any small group with its eye on the main political developments of the day has the power to advance its cause, if it can assess its own position realistically, and act within its capacities. Since Communists wish united action with the Labour left, they could use their parliamentary interventions to achieve such a political effect. In 1970, for example, they could have run six token candidates only, against the archvillains in the Wilson administration. Or during the Common Market debate, they might have announced that they were contemplating intervention in all those seats, and only those seats, whose Labour members had lost their way in the lobbies, and that they would be particularly keen to see that wanderers from marginal seats were among the most hotly opposed. They might even have publicly relieved such Labour members as showed themselves to be of

subsequent good behaviour. In such a way, their disadvantages would all have turned to advantage, and their allies in the Labour Party would scarcely be incommoded. As it is, in every left-wing union there are recurrent squabbles about some inept intervention against a union nominee, and at least as many Labour members of the left of centre face Communist opposition as do those of the right. The whole thing is random, planless, and self-defeating. None of it goes on within any apparent wider programme of socialist strategy, whether for a renewed offensive for affiliation to the Labour Party, or for some new initiative to group socialist forces outside that Party. This is almost the worst of all possible worlds, and it ensures that whatever the merits or demerits of the Communists' programme for a peaceful transition to socialism, it remains on an entirely abstract plane.

The other group to contest a recent parliamentary election is the Socialist Labour League, which made an experimental intervention at the Swindon by-election during the last years of the Wilson government, and polled a normal vote by Communist Party standards. The League seems to be in no hurry to repeat the experiment, and has subsequently been much more concerned to angle its propaganda at Labour Party supporters than to alienate them by opposing their candidates.

There are broad questions involved in these examples. Throughout Europe there have been similar interventions by revolutionary groups in electoral contests. Indeed, the *Morning Star* reported the results of the campaign of *Il Manifesto* in the Italian elections as if they were a resounding defeat, when in fact they were very favourably comparable indeed with Communist Party performance in British elections. A marginally more successful initiative was undertaken by the French Ligue Communiste, which offered Alain Krivine as a presidential candidate. He polled 250,000 votes, and then thoroughly disgraced himself by not calling upon his supporters to go to the second round of ballots in support of the surviving left candidate. This lent justification, which was totally unnecessary, to the enraged cries of Communist leaders, that Krivine was simply a splitter and provocateur. In reality, there is no doubt that he is a dedicated and capable socialist militant: but there is no doubt either that he has not the beginning of a notion of the kind of strategy which French workers will need if they are to win the next round of political battles in which they will be engaged. That the French Communist Party can be compelled to come to terms with the forces on its left from time to time has been ably demonstrated by the United Socialist Party, and the trade union federation, the CFDT, both of whom have more than once compelled their more orthodox rivals to face issues which they would greatly have preferred to ignore. In general, though, the revolutionary left has not

been able anywhere in Europe to assemble the kind of constituency which could make it politically credible in electoral terms.

There have, however, been a number of left socialist parties which have gained a certain influence during the past decade and a half. All have constituted splits in already well-established socialist or communist parties, which subsequently gathered wider support. The PSU in France is a case in point.¹⁰ The Italian Party of Proletarian Socialist Unity (PSIUP) was another,¹¹ although this has recently voted to merge with the Italian Communist Party, having originally split from the Socialist Party. During its brief life, it maintained a distinguished presence in Parliament, and exercised real influence within the major trade union federation, the CGIL. But it was unable to determine a viable independent strategy. In Denmark, Axel Larsen led a significant split from the Communist Party which eclipsed its parent body in the subsequent elections and thereafter. Yet none of these organizations, varied though they have been in origin and formation, has been able to come anywhere near to supplanting the established major parties of the working class. Some attempted splits, based on nationalist currents of thought as well as socialist groupings, have achieved momentary success only to sink almost without trace. A notable example is that of the Walloon Workers' Party and the related Socialist federation in Belgium, which began with a serious trade union base, and which included among its founders one of the most original Marxist thinkers in Europe, Ernest Mandel, but which fared, if anything, worse than the broadly similar formations elsewhere in Europe.

