

ERNEST BEVIN AND THE COLD WAR 1945-1950

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The social legislation of the Labour governments after 1945—the creation of the welfare state as it is commonly thought of—has become an important mythology for the working-class political movement in Britain. The exaggerated claims made at the time by many of Labour's intellectuals—that Britain by 1950 had entered upon a post-capitalist phase of development¹—have, of course, long been discarded but the general consciousness among a majority of the politically committed that the years after the end of the Second World War somehow represented a qualitative breakthrough are still widely current. In 1983 a marxist could write—in an article devoted to a much too uncritical account of Maynard Keynes:

Keynes died in 1946, while the postwar Labour government was just beginning its work: the programme of reforms which were to provide an agreed framework for government for the next 25 years and which can be seen as inaugurating the 'Keynesian era'. The successes of that government—in institutional change, in what seemed decisive and irreversible social advance, in economic management—became a model for socialist practice.²

Most of these statements are untrue or, incorrect in their implications. It is certainly correct that the social legislation introduced after 1945 was in advance, considerably in advance in most cases, of practice in capitalist democracies elsewhere but within two decades the levels of social provision in France, Germany and the Scandinavian countries were already higher than in Britain; and what is now widely appreciated is that the Attlee governments made remarkably little change to the institutional structure of Britain. The pronounced mal-distribution of wealth and property remained and there were no attempts to modify the economic inequalities that were both built into the system and were continuously being generated by the normal processes of capitalist development. There was no wealth tax; and towards the political institutions of the country—the civil service, the management structures of nationalised industries, the conservative and traditional practices of central and local government—the post-war labour administrations showed a notable caution and respect. Moreover Labour, from the mid sixties, was confronted with increasingly powerful vested interests which had built themselves up after the years of war and which offered continuous resistance to further

advances. When the right-wing administration of Thatcher began the piecemeal dismantling of social welfare services from **1979** on there were notably few defences that could be mobilised.

The demolition of national social provision has in some ways sharpened the contrast between what is happening today and what was done after **1945**, and the illusions live on as to what exactly was accomplished by the Attlee government. But what has never been seriously questioned is the other part, and the more important part, of the post-war government's policies in the area of foreign affairs; and the connection between the foreign commitments entered into by Attlee and Ernest Bevin, his Foreign Secretary, and the domestic policies of the Labour government have remained confused and little understood. The past four decades have been the only period in the history of the British labour movement—the First World War being an exception—when there has not been a substantial minority opinion in sharp opposition to the dominant conservative attitude and policy in foreign affairs. There have always been some minority views, of course, and the current strong trend against nuclear weapons may well prove a new departure; but the collapse of CND in the early sixties exhibited how tenacious was the consensus established in the years immediately after the ending of the war. The central theme has been anti-Sovietism, and all other issues have been subordinated to the maintenance of the alliance between America and Western Europe—and now including Japan—in furtherance of the anti-Soviet policies directed and coordinated by Washington. Towards the establishment of the relationship between America and Europe in the early post-war years, Attlee and especially Bevin, the leaders of the most powerful but disintegrating world imperialism, were of crucial importance.

Ernest Bevin was born in **1881** but his political career came only in the last ten years of his life. It was his trade union experience that shaped him beyond any possibility of change, and even here he developed slowly. Not until the years between **1905** and **1908** did he begin to shift his main interests from the chapel to politics; he first became a trade unionist at the age of twenty nine and in the spring of the following year he was appointed a full-time official of the Docker's Union: to remain a trade union official until his appointment as Minister of Labour in **1940**.

His long apprenticeship in the Baptist chapel and the Adult school movement marked him intellectually all his life. He was self-taught, with the strengths and weaknesses of that tradition. He came tardily to a recognition of social injustice: a loitering conversion from the politically ignorant 'commonsense' of the ordinary working man to some degree of appreciation of the class nature of society; a matter of political comprehension that owed almost nothing to theoretical insights and almost everything to the assimilation of practical experience. Bevin was a product

of the labourist tradition of nineteenth century Britain and he was to be hardly touched by the twentieth century transition to the labour socialism of mainstream Labour Party activists: labourism with a socialist rhetoric.

Bevin had certain strongly marked personal characteristics. 'After his trade union experience' writes his major biographer in the third and last volume of Bevin's life and times, 'he found it hard to believe in the disinterestedness of those who disagreed with him. . .'.¹³ There is, of course, nothing in the trade union experience which automatically encourages such attitudes in its practitioners. In spite of his overweening self-confidence in public Bevin was extraordinarily sensitive to criticism, and any opposition he inevitably cast in personal terms. Since he was also thoroughly prejudiced in his views of individuals, criticism became treasonable: the stab in the back was the phrase he must have used dozens of times in his public career. His antipathy to Herbert Morrison, and the bitterness with which that antipathy was expressed, was only one of the most striking illustrations of Bevin's prejudices; and Morrison, it must be noted, was basically on Bevin's side. For those movements, such as the British Communist Party or the Labour Left for which Bevin had a total aversion, there could be no accommodation at any point.

Political and social change, in the theory and practice of labourism, were practicable and possible within the existing system. Parliamentary democracy offered these possibilities. This was the central labourist creed. There were immensely powerful vested interests to be opposed; many narrow-minded individuals to be convinced, in one way or another; the inertia of the system to be overcome. But always social reform was achievable, and with the slow expansion of political democracy in the closing years of the nineteenth century, at local as well as at national levels, the opportunities for change began to widen. The political strength of those who combated change encouraged a reciprocal toughness of stance among working people and especially among those who were trade unionists, for it was they upon whom the struggle largely devolved; and there developed among them a stubborn insistence upon bargaining rights and economic improvement. It also encouraged a view of political action that became inextricably woven into working-class experience in Britain: the understanding that electoral power would provide the necessary leverage for amelioration by legislation. Bevin and his generation, consciously, more often implicitly, had an appreciation of the State that was common to the Fabians and most British socialists of the twentieth century: that the whole apparatus of State power was at the disposal of those who won a parliamentary majority. **C.R.** Attlee stated the matter in terms to which Bevin undoubtedly gave whole-hearted assent and which certainly informed all his own political beliefs. In *The Labour Party in Perspective*, published in 1937, Attlee emphasised the practicality of the British movement:

It has never consisted of a body of theorists or of revolutionaries who were so absorbed in Utopian dreams that they were unwilling to deal with the actualities of everyday life. From the first, British socialists have taken their share wherever possible in the responsibility of Government. The British system of local government has proved to be an excellent trainingground. Long before there were more than a handful of Labour members in Parliament, Socialists had won their way on to local councils and were influencing administration. By showing what could be done in a small sphere they were able to convert many sceptical workers who would only believe what they saw in being.⁴

Attlee was influenced in some small degree by the events of the 1930s; but Bevin not at all. In no way does Bevin appear to have been to the slightest extent radicalised by the events of the inter-war years. The General Strike pushed him into a more not less moderate position: it did also, of course, many of his leading colleagues. And in foreign affairs in the years after Hitler came to power, his comprehension and understanding were outside the progressive tradition which became further radicalised by appeasement and the Spanish experience. In his younger days Bevin had attended a Baptist chapel whose pastor, the Rev. James Moffat Logan, took a courageous stand against the Boer war; but what Bevin's attitude was does not seem to be known. In the First World War he adopted what can only be described as a trade union approach: one which was neither jingoistic nor in political opposition. He was certainly contemptuous of the political pacifism of the ILP as represented by MacDonal and Snowden. The most important international issues of the years between the wars, for the labour movement in Britain, were the Soviet Union, India and the Spanish civil war. About the last, which was such a formative influence upon so many, Bevin was never very interested. He defended non-intervention at the TUC in September 1936 and the bloc vote gave him an overwhelming majority. Throughout the three years of the Spanish war he withheld any effective support for the Republic: no doubt in considerable part because of the communist influence. What was typical of Bevin in the 1930s was the offer which he and Citrine made in February 1937 to Baldwin, then Prime Minister, to help with the difficulties of the rearmament programme in return for an official committee to enquire into holidays with pay. The Amulree committee on which Bevin himself served, recommended one week's paid holiday, instead of the two weeks the TUC asked for, and it passed into law in 1938.

The importance of paid holidays for working people is not denied; but rearmament was a political issue of major importance and to trade it off for the paid holidays issue was entirely typical of the narrow economic view of their responsibilities adopted by both Citrine and Bevin. But Bevin in these years went beyond Citrine in accepting a more political stance. His position in the TUC made this necessary. He was an early advocate of rearmament against German fascism, and his reasons were those of

national interest: not very different from those put forward by Churchill. Bevin was also, in this decade, the foremost advocate in the trade union movement of consultation with employers and government: a policy which developed consciously in the aftermath of the General Strike and which continued and expanded in the following decade. Soon after he became chairman of the General Council of the TUC in 1936 he noted the differences between the reports of the two periods and the extension of the TUC's responsibilities and involvement with both employers and government. 'Most of these things' he commented to his own executive council, 'were to them [in the twenties] propaganda points. Those were the days of advocacy. Ours is the day of administration.'