This balance-sheet is not encouraging for anyone who wishes to repeat the experiment in Britain. Once again, it should be stressed that all these parties have attracted many clever and self-sacrificing supporters, that all have enriched the political culture of modern Europe, and that none should be simply written off. The advocacy of Lelio Basso, of Michel Rocard, of Ernest Mandel, and of many others, has powerfully contributed to the socialist awakening which remains by far the most positive feature of the seemingly intractable territory in which we must work.

But although the creation of a renewed socialist culture is the first task of modern socialists, it will remain abstract and scholastic until it is materially embodied in working-class institutions. And the fact we must face is that once the workers' movement in any country has developed its organizations, these bodies will always stand between the articulation of any new ideas and their realization. Unless the mass-organizations can be won over, or seriously divided in the course of an attempt to win them over, they will effectively bar the way to the emergence of any alternatives. Certainly there is no advanced capitalist democracy in which they can be simply by-passed. Only in countries

in which dictatorship, or underdevelopment, or both, have left an organizational vacuum, can the new socialist ideas (or the reassertions in modern terms of old ones) come to exercise a predominant influence over the working-class through brand new organizations. Elsewhere, the material structures which have been inherited by the working population are bound to play a major role in limiting, or expanding, the political understanding which they may develop. No more obvious example of this truth is needed than that of the growth of the French Communist Party and its trade union federation, the CGT, after the events of May in 1968. Even though the French Communists emerged quite plainly as a party of order and constitutional behaviour, and though they were at pains to denounce all the most prominent inspirers of the May upheaval as disrupters and worse, and though there was at the time an absolutely unparalleled upsurge of working-class militancy and self-confidence, nonetheless the CGT followed up the return to "normality" with very considerable gains in membership. Not for the first time, a movement which was in many key respects *against* the influence of an established workers' organization, reacted to the benefit of that influence.¹²

It might be thought that this experience would teach the value of political organization, of the development of a structural network of cadres and activists, even if the lesson were seen as having, in truth, some very negative implications. The same story, on a less dramatic scale, is told by the British Labour Party, which lost members on a frightening scale during the Wilson years, and entered the 1970 elections in a state of barely concealed civil war between unions and political leaders. By 1972 recruits were flowing back into the party, and both unions and political leaders were seeking urgently to discover a common basis on which to act in future. Why? Why didn't the whole alliance fall apart? The partial answer is that the Conservative Government could not have been more effective in compelling Labour's erstwhile supporters to reunite than it was, launching, as it did, simultaneous attacks on the independence of unions, the institutions of welfare, the powers of local authorities, and all those areas in which workers had been wont to consider countervailing powers as residing. Together with this fact must be taken the adjoining question we are considering: there was no practicable alternative. To fight the Rent Act, you needed Labour Councillors. Even when they collapsed under pressure, they were seen to be on the right side: and to the extent that they did not, they inspired hopes that things might change. To repeal the Industrial Relations Act, you continue to need Labour members of Parliament, since outside Ulster, Wales and Scotland no others even half-way to radicalism present themselves as serious contenders. Labour will continue to win certain elections while it can maintain a

monopoly of the kind of political machine which can, without undue strain, field 600 plus candidates in national elections and secure support in the field for their campaigns, and field several thousand candidates in all the main local contests. The realities of the position become plain when one asks, if all the groups to the left of the Labour Party were united, could they begin to contest on this scale? The answer is that they could not, and because they could not, union support is bound to go to people who can. This process alone (and it is not alone) would ensure that the Party might possibly recover from a whole succession of Wilsons, if one considers so baneful a prospect to be plausible. I do not consider the prospect at all plausible, and would not exclude more cataclysmic outcomes if it became real: but in the event of the collapse of a structured opposition, there is no simple certainty that independent socialists would have their field-day. Indeed, the proven incapacity of socialism to present itself as a practicable choice within a structured movement would not augur well for its capacities to rise to new responsibilities in the incomparably more difficult terrain of the collapse of such structures.

For socialist movements which arise within countries with an existing conservatively oriented Labour Movement, there is one very clear precedent, at which these examples only hint. Unless the existing movement is either won over or divided, it will not be possible for activists to develop the kind of apparatus which is absolutely necessary to meet the demands of full participation in political life. The main example we have in this connection is that of the greatest split in socialist history, that which formed the Communist parties. This needed the Russian Revolution to inspire it, and considerable material intervention from the Comintern to consolidate it. Even then, with all the volume of moral and material support which this revolution could offer, it miserably failed to establish effective organizations at the level we have been discussing, except in countries in which it came new, and first, to the task of organizing the workers, or in countries in which it was able to detach a significant proportion of the socialist forces from their traditional organizations. In Germany, France and Italy the second conditions applied, as they did also to a lesser extent in Finland and some other countries. In Indonesia, China and Vietnam the first conditions were in force.

When Trotsky attempted to lead his supporters in a split from the parties of the Third International, he was not able to repeat this experience in any of the countries which already had developed Communist parties. The only countries in which his supporters ever maintained any prolonged Parliamentary or equivalent presence were Ceylon and Bolivia, where the first conditions we established still applied. The other Trotskyist parties all operated as minority currents

in working-class movements which were already structured, and with the exception of the group in the United States, which was able to campaign for the formation of a Labour Party because there was none already on the scene, they were hardly ever able to operate on an independent scale, never mind about presenting an alternative organization to the mass of socialist-oriented workers. If anything, the experience of Maoist groups replicates this story with even greater obviousness. Yet it would be a brave and foolish man who said that workers in, say, Western Europe, had nothing whatever to learn from either Trotsky or Mao.

Spontaneous fission, generated by the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian Revolution, or the apostasy of the Mollet socialists concerning Algeria, or the entry of the Italian Socialists to the Centre-Left government in Italy, produced the left socialist parties we have already discussed, in Denmark, France and Italy. These bodies did inherit serious forces, comparable perhaps with those of the British I.L.P. in the 'thirties. All had a parliamentary orientation, but none could present more than a minor challenge in Parliament. To succeed in their original aims they needed to have carried with them into independent action a substantial fraction of their original parties: and having failed to do this, they were bound to modify their perspectives.

So far this has been a somewhat academic argument, whose intention is to establish that the only place Ralph Miliband could find the nucleus of his opposition socialist party would be the Labour Party, and that if his new formation were to improve on the new left groups, or the left socialist models of modern Europe, or the I.L.P., it would have to detach from the Labour Party at least some major unions, and Labour activists enough to hold some town councils, and parliamentary constituencies. Doubtless, if this were done, the groupuscules would feel the pressure, and many would align themselves with the new formation.

But two questions then emerge. First, what would the new body do next, after it had emerged from the old, moribund party? If it were, however sceptically, to act on the Parliamentary plane, it would obviously require to establish a structure almost exactly on the model of its progenitor. No unions would support a new party which began by insisting on its rights to reappoint their leaders for political reasons, or to reorganize their membership on new criteria. Unions might, indeed, agree to work in a common organization with socialist groups which did try to act on such principles, but the very least they would require would be that such socialist intervention should be governed by the same democratic processes established within the unions themselves. As long as parliamentary democracy survives in Britain, the natural form of labour political organization will be that of a federal

alliance of working-class organizations, which might well be inclusive, but which will only be integrated and led by example and the force of argument. This was the form evolved by Marx in the First International, advocated by Engels during the Second, and established on an inclusive basis by the Labour Representation Committee. That the British Marxists opted out of it was their misjudgement, and that they now remain outside it can only strengthen their opponents. The only grounds for abandoning it would be the fact or the imminent prospect of a suspension of parliamentary democracy: and it is greatly to be doubted that it could be abandoned easily then.

The reason that federal organizational forms evolved in Britain and all those other countries in which trade union organization preceded working-class political parties is only partly connected with the need to converge upon an effective electoral presence: even the day-to-day work of labour defence requires that Trade Unions should come together in trades councils, confederal bargaining units, trade union congresses and the like. The more hotly contested the claims of the unions, and the more militant their struggles, the more call there is for integration of separate organizations in support committees and similar bodies. When the co-ops are brought into support for strikes, or when students join picket-lines, the process at work is entirely similar to that which occurs when unions combine with socialist and labour pressure-groups and organizations in order to achieve parliamentary or local government representation. The work of elaborating an autonomous political programme is not imaginable without the construction of an organization capable of integrating the aspirations of living workers of widely different trades, skills, and interests. Of course, the socialist movement has a history, and strewn throughout this are the landmarks of a whole series of previous programmes, from the Communist Manifesto onwards. In this situation it becomes quite possible for isolated socialists to imagine a platform of demands, based upon the records of bygone struggles, distant countries, other times. Yet such platforms could only have unmediated relevance to the existing, present, working-class movement by some happy accident: in general it remains true that just as no generation entirely repeats the mistakes of its forerunners, so no historic problems remain fixed in immobility. If we cannot step into the same river twice, we surely cannot coast past our present difficulties on the programmatic demands of half a century ago.