This growth of corporatism reached new heights during the Second World War, and for Bevin the experience was crucial. The Ministry of Labour had steadily become more important since 1914 and Bevin appreciated the further possibilities in a second wartime situation. This was why, against the advice of some very close to him, like Arthur Deakin, he accepted the Labour department rather than Supply or Economic Warfare. He was right, of course. His very successful tenure of the office, and his considerable contribution to the planning of national resources placed the Ministry of Labour at the centre of decision-making on the domestic front. His personal contribution to the success of his Ministry was crucial to the further consolidation of his basic ideas about the nature of society, the nature and character of the state, and the ways of administration. He became immensely powerful in the War Cabinet and Bullock notes, although with considerable under-emphasis, the impact of power upon his general ideas. It was wartime experience that confirmed for him the central proposition of labourism: the achievement of national recognition and the responsibility for the national interest. The crucial difference for Bevin in the years after 1945, Bullock writes, lay in the fact:

that the Labour Party was no longer a party of protest but accepted as the constitutional government of the country, and the working class and trade union movement which he represented were no longer excluded from the concept of the national interest but entrusted with the responsibility for its maintenance. His anger and resentment at this exclusion and the unfitness for responsibility which it implied had been one of the most powerful springs of his political activity and had led him to attack the Baldwin and Chamberlain administrations as class governments. Once the exclusion was removed, he found it natural to take a national rather than a class view of his responsibilities.⁶

This is the undiluted statement of the theory and practice of labourism, and Bevin's conception of what constituted 'national interest' simply expressed his fundamentally liberal-labour approach to the analysis and understanding of society. What did Bevin mean by 'national interest'? 'In general terms' replied Bullock, 'the security of the United Kingdom

and its overseas possessions against external attack; the continued financial and economic as well as political independence of Britain; the right of its people to trade freely with the rest of the world, their right to maintain a policy of full employment and a decent standard of living.⁷ These were sentiments which any progressively-minded Tory could and did express in these years immediately following the ending of the war; and it is further necessary to emphasise how much the business of wartime administration had deepened Bevin's bias towards corporatism. The more obvious manifestations of class conflict had been considerably muted, and the sharp cleavages of the inter-war years had been blunted and softened. Corporate bias was always implicit in labourism, and Bevin's practical experience of the use of the state machine to mobilise men and resources confirmed his already firm belief in its essentially political neutrality.

Labourism was one central strand in Bevin's thinking; the other was anti-communism which he had exhibited from the early days of the Russian revolution. He played a part in the national movement against intervention in 1919 and 1920, although certainly not the major role that he himself often claimed and which his biographer accepts uncritically. In common with most of the leading trade union and political personalities of the labour movement, but with rather more intensity in his case, he had an animosity towards the British Communist Party which became more pronounced through the years of the thirties, not least because of the success of the Communist Party in the encouragement of rank and file movements in trades organised by Bevin's union. He was with the mainstream of British labour when he pointed to the absence of civil liberty in the Soviet Union; he was certainly the object of a continuous invective against him by the communist and the non-communist Left. In Bevin's case, however, his anti-communism was to be carried over into international affairs, and the common gibe during his period of office as Foreign Secretary that he approached Soviet Russia rather as a communist-inspired breakaway union was not without substance. Dalton reported Bevin saying in September 1946 that Molotov was like a Communist in a local Labour Party: if you treated him badly, he made the most of the grievance and if you treated him well, he put up the price next day and abused you. Dalton finished his account of this discussion by writing in his diary about Bevin: 'Full of bright ideas, as well as earthy sense, but dangerously obsessed with Communists.'⁹

It was not ability that Bevin lacked: his capacity for mastering a brief is constantly remarked upon by Bullock, quoting the comments of Bevin's senior officials. What was lacking was any serious intellectual equipment that would have allowed him to evaluate the application of the concept of 'national interest' as interpreted by the traditionally-minded Foreign Office. The United Kingdom was the largest imperialist power in the world,

and no appreciation of Britain's position in the world—before 1939 or after 1945—could be realistic without an understanding of what imperialism meant for the dominant power and for those who were dominated. The radical wing of the labour movement in Britain—represented at its most generous by H.N. Brailsford—had developed a theory of imperialism, not least around the case of India, that had widespread currency during the inter-war years and which had encouraged a genuine sense of internationalism. This was a tradition which went back a long way for its earliest beginnings. It was a non-Marxist trend although inevitably after 1917 there was an important influence coming from communist sources. But none of this affected Bevin in any way that can be discerned. Indeed, by 1938 his ideas had crystallised around a liberal approach to international economic problems and in particular to the problems of Empire. He had talked on the question of international economic questions at the Labour Party Conference in 1937 and early in 1938 he wrote an article for his union journal in which he developed his ideas:

The great colonial powers of Europe should pool their colonial territories and link them up with a European Commonwealth, instead of being limited British, French, Dutch or Belgian concessions as is now the case. Such a European Commonwealth, established on an economic foundation, would give us greater security than we get by trying to maintain the old balance of power. . . .¹⁰

He was further encouraged in these naiveties by his attendance at an unofficial Commonwealth conference in Australia in the autumn of 1938. The leader of the British delegation was Lord **Lothian**, a vigorous supporter of appeasement, and among the other British delegates was Lionel Curtis, the most woolly of all the 'high-minded Imperialists'¹¹ associated with the Round **Table**, and the one with the most grossly inflated reputation. The delegates came from the four older Dominions together with those from India, Ireland and the United Kingdom; and most were academics. Bevin returned with neo-imperialist ideas about the extension of the Ottawa agreements beyond the existing Commonwealth countries, and full of suggestions for the better administration of the colonial Empire. 'Our crime isn't exploitation, it's neglect'¹² and there is no evidence that he got beyond these simple untruths by the time he became Foreign Secretary.

His deficiencies as Foreign Secretary were two: first, his lack of practical experience of foreign affairs, and second, the vacuum in his mind of what a Labour, let alone a socialist, foreign policy should involve. He had been privy, of course, to all the foreign policy discussions in the War Cabinet, and he was not ignorant of the range of problems he would be confronted with when he took office. But the political approach he brought to office was compounded of his vigorous anti-communism and anti-Sovietism with a marked conservative view of what the 'national interest' involved.

Bullock is therefore correct to emphasise, as he does on a number of occasions, the fundamental continuity of foreign policy established by the Churchill coalition government with that carried on by Bevin on behalf of the new Labour administration. The permanent under-secretary at the Foreign Office, Sir Alec Cadogan, waiting for Attlee and Bevin to arrive for the resumed Postdam conference, wrote with pleasant frankness in his diary:

I think we may do better with Bevin than with any other of the Labourites. I think he's broadminded and sensible, honest and courageous. But whether he's an inspired Foreign Minister or not I don't know. He's the heavyweight of the Cabinet and will get his own way with them, so if he can be put on the right line, that may be all right.¹³

The right line was the continuation of the existing line. In the first foreign policy debate of the Labour Government, in August 1945, Anthony Eden recalled the years with Bevin in the War Cabinet:

Eden: During that period there were many discussions on foreign affairs I cannot recall one single occasion when there was a difference between us. I hope I do not embarrass the Foreign Secretary when I say that.
 Bevin: No.
 Eden: There was no difference on any important issues of foreign policy.¹⁴

Nor was there to be in the years which followed. Hugh Gaitskell was quoted as saying in October 1954 that he doubted whether foreign policy would play an important part in the next election 'not because it is not important, but because Mr Eden has, in fact, mostly carried on our policy as developed by Ernest Bevin, in some cases against the views of rank and file Tories'.¹⁵ So we get the succession: Churchill and Eden; Bevin; Eden: each following the other and bequeathing their legacy to the Foreign Secretaries who came later. It took, apparently, a few months before Bevin felt himself completely at home with his officials in the Foreign Office as he had with those at the Ministry of Labour. It was largely, it may be surmised, as Bullock does himself suggest, a matter of awkwardness of finding himself in a job he was supposed not to have wanted and surrounded by the social and political elite of the civil service who, whatever their deficiencies, were very clever men. Bevin, for all his blustering arrogance, was by no means always at ease with the imperious smoothness that is the manner of the educated upper class in Britain; and like so many self-made men, he could be easily charmed and flattered, as Lady Diana Cooper, among others, relates in her autobiography.¹⁶ There is an exceedingly instructive story which Gladwyn Jebb tells in his memoirs of his first interview with Bevin:

In fact he said nothing for a few moments and simply looked me over in my chair. Finally he observed 'Must be kinda queer for a chap like you to see a

chap like me sitting in a chair like this?' Slightly nonplussed, I thought it better not to take up the challenge. So I just shrugged my shoulders and smiled. Bevin was rather nettled. 'Ain't never 'appened before in 'istory,' he remarked, scowling ferociously.¹⁷

And Jebb told him he was wrong; that Thomas Wolsey 'incidentally, not unlike you physically' was a butcher's son from Ipswich. Bullock adds that whether historically accurate or not 'the comparison visibly impressed Bevin and secured Jebb a permanent place in his good books'.¹⁸

It was not difficult for the Foreign Office to put Bevin 'on the right line' as Cadogan had written. Attlee left foreign affairs to Bevin, and Bevin got his way in the Cabinet. When there were differences between Attlee and Bevin, the Prime Minister never seems to have insisted upon his particular point of view. Their close relationship—the only one that either man had within the group of leading Ministers—was a source of enormous strength to the officials of the Foreign Office. Bevin was on good terms with the Chiefs of Staff; he had an intimate knowledge of the workings of the Whitehall machine; and he could always rely on the necessary majority at the annual conferences of the Labour Party and the TUC. This was important since Bevin's critics came from within the labour movement. In the House of Commons Tory opposition was largely nominal; it was on his own back benches that Bevin found bitter hostility.