The work of grappling with this task can only be a work of democratic discussion. Arbitrary fiats will only succeed in detaching and alienating larger or smaller groups of unrepresented interests from the main force. In any context in which the basic freedoms of association and communications exist, even in mutilated form, the work of

organizing an effective force of socialists necessarily requires an effort of convergence upon a programme, which may take the form of an alliance of existing working-class parties, where a highly structured socialist movement exists, or which may take the form of a federal organization, where labour has already reached a high level of sectional organization, prior to the development of any integrating body of socialist doctrine. For better or worse, this was and remains the situation in Britain. The fact that the Labour Representation Committee lost its Marxists, who were in any event a singularly dogmatic and uncreative, not to say boring, lot, at a very early stage in its evolution, left the subsequent Labour Party all too vulnerable to the doctrines of fabianism: a process which Miliband has amply documented. But today the cardinal tenets of late fabianism have been refuted by events: the bible of Crosland revisionism, published in the mid-fifties, has dated more than any other important work of socialist analysis published in Britain in the last fifty years. This means that Labour as a movement, as opposed to Labour as a potential government, can only exist on the basis of other doctrines, altogether more radical. The very pluralism involved in a federal structure becomes an advantage to socialists, since the integrating force of dogma has rotted away. When Hugh Gaitskell fought and fought again, it was for a provincial neo-imperialist, radical labourism, which existed as an articulated complex of liberal prescriptions and could, in its context, carry widespread conviction. Perhaps it was all summed up in Crosland's ill-fated book. But where, today, are the tablets of Wilsonism? Such pragmatism inspires no sacrifices, blazes no trails, bodes no fundamental changes, and meets no deep spiritual needs. It solidly implies the continuance of the status quo, if possible to infinity. Yet all the while it is manifest that the British status quo will be hard-pressed to survive the decade, leave alone longer. The idea that it might be botched along for another Parliamentary term is not completely absurd, but it is at best irrelevant to anyone who is honestly concerned with major public issues, and at worst an imposition upon all those many millions of Labour supporters whose interests will have to be sacrificed to allow it to happen. Another Wilsonite government would split the Labour Movement into irreconcilable camps, the vastly larger of which would be in sharp opposition to it. Whether another Wilson Government would be "Wilsonite" is, of course, open to question: it may be imaginable that this particular leopard could fairly easily change his spots twice nightly, with matinees on Wednesdays: but I personally doubt that such changes would be for the better development of socialism. Of course, in the unlikely event that this happened, all of us would welcome it, but meantime we shall be well advised not to put our trust anywhere, but to keep our powder dry.

However, if this scenario is plausible, where must socialists engage themselves? There can hardly be a moment's doubt. Another Labour Government offers socialists the chance to do well the work which they botched last time: to force the imposition of socialist policies, or to isolate and defeat those who oppose them. While external critics might aid in this process, in its essentials it will either be an inside job or it won't get done. And if it is done, it will still imply the creation of a *new* or renewed, Labour Party, a federation, an alliance of all who seek change. It will still imply nationwide political organization, participation in elections, and all that this requires. No magic barricades will sweep it all away and inaugurate a promised utopia, no soviets will reemerge in pristine order from the textbooks, and no self-appointed elects will impose their rigorous orthodoxies on stevedores and coalminers, or even teachers and computer-programmers, simply because the politicians have failed again. The soviets, which might be desirable, to say nothing of the orthodoxies, which certainly would not, could arrive at hegemony: but only in defence of gains already made within the given constitutional order. And no such gains are imaginable without the engagement of the overwhelming majority of the people who will, in 1973 or 1974, be voting Labour yet again, in spite of all the exhortations to which they have been exposed from the socialist missionaries of the groupuscules.