The story of Bevin as Foreign Minister, from the summer of 1945 to his forced resignation, for reasons of ill-health, in early March 1951, has been told by Alan Bullock in the third volume of his very large-scale biography in something over 850 pages. Bullock's analysis is predicated upon certain basic assumptions: given their validity, then the policies Bevin followed were reasonable, sensible and politically desirable. The first was that

there was a real danger of the Soviet Union and other Communists taking advantage of the weakness of Western Europe to extend their power. We know that this did not follow, but nobody knew it at the time. This was a generation for whom war and occupation were not remote hypotheses but recent and terrible experiences. The fear of another war, the fear of a Russian occupation, haunted Europe in those years and were constantly revived—by the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia, by the Berlin blockade, and by the outbreak of war in Korea which produced near-panic in France and Germany. It is unhistorical to dismiss these fears as groundless because the war and occupation did not occur (p. 845).

The second assumption is 'that there were substantial reasons, accepted by a Labour government which had already begun on the processes of withdrawal in Asia and the Commonwealth, for not pushing it further until the dangerous instability after the war had been replaced by a new balance of power' (p. 847). The third strand in Bevin's policy was to accept a permanent relationship—Bullock calls it an alliance—with North America

and Western Europe on the understanding that in the world struggle between the Soviet Union and communism—the two were interchangeable for Bevin—on the one side, and capitalism on the other, Britain could no longer go it alone but was forced to recognise the over-riding strength, and leadership, of the United States. In this respect Bullock is correct in noting the break with traditional policy, but more important, as Bullock also emphasises many times, was the continuity between Labour's foreign policy and that pursued by the Coalition government during the years of war to 1945.

An essay of the present length cannot analyse the range of foreign policy decisions entered upon by Bevin and the Attlee government. What follows is a selection of events and issues which illustrates certain of the leading strands of decision-making and illuminates the general course pursued by the Labour government. Palestine, Malaya and Germany are among the countries excluded from consideration.

An instructive case history was that of Indo-China, one of the issues of colonialism that confronted Bevin very early in his tenure of office; and which exemplifies Bullock's comment about the need to be cautious in the 'withdrawal' from Asia as well as offering a specific illustration of the absence of anything approaching socialist principles in the making of the foreign policy of the Attlee administration.

A further reason for looking, however briefly, at the post-war history of Indo-China is that Bullock dismissed what happened in a couple of sentences; and it clearly did not represent for him anything of **importance**.¹⁹ If you have a mid-twentieth century Western liberal view of world relationships it can presumably be taken for granted that former colonial powers—in this case, the French—have a moral right to resume their domination; especially if the nationalist movement contained an important if not central component of Communists in the leadership. The story of Indo-China and imperialism goes much further back than the capitulation of the Japanese army in August-September 1945. The Americans, in the early days of the war, had been exceedingly hostile to the European imperialist powers and had been stating their opposition to a return, after the war, to the status quo ante. By 1944 however, what an English historian has called 'the brave days of 1942-3', when the USA was talking about specific dates for the achievement of colonial independence for various countries, were passed and the general attitudes inside the Washington administration were beginning to change. There were many reasons, including the ambitions of the Americans themselves in the Pacific, the growing strength of the French position, and the unyielding attitude of the British on these colonial **questions**.²⁰ The British Foreign Office recognised the importance of France in the post-war period—despite Churchill's personal hostility towards de Gaulle, and as Sir Alexander Cadogan wrote to Churchill in November 1944: 'In view of the

well-known American attitude towards the restoration of colonies generally, there is much to be said for the colonial powers sticking together in the Far East.²¹ How they stuck together was never better illustrated than in Indo-China between September 1945 and the early months of 1946.

Indo-China began to be an area of growing interest in the second half of 1944 when post-war problems were being increasingly considered. On November 15th, 1944 General Wedemeyer, commanding the American forces in China, reported that British, French and Dutch interests were making intensive efforts to prepare for the recovery of their possessions in the Far East.²² The Americans had already been considering the ideas of trusteeship but these suggestions were fading rapidly during 1945 and after Roosevelt's death were never again seriously considered. At Potsdam the American suggestion that Indo-China should be split at the 16th parallel was accepted, with the southern half coming within Mountbatten's command and the northern within the control of Wedemeyer. At the time the decision was taken it was not expected that the Japanese would capitulate so quickly and the pro-colonial campaign which the British had waged on behalf of the French was soon to be tested in political, rather than in military, terms.

The Vietminh took power in Hanoi in the middle of August and at the end of the same month the Committee of the South, largely dominated by Communists, took power in Saigon. The nationalist liberation movement was much weaker in the south than it was in the north, but it was understood by the Vietnamese everywhere that they were going to work with the Allies and not with the hated French. Meanwhile, after the capitulation of Japan Mountbatten was beginning to receive orders concerning Vietnam based upon discussions between the French and the British Foreign Office: orders with which Mountbatten had some important disagreements although the final text was not communicated to him until the 9 October when the crucial events were over. Before that he had been told to proceed in accordance with drafts sent to him in early September, the main points of which were that British troops were to be used to ensure the disarming of the Japanese, and the release of Allied prisoners but that responsibility for civil administration rested solely with the French. 'The general tenor of the agreements' wrote the official historian of British military administration in the Far East, 'was to safeguard French sovereignty from avoidable encroachment by Allied Commanders'.²³

During the early days of September, before the British arrived, the Vietminh, whose strength in the south was now growing rapidly, continued to argue for cooperation with the Allies. What may, from other continents and other communist parties, be called the spirit of Teheran still led the Vietminh to believe that the Allies would support the movement for independence. Among other issues, they denounced the slogan—used by Trotskyists and certain other nationalist groups—of 'arms for the

people' and they opposed the seizure of land by the peasants.²⁴ The provisional government in France had already issued a statement on the future of Indo-China on 24 March 1945. While a considerable advance on anything that had gone before—it could, after all, hardly preach a straight return to colonialism—it fell very short of genuine independence. For one thing, Cochin China, Tonkin and Annam were to continue as separate states whereas they were now considered by the nationalists as integral parts of the Republic of Vietnam. The French governor appointed in August 1945 was Admiral Georges Thierry d'Argenlieu, as uncompromising as de Gaulle himself about the inviolability of the French Empire in the post-war world. The French in Indo-China, it hardly needs to be remarked, exhibited all the usual characteristics of colonial overseers. As Tom Driberg commented in the House of Commons on 28 January 1946, the French administration during the war 'was extremely oppressive and corrupt, and ninety-five per cent pro-Vichy'.²⁵

The nucleus of the British forces allocated to Saigon was the 20th Indian Division, commanded by General Douglas D. Gracey, who was later commander-in-chief of the Pakistan Army. The total number of troops who entered Vietnam were around 26,000, very effective and highly disciplined and with a formidable record in the 14th Army. The Indian army, it should be noted, was to the greater part of Asian nationalists, the symbol of imperialist oppression. Advanced groups began flying into Saigon in early September; the main body began to arrive on the 11th September and Gracey landed at Saigon on the 13th, to find the airfield manned by Japanese troops with their generals waiting to pay their respects. The Japanese were to play an interesting role in the weeks to come. There were not enough British troops—mostly Indians or Gurkhas—to go round and the French, already on the way with General Leclerc as GOC, were not to arrive until towards the end of the year. In the interim the Japanese in certain areas, including parts of Saigon, were relied upon to maintain order. Order, as the situation deteriorated, meant fighting and from late September the Japanese were engaged in operations against the local populations. 'Their discipline' said an English Brigadier, 'was excellent'.²⁶ Some who had been disarmed were brought back into military duty and one consequence, noted at the time, was that British, Indian and French casualties were significantly reduced. An American eye witness reported that 'the British were delighted with the discipline shown by their late enemy and were often warmly admiring, in the best playing-field tradition, of their fine military qualities. It was all very comradely'.²⁷

These things came about because the people of south Vietnam did not want a return to French colonial rule and because the commander of the British forces, sent in with specific instructions as to what he could and could not do, took it upon himself to go beyond his brief. There is

evidence that Gracey had made up his mind before he arrived in Saigon that Indo-China was going to remain French. His own instructions were clear: to carry through the disarming of the Japanese, to release all Allied prisoners and arrange for their repatriation, and not to become involved in the local political situation. But Gracey's own inclinations are only part of the story: to have remained genuinely neutral would have meant serious negotiation with the Committee of the South and the French being kept at arm's length. The political decision to facilitate the return of the French had already been taken before Gracey and his troops arrived in Saigon, so while Mountbatten was undoubtedly unhappy at what was being done below the 16th parallel—as were many other people including most of the American press, many Labour MPs and curious fellow travellers (sic) such as General Douglas MacArthur—the War Office and the Foreign Office in London were agreed in principle that Gracey must be supported. Mountbatten was instructed accordingly.

The crisis began in earnest on September 21st, a week after Gracey had landed in Saigon. On that day he issued Proclamation No 1 which in effect was a declaration of martial law. It had been under consideration almost since the day of the British arrival. It forbade meetings and demonstrations, and continued the curfew. On the day following the posting of the proclamation, early in the morning, the British took over the Saigon jail from the Vietnamese and allowed French representatives to select over one thousand from among the French prisoners of war who had been interned by the Japanese since 9 March, and gave them arms. On the following morning, the 23 September, these released French soldiers together with paratroopers newly arrived, took over all the buildings of Saigon before the Vietnamese were aware of what was happening. The French had returned, and henceforth there was no possibility of a negotiated settlement between the Vietnamese and the French. This was Gracey's momentous contribution to the post-war history of South East Asia for which the final responsibility rested with the Foreign Office in London. The seeds had now been sown whereby the bloody conflicts between the Western imperialists and the people of Vietnam were to grow steadily, culminating in the full-scale American intervention. Without British military action in the early autumn of 1945 the independence movement in Vietnam would have been successful. Without the British action in September and October—before the build up of French forces—there would have been no chance of the French re-imposing their colonial regime upon the Vietnamese people. If Bevin and the Labour Government had nothing else to their discredit, this counter-revolutionary action against the legitimate national aspirations of a people who had already suffered grievously under French rule, would remain a major national shame of the British people. This is not rhetoric: what the British did in Indo-China in the autumn of 1945 was the prelude to decades of war,

butchery and devastation inflicted upon the bodies and the homes and patterns of living of the poverty stricken people of Vietnam. On the 28 January 1946 Noel Baker replied for the Foreign Office in the House of Commons on the casualties in the Indo-China campaign: the British forces were about to withdraw. Some 126 Allied dead had been counted, of which 3 were British and 37 Indian. There was no precise information about the 'Annamites and Tonkinites who opposed our troops: it has been estimated that about 2,700 have been killed'.²⁸ It was, in the light of what was to follow in the next three decades, a modest enough beginning.

It was not to be expected that Indo-China would merit much attention in London. It was, after all, a far away country in a world large parts of which had just emerged from years of war. Press reports were few and were overshadowed by the news of the similar action in Indonesia, which was on a larger and bloodier scale than in Indo-China, although the pattern was the same: British troops and Japanese slaughtered Indonesian nationalists in the interests of the restoration of western imperialism. It was chance that a British member of parliament was in Vietnam in the late summer and early autumn of 1945. This was Tom Driberg whose questioning in the House of Commons and articles in *Reynolds News* provided most of what publicity there was. Harold Laski, at the time chairman of the Labour Party, remained faithful to his socialist principles. He wrote on the Vietnam and Indonesian events in damning terms. On Indo-China he naturally disputed the French claim to repossess their former colony. 'What may appear to us no more than an enlarged police situation is to the people concerned the destruction of hope.'²⁹ Bevin and Noel Baker had no difficulty in the House of Commons in evading questions or uttering untruths; and there were so many other problems in which international mayhem was being committed that Vietnam could easily be dismissed and forgotten.

The international problem that occasioned most debate in Britain in the last six months of the war and during the early period of Bevin's Foreign Secretaryship was Greece; and it was in connection with Greece, before the war ended, that Bevin's reactionary attitudes on foreign affairs most clearly exhibited themselves.

Greece before 1939 was traditionally reckoned to be within the British sphere of influence. Its geographical position in the Mediterranean was regarded as vitally important for the sea communications between Britain and the Far East as well as for the oil supplies of the Middle East. There were links of great historical significance between the two countries. Churchill during the war years, dominated by his vivid imperialist sense of history, was conscious always of the importance of Greece in the context of Middle East strategy. As would be expected, he was a fervent supporter of the Greek Monarchy; indeed, George II, who had actively

supported the Metaxas dictatorship in the late thirties, was warmly regarded by establishment circles in Britain.³⁰ It is interesting, and significant, how differently Churchill approached Yugoslavia—a country with much less strategic importance for Britain—but which also had a monarchy and, like Greece, a government in exile in London during the war years. Churchill, who was always a slippery politician, capable of disguising contradictory policies in high sounding language, muted his fundamental anti-communism in respect of Yugoslavia while allowing it full play in the case of Greece.³¹ He was, for example, single-minded to the point of fanaticism about the restoration of the monarchy in Greece after the war was over, and anything or anyone who undermined the prestige or the position of the monarchy aroused immediate hostility in London. One result was that the Foreign Office always depreciated the importance of the resistance inside Greece which was outside the control of the monarchists, and there developed in consequence a bitter conflict between the Foreign Office in London and the SOE (Special Operations Executive) in Cairo which was responsible for internal military developments inside Greece.

The Greek crisis of the war and post-war years has been analysed in immense detail by British and Greek participants in the Greek struggle, and by British and Greek historians.³² Much of the important documentation is to be found in the files of the Public Record Office in London. In the context of this present review of Bevin and the Labour Government after 1945 only certain salient points require to be emphasised. The first is an extension of a matter already referred to: the constant denigration of EAM, the national resistance movement, and ELAS, its military wing. Orme Sargent, who was to become deputy permanent secretary in 1947 in succession to Alexander Cadogan, minuted in January 1943:

The achievements of SOE are sadly out of proportion with the vast sums of money which, during the last year and a half, have been spent in Greece; chiefly on subsidising communist organisations in opposition to the Greek government, which we are supporting.³³

and a year later, on 23 January 1944, when there was abundant confirmation of the extent of EAM's dominating position inside Greece, Orme Sargent repeated his earlier observation, notwithstanding the irrefutable evidence that was reaching Cairo and London:

The truth, of course, is that the whole guerrilla movement has been largely fiction created by SOE to justify a vast expenditure of money and raw material in that country.³⁴

These comments by Orme Sargent were circulated only within the government machine; but they surfaced in a dramatic way in public discussion

during the most critical period of the counter-revolution which Britain initiated at the end of 1944. In a major House of Commons speech on the 18 January 1945—the first part of which was entirely devoted to Greece 'the most controversial matter of the hour in British policy', said Churchill, and he went on:

I have been told that I made a mistake in under-rating the power of the communist-dominated ELAS. I must admit that I judged them on their form against the Germans. I do not wish to do them any military injustice. Of course, it was not against the Germans they were trying to fight to any great extent. They were simply taking our arms, lying low and awaiting the moment when they could seize power in the capital by force, or intrigue, and make Greece a Communist state with the totalitarian liquidation of all opponents. I was misled by the little use they were against the Germans, especially once the general victory of the Allies became probable, in spite of the arms we gave to them. I certainly underrated them as a fighting force. . .

While the British were busy distributing the food and endeavouring to keep things steady, the EAM and Communist Ministers, who were eventually increased to seven in the Papandreou Cabinet, were playing a different game. They were playing the game of the ELAS bands and their Communist directors. . .³⁵

Churchill was lying. He may, perhaps, have been so besotted by his commitment to the Greek monarchy, or so blinded by his anti-communism that he failed to comprehend the meaning of the flood of reports that had come out of Greece; but these things are unlikely. Churchill had been preparing the counter-revolution in Greece from at least 1943. He himself had insisted on the military operations in early December 1944 as a result of which Greece was returned to the reactionaries and the fascists; and he no doubt felt it necessary that a full-blooded public justification was required. That such a justification involved him in untruths, falsehoods and gross misrepresentation was of course beside the point.

There was no disagreement among those who were either directly engaged in the resistance or who have assessed the evidence later that EAM and ELAS were the dominant political and military forces in Greece at the time of the German withdrawal. In the same debate from which the Churchill quotation above was taken Sir Richard Acland, in an impressively documented speech, named the political committee of EAM and listed their political affiliations as evidence of its broad popular character.³⁶ In 1952 Stavrianos emphasised that 'to a very considerable degree the EAM became a national liberation front in fact as well as name',³⁷ and he estimated that towards the end of the occupation period EAM was 'governing the two-thirds of Greece which it had freed'. The 1979 history of Greece by Richard Clogg accepted that EAM 'did clearly enjoy genuine mass support' and that it 'controlled by far the largest armed formations in Greece' (p. 150).

It is important to underline that the aims Churchill was setting himself

in foreign and imperialist affairs were throughout the war analysed and understood by the Left in Britain. Churchill, it must always be recalled, was consistently supported, in private and in public, by Attlee and Bevin, members of the War Cabinet. But for the Left there was no 'betrayal' since they always appreciated the reactionary, indeed the counter-revolutionary, policies consistently pursued by Churchill and his colleagues. The most perceptive and the most knowledgeable expert on the British Left was Konni Zilliacus—often quite incorrectly characterised as a communist fellow-traveller—who had from his long service in the League of Nations an unrivalled knowledge of European politics. His predictions were to be proved remarkably accurate. Zilliacus was not alone: Seymour Cocks who was in the House of Commons during the war was another specialist, and Nye Bevan was often the Left's most effective speaker from the back benches. The publications of the Union of Democratic Control were highly informative and the *New Statesman* had access to many sources critical of the Coalition Government's policies round the world. In August–September 1943 Zilliacus wrote a private report for a Fabian Study group on the future international situation as it was developing.³⁸ He quoted at length from the war of intervention against the young Soviet Republic from 1918; underlined the argument that since 1917 world affairs had been dominated by the necessity to contain the forces of social revolution; and he identified the areas in which major conflict could be expected in Europe once the war against fascism was over. On Greece he emphasised Churchill's 'open partisanship on behalf of the Greek King, who has a black record of hostility to democracy and of pro-fascism'. His memorandum was remarkably prescient in its analysis of future developments and in its more simplified versions these were the ideas of the Left in general.

By the summer of 1944 Churchill was becoming seriously concerned with what was likely to follow in Greece after a German collapse. It was essential, Churchill wrote in his memoirs, from which most of the quotations which follow are taken, 'that there should be no political vacuum in Greece. As I minuted on August 29, "It is most desirable to strike out of the blue without any preliminary crisis. It is the best way to forestall the EAM" ' (Vol. VI, pp. 247–8). The Germans were 'tardy'—the phrase is Churchills—in withdrawing from Athens but this allowed the British to consolidate their political plans. The Caserta agreement of 26 September, which the EAM signed, placed all the guerrilla forces under British command, and early in October the first British forces landed in Greece and Athens was occupied by paratroopers under the British C-in-C, General Scobie, on October 14. The main bulk of troops followed together with the Greek Government and Rex Leeper, the British Ambassador.