That is the first question: any new socialist party would be impotent unless it replicated the best features of the old Labour Party. In countries where the unions were themselves established by the pre-existing socialist parties, and where political organization has long taken priority over union membership, such formulae do not necessarily apply: but they do apply in Britain, in many of the former white dominions, in Belgium, and probably, as Trotsky and his followers thought, in the United States.

The second question is obvious. If the object is to establish a real Labour Party, and if this object cannot be achieved without the support of many of the present components of the existing pseudo-Labour Party, where can socialists direct their efforts but at that very Party? They may join it, or they may be organized outside it, but they cannot ignore it, and influence over its members must be their constant preoccupation. And that is what happens. Both the most serious "revolutionary" groups, which is to say the two which publish daily newspapers, are highly concerned to develop their policies in a way which makes them intelligible and acceptable to Labour Party members. The rest of the left tends to thank its lucky stars that the quite different items of ideological baggage carried by these two groups makes their work unconscionably difficult. But for those who do not stagger under this weight, what possible alternative can offer itself but

that of campaigning to develop an explicitly socialist tendency within the Party? And if one admits such a tendency might be developed, who can say, in advance, whether it would be containable? If the unions decide to support real socialist options, why should the socialists need to split away? While, if the campaign is at a lower level, for an inclusive socialist organization, why should that campaign not be waged within the existing Party?

It is at this point that Ralph Miliband offers evidence which needs careful scrutiny. The unions are not reliable allies, he thinks. He cites my own appeal to Frank Cousins to lead the left, after his resignation from the Government in 1966.¹³ (Frank Cousins declined, saying he was going to "try and help find a more reasonable understanding towards the removal of our economic problems than is possible under the proposed Bill for Prices and Incomes"). This, Miliband suggests, is "typical of the limited role which trade union leaders, including left wing ones, see themselves as playing within the Labour Party". I do not think this is borne out by the evidence. The roles chosen by union leaders are to a great extent determined for them in the political situation in which they operate. Cousins' own union provided one of the largest figures (and one of the most totally disastrous), in the Attlee administration. "A limited role" would be an ungenerous description of Ernie Bevin's contribution, alas. It is absolutely plain that the leader of the T&GWU almost *has* to be invited to serve in any Labour cabinet, particularly if he is a potential threat. What is not plain in advance is whether that leader will have developed political ideas of his own, and felt links with his militant supporters. There certainly have been numbers of union leaders who intervened most actively in political affairs, and by no means all of them have been men of the Right. A. J. Cook is a notable case in point. But this is not the nub of the problem. The key question is, how can anyone today, in this situation of unparalleled union strength and self-confidence, lead the Labour Party without winning the broadly-based support of the unions? Gaitskell's rise to pre-eminence was against the background of the Lawther-Williamson-Deakin triumvirate. Wilson had no such firm base, but had the passive support of the majority of the TUC. His successor, however, will have to live with his two most significant achievements. For Wilson injected an unprecedented scepticism about Labour politicians into nearly all the unions, which serum took effect from top to bottom. At the same time, the reaction produced a notable democratization of the main unions, which process has adamantly resisted the Industrial Relations Act, and shows not the slightest sign of recession. No new leader of the Party can avoid coming to terms with this profound development, which already carries the problem of accommodation far beyond the scope of the kind of bureaucratic

intrigue which was open to leaders of the Gaitskell era. Unlike Lawther and Williamson, whose capacity to uphold conservative policies rested on widespread mass lethargy, Jones and Scanlon can only lend their weight to policies which carry support in an active and self-assertive rank-and-file. Of course, they could always theoretically abandon that rank-and-file; but if they ever did, they would be of little value to the establishment without it. All this means, quite plainly, that the unions will not be easily diverted from the pursuit of serious social change. If the Parliamentary Party were foolish enough to offer as a new leader anyone unacceptable to the unions, the rift which followed would be shattering in its impact.