'The testing time for our arrangements had now come', Churchill continued in his memoirs. 'At the Moscow conference I had obtained

Russian abstention at a heavy price' (ibid., p. 249). What Churchill was referring to was recorded fifty pages back in the same volume of memoirs: his visit to Moscow in early October 1944, and the agreement with Stalin over spheres of influence in the Balkans. On the first evening (9 October) Churchill set down on a single sheet of paper the percentage influence allotted to the two powers, Russia and Britain. Roumania was to be 90 per cent Russian; Bulgaria 70 per cent Russian; Yugoslavia and Hungary 50 per cent each; and Greece 90 per cent British. Churchill then passed the sheet over to Stalin. 'There was a slight pause. Then he took his blue pencil and made a large tick upon it, and passed it back to us' (p. 198). There was then a long silence, Churchill went on, and Churchill at length proposed that the agreement having been reached the paper should be burnt. 'No, you keep it', Stalin is reported as saying.

As all commentators, then and since, have acknowledged, Stalin kept his word; and he made no attempt to intervene against the British counter-revolution in Greece. It is, however, improbable that the Kremlin did not take full note of the ruthlessness of British actions, and appreciate their implications for their own position in Eastern Europe. It is necessary to underline the point which is mostly forgotten in the analysis of post-war Europe that the British were the first to engage in clearly defined self-interested military action in a country that had been occupied by the Germans; and this, let it be further emphasised, before the war with the Nazis was over.

General Scobie had a very firm idea of what was expected of him and between the date of the arrival of British troops and early December, the internal situation steadily deteriorated. By mid-November, according to his memoirs Churchill was ordering Scobie to make counter-preparations to a military coup by the EAM. The fact of a proposed coup was untrue but the crisis was precipitated on 3 December by the police firing on an unarmed demonstration in the middle of Athens; and from then on the fragile consensus fell apart. Churchill, as ever, was deeply implicated and two days after the Athens firing he intervened directly with orders to Scobie: 'Do not however hesitate to act as if you were in a conquered city where a local rebellion is in progress' (p. 252). And Churchill, in the next paragraph of his memoirs, has a most revealing story which reveals so clearly how these imperialists approach their problems and how, as so often, the experience in one colonial situation helps to confirm or throw light upon another. 'I had in my mind', Churchill wrote after giving the full text of his telegram to Scobie, 'Arthur Balfour's celebrated telegram in the eighties to the British authorities in Ireland: "Don't hesitate to shoot. . ."' The setting of the scene was now entirely different. Nevertheless "Don't hesitate to shoot" hung in my mind as a prompter from those far-off days' (ibid.).

The civil war that the events of early December precipitated was

brought to an uneasy end by first an armistice and then by the Varkiza agreement of 12 February 1945: as a result of which the Left began to be overwhelmed. 'In the months that followed the Varkiza agreement', writes Heinz Richter, 'a counter-revolutionary tide hit Greece, sweeping away everything the Resistance had built up, and brought back to the surface the old structures that still trouble Greece.'³⁹

Without the intervention of the British the story of post-war Greece would have been very different. The counter-revolution initiated by Churchill was the major factor in the development of Greek politics after 1945. From the first days of the intervention, there was vociferous criticism at all levels of the British labour movement against the Coalition's Greek policies; but at every stage the Labour Party ministers insisted upon their collective responsibility with their Conservative colleagues. At all points there was unequivocal support for Churchill's approach. Churchill was, of course, being thoroughly consistent with the political attitudes he had always exhibited. He had been a leading figure in the war of intervention against the newly established Bolshevik regime in Russia during and after the First World War; he led the reactionary wing of the Conservative Party against moderate concessions to Indian nationalism in the 1930s; and his record during the Second World War was consistent with his firm imperialist views and with the cardinal necessity of defending Britain's imperialist interests as he understood them. His support for the Greek monarchy stemmed from a recognition both of the strategic importance of Greece across British lines of communication with the East and of the need to support those forces in Greek politics which could resist the growing movement of the Left. Bevin never deviated from his support of Churchill's policies. A fortnight after the bloodshed in Athens' Constitutional Square there was convened a special one day conference of the Labour Party. This was on the 18 December in London. It was Bevin's first major statement of the war years on foreign policy issues, and he vigorously defended the British intervention in Greece. Those replying were allowed five minutes only. Nye Bevan said:

Mr Bevin has described what is happening in Greece. I have no time to answer him. But there is one complete answer. Only three bodies of public opinion in the world have gone on record in his support, namely Fascist Spain, Fascist Portugal and the majority of Tories in the House of Commons.

and Bevan went on to describe Bevin's account as 'garbled and inadequate where it was not untruthful'.⁴⁰ Bevin's account was certainly garbled, but it was an approach that he continued without any alteration when he became Foreign Secretary. Bullock notes that Greece was one of the countries where Bevin's policies came in for most criticism during the first two years of office; but that he never wavered in his support of his

officials of the Foreign Office. There were three main reasons for Bevin's continuation of Churchill's policies. The first is that his specialist advisers were not changed and they included, especially at the top level, some notably reactionary personalities. Second, there was Bevin's pervasive anti-communism. He must have believed, as does his biographer, that Churchill intervened in December 1944 in order 'to prevent a communist seizure of power in Athens'.⁴¹ But Bevin's steadfast anti-communist attitude in respect of Greece merged into his general approach to the Middle East. He stated his position very early in office. In a paper circulated to the Cabinet—which now included Nye Bevan, his former critic—dated 11 August 1945, Bevin insisted that

We must maintain our position in Greece as a part of our Middle East policy, and that unless it is asserted and settled it may have a bad effect on the whole of our Middle East position.

And that position was maintained in spite of a continuous flood of criticism from observers in Europe and in America that the monarchist, conservative and neo-fascist elements in Greece were steadily conducting war against the Left. Bevin, who by his general policy, did nothing to stem this right-wing offensive, made one further decision that was to lead to the renewal of civil war. Britain, against the opinion and advice of all the Greek political groups except those which were monarchist, insisted on the elections of 31 March 1946. Left and Centre in both Britain and Greece were clear that monarchist control of electoral procedures could only give a wholly distorted result. In the event EAM, the Svolos socialists and three other small non-communist groups boycotted the elections, which the monarchists won, inevitably and overwhelmingly. During the spring and summer of 1946 some thousands of armed men began to find their way back to the mountains. On September 1st 1946 a national plebiscite on the return of the monarchy went in favour of George II. The leader of the Populist movement, Constantine Tsaldaris, continued the terror against the Left and the winter of 1946-7 saw a full-scale civil war get under way. By the end of 1949 the Left was beaten: the policies of Churchill and Bevin, with the Americans now in full control, had succeeded. And by this date, too, the Labour Left had been quietened, a story that requires its own telling.⁴²

There is one story, however, set out by Bullock in some detail that has not hitherto received the attention it has deserved. It concerns Attlee and his considerable misgivings over Bevin's Middle East policy and not least over what was being done in Greece. Attlee's own biographer, Kenneth Harris, largely missed the significance of what Attlee was trying to do. The story is illuminating, not only because it exhibits Attlee in a more realistic mood but it also illustrates the limitations imposed on the

Prime Minister by his dependence upon the most powerful man in the Cabinet. It further demonstrates the effectiveness of both the Foreign Office and the political weight of the Chiefs of Staff. Hugh Dalton, whose third volume of memoirs was published in 1962, first indicated the misgivings that Attlee was beginning to articulate; but it was not until the thirty year rule on official papers came round to the period of the Labour government that the full detail was revealed. On 2 March 1946 Attlee circulated a paper to the Defence Committee. It was, Bullock writes, among the most radical produced by a British Prime Minister. Attlee summarised the arguments he had put to Dalton in February 1946: that we could no longer expect in time of war to keep open the Mediterranean and we could therefore withdraw troops now from Egypt and the rest of the Middle East including Greece. The future, especially with an independent India, did not lie through the Mediterranean. Attlee concluded his March 2nd paper;

We must not for sentimental reasons based on the past give hostages to fortune. It may be that we shall have to consider the British Isles as an eastern extension of a strategic area the centre of which is the American continent rather than as a power looking eastwards through the Mediterranean to India and the East.⁴³

The discussion on these crucial matters occupied several meetings of the Defence committee but no clear decisions were reached. Bevin had circulated a Foreign Office comment which totally denied Attlee's arguments. In July 1946 the Chiefs of Staff reiterated their belief on the importance of the Mediterranean for oil supplies and as a focus for world communications. Bevin gave little away in the matter of the call-up to the Forces, arguing that there must be sufficient military power to make British foreign policy credible; and the whole discussion and debate petered out. It was however re-opened by Attlee later in the year. On 1st December 1946 Attlee typed a personal letter to Bevin who was in New York in which he raised again, and sharply, the same arguments of his March memorandum: 'The Middle East position is only an outpost position. I am beginning to doubt whether the Greek game is worth the candle.'⁴⁴ Early in 1947 Attlee produced a further memorandum in which he first subjected the Chiefs of Staff position to radical criticism and then went on to ask for a serious consideration of the whole Middle East strategy. It produced a very strong impression. In their replies Bevin and the Foreign Office concentrated on the political aspects, and the Chiefs of Staff on the strategic. Bevin's document, drafted by one of his senior officials, ended with this conclusion:

Your proposal would involve leading from weakness. Our economic and military position is now as bad as it ever will be. When we have consolidated our economy, when the economic revival of Europe has made progress, when it has finally

become clear to the Russians that they cannot drive a wedge between the Americans and ourselves, we shall be in a position to negotiate with Stalin from strength. There is no hurry. Everything suggests that the Russians are now drawing in their horns and have no immediate aggressive intentions. Let us wait until our strength is restored and let us meanwhile, with US help as necessary, hold on to essential positions and concentrate on building up UNO.

And there, the matter ended. Attlee, Bevin and Alexander had a discussion on 9 January 1947, after which Bevin dictated a note to the effect that his general policy was to continue and that no British troops were to be withdrawn save those already agreed upon.⁴⁵

It could not have been within the area of historical possibility for Attlee to have altered in such a dramatic way the course of British foreign policy. The vested interests against him were too powerful, including and not least the Chiefs of Staff whose political activities deserve much more documentation than they have so far received. Bevin himself, as noted above, was the crucial prop for Attlee in the Cabinet and without Bevin it is possible that Attlee would not have remained Prime Minister. There were other reasons, however: among them the decision to manufacture an independent British atom bomb, the discussions on which were taking place at the same time as the review of foreign policy strategy set out above. On the 26 October 1946 there was a meeting of the Cabinet's atomic committee, General 75, to decide whether a gaseous diffusion plant should be built for the production of uranium 235. This would be a necessary preliminary to the production of a British atomic bomb. Cripps and Dalton were opposed on the grounds of cost and it was Bevin's intervention, which Attlee supported on all future occasions, that ensured the independent bomb for Britain. Bevin's words on this occasion, as reported by one who was present, are worth remarking upon, in terms both of what he said and the tone that comes through. They are an authentic reflection of his essential illiteracy on so many issues of foreign affairs. He arrived late at the meeting, having, so he said, fallen asleep after a good lunch; and he is recorded making his opposition in this way:

That won't do at all, we've got to have this. . . I don't mind for myself, but I don't want any other Foreign Secretary of this country to be talked at or by a Secretary of State in the United States as I have just had in my discussion with Mr. Byrnes. We have got to have this thing over here whatever it costs. . . We've got to have the bloody Union Jack flying on top of it.⁴⁶

This was the decisive intervention on the independent British bomb. Attlee fixed the rest of the proceedings. The substantive decision had still to be taken, but that appears to have been almost a formality. On 10 January 1947 General 75 was reconvened as a new Committee, General 163, from which Dalton and Cripps were excluded. Those present were Attlee, Bevin, Morrison, Alexander, Addison and Wilmot. The decision to manu-

facture the Bomb was not reported to the Cabinet nor to Parliament; and according to Attlee's biographer, Attlee manipulated the financial estimates to conceal the first £100 million expenditure on the Bomb. The secrecy on the Bomb lasted for the rest of his administration. The only politician outside the small inner group of the Cabinet who knew in detail what was taking place in this field of atomic research and production was Sir John Anderson, the Tory chairman of the Advisory Committee which Attlee had established.⁹⁷

The central thrust of Labour's foreign policy, as conducted by Bevin with an undeviating support from Attlee, was pivoted upon a total opposition to the Soviet Union and to all those radical movements, in Europe and elsewhere in which Communists played, or were thought to be playing, an important part. There were, of course, other strands to Britain's foreign strategy but the overriding consideration was what was felt to be the communist threat to established orders. In this crucial regard, Labour was no different from the Conservatives. There was no Labour foreign policy: there was a British policy which continued that which had been elaborated by Churchill and agreed by his colleagues in the War Cabinet. This is not to ignore the genuine differences of opinion within the ruling group during wartime or to fail to appreciate that were some issues in the post-war world which the Conservative Party would have approached differently from the policies followed by Labour. India is the obvious case in point. Indian independence solved itself in the sense that there was no alternative and this regardless of the firm commitment to Indian independence that the British labour movement had always expressed. No doubt under Churchill what would have been offered would have been something short of independence; and in the long run, if independence was not forthcoming, the result would have been Northern Ireland on a continental scale. But in other colonial countries, whether controlled by the British or by other Europeans, the Labour Government followed a policy indistinguishable from that which the Conservatives could have been expected to implement.

There were, however, two new factors in the post-war world which severely restricted the operations of British foreign policy. One was the absolute and relative decline of Britain as a world power of the first rank compared with either America or the Soviet Union. The second was the overwhelming power of the United States within the capitalist world. The Americans themselves were conscious of the decline of Britain from the early days of the war, and they were increasingly aware of the much weakened part which Britain would play in the post-war world. The American attitude was clear-sighted and ruthless. Lend-lease was ended a few days after the capitulation of Japan in August 1945 in order to pressure the British into the explicit acceptance of the terms of Bretton

Woods, and it was the absence of an appreciation of the new situation in Washington after Roosevelt's death that led to Maynard Keynes' spectacular failure in the negotiations over the American loan in the autumn of 1945. The Americans were determined to end the British system of Imperial preference and the discriminatory aspects of the sterling bloc. But at the same time the US State Department was aware of the importance of Britain in a world which had just come through a devastating war, and of the need which America would have of Britain's cooperation. There were a variety of areas in which British assistance would be crucial; and it was therefore necessary to keep Britain neither too weak nor too strong. Hence the care with which the Americans administered Lend-lease during the war: in ways which maintained the British reserves of gold and dollars at a figure reckoned to be about the minimum necessary for reasonable functioning. It is the American historians such as Gabriel Kolko and Fred Block who have developed the argument that there was a general understanding within the American administration that Britain should be kept neither too weak nor too strong.⁴⁸ At the same time there were marked differences of opinion regarding policy towards the Soviet Union within the United States in the closing months of the war and in the immediate post-war period; and Roosevelt's death did not lead to a complete change about but only, in the first months, to a general hardening of attitudes. At this time both Attlee and Bevin, and this must also have been true of many of their senior officials, thought the Americans inexperienced and naive, especially in relation to the Soviet Union. Attlee in early 1946 was reported by Dalton as referring to the 'little men' nominally in charge of the American administration; when Churchill made his strident Fulton speech in March 1946 Attlee was secretly delighted since, according to his biographer, he still considered the Americans to be 'naive in their attitude to Stalin'.⁴⁹ There is an interesting passage in Bullock—the context is late 1946, in which Bullock sums up Bevin's general approach to the Americans:

Bevin was as anxious to have the Americans take a greater share of responsibility for maintaining the independence of Greece as he was in Turkey, Iran and throughout the Middle East. But he had a better understanding than his colleagues in London of the difficulty Americans had—in the country, in Congress, and even in the Administration—in adjusting themselves to the world role they were now called upon to play. From this he continued to draw the same conclusion as he had throughout 1946: that it was essential to give them time, be patient and not to try to force the pace. In his judgment, the risks were too great, the American Government's new-found sense of purpose too brittle, American opinion too unsettled for Britain to surrender her own independence of action into American hands.⁵⁰

No American historian familiar with these years could possibly write in the terms just quoted. The Americans certainly had their problems in terms of

their future role as leaders of world anti-communism; and Britain was undoubtedly helpful in that Attlee and Bevin were much more committed to their anti-communism than most of the senior politicians or officials in the United States for many months before the war ended. The Americans needed Britain but it was a very different kind of need from that which afflicted Britain in relation to America. Britain was bankrupted by the war; and Britain's insistence upon pursuing her imperialist role in the Far East and in Europe dramatically weakened her economic position in the world. 'By the end of February 1947', an American historian wrote in 1981, 'the United Kingdom lay naked before the world, stripped of its status, its aspirations, and much of its pride'. The exaggerations are only slight, and it was to be American dollars that rescued the ~~bankrupt~~.⁵¹

These comments can be illustrated by an examination of one of the political landmarks of the post-war world: the origins and implementation of the Marshall Plan in the second half of 1947 and through subsequent years. The Marshall Plan has had a very favourable press, both at the time and subsequently by historians, especially British historians. As Bevin himself said in 1949: 'It seemed to bring hope where there was none. The generosity of it was beyond our belief'; and this emphasis upon American magnanimity has always been one of the enduring myths of contemporary history. Another, especially in Britain, is the role played by Britain and by Bevin in particular. Bullock follows a common line of argument when he writes that 'it was Bevin's imagination in seeing what could be made of it [the Marshall Plan] and his boldness in taking the initiative which gave Marshall's remarks the resonance they needed to become *effective*'.⁵² To read some popular British texts it might be thought that Bevin was largely responsible single handed for the Marshall Plan and its implementation; that without Bevin's 'imagination' Western Europe would not have made the economic recovery it achieved and the military interdependence in NATO that was its concomitant. Even K.O. Morgan, who is a good deal more realistic in his appraisal of Labour's foreign policy than is Bullock, writes of the 'extraordinary saga of achievement by Ernest Bevin' between the date of Marshall's Harvard speech and the establishment of NATO in April 1949.⁵³ In one crucial respect, all the commentators who argue in these terms are correct: Bevin was Washington's man and he accomplished all they hoped for when they planned aid on a massive scale to Western Europe. But their motives were calculated and wholly self-interested and Bevin only did what *they* wanted done. It was the beginning of their role as the dynamic centre of world anti-communism. The Truman doctrine of the spring of 1947 had been limited to Greece and Turkey although its general propositions were easily extended; and it was the development of the basic policies which produced the Truman doctrine that led to the Marshall speech at Harvard on 5 June 1947.