At the moment, the Parliamentarians are paralysed, because no substantial contenders for the Wilson mantle have offered themselves in case the "safe" man, Mr. Short, is chosen in the rush not to rock the boat. But rocked or not, any such boat would sink without trace in the new Labour unrest which has possessed the unions, unless Mr. Short or his equivalent were to suffer a conversion against which that of St. Paul would appear to be the very slightest of changes of emphasis. And the parliamentarians themselves are aware of this. Although they huddle together for warmth, and remain desperately committed to security, there is a strong realization that time is running out, that the change in the balance of forces in the movement at large must ultimately be reflected in its political councils. When the time comes, if there is a candidate with the insight and skill to present a platform of socialist change, he is very likely to win. Such a candidate would need, then, to "put up a big character poster, and call on the masses to bombard the headquarters". The headquarters, it must be admitted, certainly deserve a pasting. Meantime, whatever else British socialists may be doing, whatever experiments they feel it meet to conduct, either in community action or trade union agitation, the one thing they should not do is to turn their backs on the official Labour Movement. I think history may well come to adjudge that its Cultural Revolution has already begun: but in any event, the climax of that process is still to come, and is most unlikely to be long delayed. The work will be arduous and intricate, daunting indeed. It will need all the socialist forces we can muster, and, indeed, it needs them now. It would be time enough to talk about defeat if the battle were over, assuming our victories left us time: but it is quite, quite wrong to concern ourselves with it now, as the battle-lines are just beginning to form.

NOTES

1. Ralph Miliband: *Parliamentary Socialism*, Merlin Press, 1973 Postscript, p. 372.
2. When the ILP seceded from the Labour Party, at a time when capitalism was in deep trouble, it had 16,700 members, many of whom were strategically well-placed in the Labour Movement. Its historian, R. E. Dowse, records that between July and November 1932 it dropped 203 branches out of 653. Even so, it might have made a better showing if it had not severed all its connections with the Labour Party by refusing to pay political levy, cut off relations with the Co-operative Movement, and gravely weakened its position in the unions. As it turned out, the much weaker Communist Party was to prove the beneficiary of the split, largely because of its capacity to maintain an intransigent, if contradictory, policy. Cf. *Left in the Centre*, Longmans, 1966, pp. 185 et seq. I have developed this argument with Bill Silburn, in *Poverty, the Forgotten Englishmen*, Penguin Books, 1970. See Chapter 11, pp. 216-235.
4. Cf. *The May-day Manifesto*, edited by Raymond Williams, Penguin Books, 1968.
5. This was never clearer than in the argument about British entry to the European Economic Community. Not only did several dozen Labour MPs defy the Party's decisions with impunity, so that the sole casualty was as much a victim of his own innate arrogance as of any political reprisals, but all attempts at mobilization in the country proved completely vain. Even Anthony Wedgwood Benn's proposals for a referendum were only adopted after a prolonged hassle, and then they never became more real than a debating-point. All the specific grievances which workers felt about the decision were left unco-ordinated and isolated. On the issue of Value Added Tax, which raises the most crucial questions about the nature of exploitation, (*who added what value?*) a purely parliamentary confrontation was staged, even though a severe freeze on wages was in progress at a time when prices were supposed to be fixed. It is quite possible that parliamentary styles of government could be abrogated by the Right, given a continuation of present economic and social unease over any prolonged period. But unless this happens, workers will still continually turn to Parliament for any redress to their felt grievances: and in the event that any serious socialist reform programme is ever presented to the electorate working-people will find their aspirations under the same attack which is then mounted on parliamentary institutions. Short of a "cold" counter-revolution, if soviets were ever to emerge in Britain, it would be in defence of the right of Parliament to assert its alleged prerogatives, rather than as abstractly desirable bodies. In spite of the reservations of the far left about events in Chile, it still seems very possible that we shall see some such pattern emerge in that country. *New Left Review*, No. 75, 1972.
8. Published as a Spokesman Pamphlet, No. 31, 1972.
9. Cf. Ernest Mandel: *Europe and America*, New Left Books, 1970, pp. 40-60.
10. Cf. Andrée Hoyles: interview with Michel Rocard, in *The Spokesman*, nos. 13-14, 1971, pp. 27-46. Cf. Lelio Basso: A New Socialist Party, in *International Socialist Journal*, no. 2, 1964, pp. 161-73.
12. Cf. Andrée Hoyles, *The Occupation of Factories in France: May 1968*, in *The Trade Union Register, 1969*, Merlin Press, 1969, pp. 243-95, especially pp. 287-8. *The Crisis of British Socialism*, Spokesman Books, 1971, p. 131.