There are several factors in the making of the Marshall Plan that need

to be emphasised. There had always been those who prophesied that the aftermath of war would bring a recession of the kind that followed World War One, and during 1947 fears of a serious downturn in the economy of the United States worsened, reaching a peak of disquiet in the middle months of the year. Early in 1947 a meeting of the high level State-Navy-War Coordinating committee gave its estimate that 'the world will not be able to continue to buy US exports at the 1946-7 rate beyond another 12-18 months'. The enormous increase in productive capacity during the war years had made American business highly conscious and deeply concerned about export surpluses. Between the years 1945-47 foreign aid financed about one-third of American exports and with the economic plight of Europe making an increasing impression upon American planners, diplomats and politicians, the time was coming for a serious evaluation of future policies. This chimed in with the increasing anti-communism of the Administration. In May 1947 George Kennan left the National War College to become director of the Policy Planning Staff which had been established by Marshall when he had become Secretary of State earlier in the year. Kennan was unusual among the top officials in Washington in having had first hand experience of Soviet affairs. It was Kennan, of course, who wrote the famous article in *Foreign Affairs* 'The Sources of Soviet Conduct'⁵⁴ and although there were many strands of opinion and interest that went to the making of the Marshall Plan, certain of Kennan's ideas became an integral part of American policy. He was, for example, convinced that the announcement of large scale American economic assistance would do much to restore self-confidence in Western Europe; he was equally emphatic that only if the political leaders of Western Europe were willing to seize the opportunity would success follow. It was this aspect of the Marshall speech that Bevin grasped and that has been made so much of by the Bevin idolators. But Kennan later noted that leaving things to European initiative did not mean abdication of a general American responsibility. In a lecture Kennan gave on 18 December 1947 to the National War College he offered a sample of the Tablets in the homely style he sometimes used: 'It doesn't work if you just send the stuff over and relax. It has to be played politically, when it gets over. It has to be dangled, sometimes withdrawn, sometimes extended. It has to be a skillful operation.'⁵⁵ As a statement of American magnanimity in the world after 1945, it will not be bettered.

Aid under the original propositions advanced by Marshall was offered to the Soviet Union and its East European satellites as well as to the countries of Western Europe. Kennan was greatly in favour of such an offer being made. If the Russians rejected the offer, as was expected, then the division of Europe could be said to be their responsibility; on the other hand, if in the unlikely event of their acceptance then aid should be used in ways that would undermine Soviet domination of the national economies of the

Eastern bloc. The British were firmly against Soviet acceptance although naturally Bevin went through the motions of a conference in Paris with Molotov and Bidault. When the conference had more or less broken down Bevin told the American ambassador that it was an outcome he had 'anticipated and even wished for given my certainty that Molotov had come to Paris to sabotage our efforts' (Bullock, p. 421). There is one important episode during these early days that is extraordinarily illuminating for the attitudes of both American and British administrations. Just before the meeting in Paris with Molotov and Bidault there were three days of talks between the Americans and the British in London. Attlee, Dalton and Cripps were present as well as Bevin but it was the latter, and his advisers, who dominated the British side. On the first day Bevin in the morning and top level officials in the afternoon tried to persuade the Americans to recognise Britain as a special partner in whatever emerged from the Marshall discussions. Britain, Bevin argued, was on a different basis from other European countries and should not be 'lumped in' as just one more country. Bevin, supported by Attlee and his colleagues, did his best: he played the anti-Soviet card for all it was worth:

If the UK was considered just another European country, this would fit in with Russian strategy, namely, that the US would encounter a slump and withdraw from Europe; the UK would be helpless and out of dollars, and as merely another European country, the Russians, in command of the Continent, could deal with Britain in due course.

If this was a fair example of the debating ability of Bevin in top level discussions he was not likely to get very far with anyone whom he was not able to bully; but mostly, of course, the sophisticated reactionaries who serviced him from the Foreign Office wrote his briefs. In the present case neither Bevin and the British politicians nor the Civil Servants made any impression on Will Clayton, the Under-Secretary of State in the State Department, and the special relationship was firmly and unambiguously ruled out. Clayton made one or two concessions, notably that American dollars under the aid programme need not necessarily be used for purchases in the United States but could be allocated for food supplies from Canada and Latin America; and he encouraged Bevin to continue in the leadership of the West European movement. But that was all.⁵⁶

The Marshall Plan, with the institutional developments that came into being in order to implement its proposals, confirmed the division of Europe into East and West. By the autumn of 1947 the administrative structures for West European cooperation were rapidly being created. In April 1948 Truman signed the Economic Cooperation Act and this was followed by the establishment in Paris of the new permanent OEEC (Organisation for European Economic Cooperation). The recipients of

dollar aid—some **4,000** million was allocated for the first fifteen months—were Britain, France and the Benelux countries with Italy being added later. In all, **12,000** million dollars were allotted to Europe down to January **1951**.

The military equivalent to economic aid was the establishment of NATO in April **1949**. The establishment of NATO was the inevitable consequence of economic cooperation and it was confirmed, if not hastened, by a number of serious crises between Russia and the West, of which the Berlin blockade was the most spectacular. Certainly for the majority of public opinion in Western Europe the Berlin crisis greatly encouraged anti-Soviet attitudes and in Britain helped to achieve a notable consensus for Bevin's foreign policy which had not been present in the first two years or so of his tenure of the office of Secretary of State. Nye **Bevan**, for example, was sufficiently moved by the Berlin blockade to recommend sending tanks across the Soviet zone to back up the *airlift*.⁵⁷ The new political support, especially from large parts of the Labour Left, for Bevin's policies in Europe, must be briefly commented upon for it indicated changes of considerable importance for future political attitudes. As already noted there had been severe and continuous criticism of many parts of Bevin's general policy between the assumption of power by the Labour government in the summer of **1945** and for the next two years. The most publicised challenge was probably the debate on foreign policy in November **1946** when the demand for a 'socialist alternative' to existing policies was widely supported. R.H.S. Crossman, one of Bevin's most vociferous critics, made a vigorous attack (**18 November 1946**) on the government's 'drift into the American camp'; and in the voting on several amendments about **120** Labour MPs were not accounted for. Within a few months the 'Keep Left' was officially formed, mostly of members of what would later be called the *Tribune* group. Their aim in foreign policy was to work for a third force between the two superpowers and independent of both blocs.⁵⁸ It was Marshall's speech of **5 June 1947**, followed by the political initiatives discussed above, and against the background of a rising level of diplomatic conflict between the Soviet Union and the West, that began to alter quite dramatically the politics of the Left within the Parliamentary Labour Party, and outside in the wider movement. By January **1948** Crossman was announcing in the Commons his conversion from total opposition to Bevin's policies and his support for the American initiatives;⁵⁹ and in the American liberal weekly *The Nation* he condemned Russian hostility to Britain in Iran and again called for a third force with the socialist parties of Western Europe. Crossman, too, was foremost among those who changed their minds about the Truman administration and it was during this year, **1948**, that Harry Truman began to be seen as America's version of Clement Attlee. His re-election in the autumn of the year was greeted by many of the Parliamentary Left with

enthusiasm; and Tribune in particular became more anti-Soviet than at any time since the early period of the war. There was a much smaller group of Labour MPs—some like Zilliacus, a genuinely independent socialist—who remained totally opposed to Bevin and his policies; but in 1948 and 1949 most of the serious critics of Labour's approach to foreign affairs were expelled from the Labour Party.⁶⁰

With the establishment of NATO Bevin's most important contributions to the shaping of Britain's post-war foreign policies were ended. His health was poor throughout his period of office. Indeed, already in 1943, when the man who was to become his personal physician first examined Bevin, he found, so Bullock writes, 'not a sound organ in his body, apart from his feet. He later described Bevin, comprehensively, as suffering from angina pectoris, cardiac failure, arterio-sclerosis, sinusitis, enlarged liver, damaged kidneys and high blood pressure. He was overweight, smoked and drank more than was good for him, took no exercise and was a poor sleeper'.⁶¹ It was said by Lord Franks that Bevin's intellectual powers did not seem to be seriously affected until the last few months before his death.⁶² That may be. Bevin hung on to office until the very last and then had to be pushed out by a very reluctant and no doubt embarrassed Attlee. In late January 1951 Bevin was in hospital with pneumonia; he returned to the Foreign Office at the beginning of March and tried to resume work. One of the consultants who examined him at this time commented that, 'He was still alright as far down as his neck'.⁶³ It was on his 70th birthday that Bevin was told by Attlee that he would have to replace him, and all Bevin could say to his wife when he got home was, 'I've got the sack'. In spite of his undoubted toughness there was always a whining streak in Bevin. He died just over a month later on 14 April 1951.

There are some general comments to be made by way of conclusion. What needs again to be emphasised, since it is missed from most British writing on foreign affairs, is the hostility towards the Soviet Union that Attlee and Bevin brought to their new offices in the summer of 1945, and which for at least the next twelve months made them in certain quite crucial respects the front runners in world anti-communism; before the full implications of American superpower were understood by Congress and the Administration. With Bevin in particular anti-communism was always mixed with his acceptance of traditional imperialist ideology and practice: hence his support for the French in Indo-China, the Dutch in Indonesia and vigorous British military action in Malaya. But Bevin was not alone in his acceptance of an imperialist attitude: it was common to all the Labour leadership as Morrison showed so clearly when he followed Bevin as Foreign Secretary in 1951.

The second point that needs to be stressed, since again it is most

commonly omitted by British historians, is the developing subservience of Britain to the United States during the period of the Attlee administration. The Americans imposed strict conditions on the American loan which Keynes negotiated in December **1945**: that was crucial for Anglo-American relations. Sterling convertibility—a central condition of the loan—was implemented during the summer of **1947**, with disastrous effects upon the British reserves; and the financial crisis which followed was itself a very strong argument for the acceptance of the detailed terms of the Marshall Plan. British financial weakness in the post-war years—much assisted by the imperialist role that the Labour government insisted on pursuing—made the path of the American negotiators on any project considerably easier than it otherwise might have been; and although Bevin huffed and puffed on many an occasion—and naturally usually won some concessions—the Americans never had serious difficulty in persuading the British of the way to go. American historians, of all shades of opinion, are clear on the reliability, on basic issues, of the British in international affairs and above all in the unshakeable support for America's confrontation with the Soviet bloc. The siting of American **B 29** long-range bombers in East Anglia in mid **1948** was not widely publicised, but the so-called special relationship which first developed during the Attlee administration and which has much enlarged itself since, has increasingly consisted of the use by the United States of the island of Britain as the main American bomber base in Europe, its listening post and in our own day its missile site. American control has always been accepted, and until the most recent years the natives have not shown themselves to be unduly restless. When Attlee wrote in his Defence memorandum of 2 March **1946**: 'It may be we shall have to consider the British Isles as an eastern extension of a strategic area the centre of which is the American continent. . .' he was making a remarkable prophecy which has now come to pass.⁶⁴

The alternative to acceptance of the American loan of December **1945** would have been a much greater degree of austerity; the sharp reduction of overseas military expenditures and a much faster rate of demobilisation; the construction of something approaching a siege economy. A tough British response to the ending of American aid might have brought a positive response from the Americans: at least one that did not carry with it the subordination that was to exist. By the medium run the economy might have been in better shape. But the alternatives were never seriously considered. The acceptance of a greater austerity could only have been achieved had the Labour government been prepared to mobilise the British people on a popular and wide ranging democratic basis and, at the same time, have been willing to meet head on the full force of established property interests. It is historically inconceivable that the leading ministers, shaped and moulded by the labourist tradition, could ever have envisaged themselves in these roles. They were cautious men,

deferential to the conservative traditions of the country, respectful of property rights; and they were offered a way out. Dollars from America allowed living standards to be slowly improved and the world boom of the 1950s accelerated the change. The implementation of social welfare measures in the immediate post-war years was made possible by the large cushion of American aid; and the same dollars allowed both living standards to rise and a very high level of defence expenditure to be retained. These matters were not understood at the time, nor have they been since. The myths of the welfare state have been allowed to accumulate alongside the widening status of client to the United States, especially unrecognised by the greater part of the British people.

Ernest Bevin did not have to be converted to the traditional ways of Foreign Office thinking for they were already part of his political and emotional perceptions: the belief in the great power thesis; the acceptance of British imperialist rule wherever that was possible; a lack of realism in international economic affairs; and a comprehensive and all-embracing hostility towards the Soviet Union and all its works. Bevin's legacy to his successors included the problems of Aden, Kenya, British Guyana, Cyprus and Suez in the 1950s; the continued burden of a very heavy armament expenditure which was one of the causes of the relative decline of the British economy in the next thirty years; and the subordination of Britain within the military alliance directed by the United States. All the basic postulates of British foreign policy were agreed during Bevin's tenure of office—the entry into the Common Market being the only important new factor in the years which followed. Britain became an island on which American military technology came to be the overriding military presence. With the invasion of Grenada in 1983, and the siting of Cruise missiles in 1984, with no dual control key, the finger on the British trigger is now American.⁶⁵

NOTES

1. Examples are given in J. Saville, 'Labour and Income Distribution', *Socialist Register* (1965), pp. 147-162.
2. J. Grahl, 'The Liberal Revolution', *Marxism Today*, (June, 1983), p. 20.
3. A. Bullock, *Ernest Bevin. Foreign Secretary 1945-1951*, (1983), p. 86. Henceforth referred to as Bullock, vol. 3.
4. C.R. Attlee, *The Labour Party in Perspective*, (1937), pp. 30-1.
5. A. Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin. Vol. 1. Trade Union Leader 1881-1940*, (1960), p. 600.
6. Bullock, vol. 3, p. 109.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Bullock, vol. 1, p. 133 ff. discusses Bevin's role in the movement against intervention. For a more balanced account, S.R. Graubard, *British Labour and the Russian Revolution*, (OUP, 1956), esp. Chs. 4 and 5.
9. H. Dalton, *High Tide and After. Memoirs 1945-1960*, (1962), p. 157.
10. *TGWU Record*, January 1938, p. 154; quoted Bullock, vol. 1, p. 623.

11. 'the high-minded imperialism of the *Round Table*' is Bullock's phrase, vol. 1, p. 627. High-minded imperialists differ from the more earthy imperialists, who are concerned only with money, by concentrating upon high-minded words.
12. Bullock, vol. 1, p. 631, quoting Francis Williams, *Ernest Bevin*, (1952), p. 209.
13. Quoted Bullock, vol. 3, p. 96.
14. *Hansard*, August, 1945.
15. Quoted R. Miliband, *Parliamentary Socialism*, (1961), p. 333, n. 1.
16. Diana Cooper, *Trumpets from the Steep*, (Penguin, 1964), p. 205 ff.
17. Quoted Bullock, vol. 3, p. 97 from *The Memoirs of Lord Gladwyn*, (1972), pp. 175-6.
18. Bullock, vol. 3, p. 97.
19. Bullock, vol. 3, p. 32: 'The British found themselves caught in the crossfire and denounced by both sides and their sympathisers. In Indo-China this was for only a limited time and the British handed over with relief to the French in the spring of 1946.'
20. C. Thorne, 'Indo-China and Anglo-American Relations, 1942-1945', *Pacific Historical Review*, XLV, No. 1, (February, 1976), esp. p. 91 ff. For a somewhat different emphasis upon certain questions, W. LaFeber, 'Roosevelt, Churchill and Indo-China 1942-45', *American Historical Review*, LXXX (1975), pp. 1277-1295.
21. F.O. 371, PREM 3, 1800, quoted in Thorne, 'Indo-China and Anglo-American Relations, 1942-1945', p. 84.
22. G. Rosie, *The British in Vietnam. How the Twenty-Five Year War Began*, (1970), p. 37.
23. F.S.V. Donnison, *British Military Administration in the Far East*, (HMSO, 1956), p. 406.
24. Ellen J. Hammer, *The Struggle for Indo-China 1940-1955*, (Stanford, 1966), Ch. 6.
25. *Hansard*, 25 January 1946, col. 527.
26. Quoted in Rosie, *The British in Vietnam*, p. 92.
27. Harold Isaacs, an American journalist, quoted *ibid.*
28. *Hansard*, 28 January, 1946, col. 527.
29. For the reactions of some of the British Left, see Rosie, *The British in Vietnam*, Ch. 8; and see also Tom Driberg, *Ruling Passions*, (1978), pp. 225-6 where he gives a very casual account of a period during which he was a passionate critic of British intervention.
30. This emerges from most accounts of Anglo-Greek relations in this period: see, among the voluminous literature, R. Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, (Cambridge, 1979), Ch. 6; and Churchill in August 1944: 'The British nation felt friendly and chivalrous towards him [the Greek King] for his conduct at a difficult moment in both our histories', *The Second World War*, vol. VI, p. 100.
31. See the extraordinary statement by Fitzroy Maclean in *British Policy Towards Wartime Resistance in Yugoslavia and Greece*, (ed. P. Auty and R. Clogg, 1975), pp. 221-228; and much else in this important volume.
32. There is a select bibliography in the Auty and Clogg volume, quoted above in note 31; and see also a later volume, *Greece: From Resistance to Civil War*, ed. M. Sarafis, (Spokesman Books, 1980).
33. R. Clogg, ' "Pearls from Swine", the Foreign Office Papers, SOE and the Greek Resistance', in Auty and Clogg (eds), *op. cit.*, p. 174.
34. *Ibid.* pp. 173-4.
35. *Hansard*, 18 January, 1945.
36. *Hansard*, 19 January, 1945.
37. L.S. Stavrianos, 'The Greek Liberation Front (EAM): A Study in Resistance,

- Organisation and Administration', *Journal Modern History*, XXIV, No. 1, (March, 1952), p. 54 quoted by T. Gittin, 'Counter-Insurgency: Myth and Reality in Greece', *Containment and Revolution*, (1967), pp. 140-181. See also the important volume by Dominique Eudes, *The Kapetanos. Partisans and Civil War* (1972).
38. K. Zilliacus, *I Choose Peace*, (Penguin Special, 1949). The greater part of the memorandum quote in the text is reprinted, pp. 72-80.
 39. H. Richter, 'The Battle of Athens and the Role of the British', in M. Sarafis (ed.) *Greece: From Resistance to Civil War*, (1980), p. 78.
 40. M. Foot, *Aneurin Bevan. vol. 1: 1897-1945*, (1962), pp. 486-7.
 41. Bullock, vol. 3, p. 160.
 42. Not all the Labour Left, as is discussed below.
 43. Bullock, vol. 3, p. 242.
 44. *Ibid.*, p. 340.
 45. *Ibid.*, pp. 348-50.
 46. *Ibid.*, p. 352.
 47. K. Harris, *Attlee*, (1982), p. 286 ff; and J. Saville, 'C.R. Attlee: An Assessment', *Socialist Register* (1983), pp. 161-163.
 48. G. Kolko, *The Politics of War*, (New York, 1968); idem, *America and the Crisis of World Capitalism*, (Boston, 1974); Fred L. Block, *The Origins of international Economic Disorder*, (1977).
 49. K. Harris, *Attlee*, (1982), p. 298.
 50. Bullock, vol. 3, p. 399.
 51. The analysis by American historians of British policy is very differently presented. The literature is voluminous: see, for example, in addition to the books by Kolko and Block already quoted, J.L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, (OUP, 1982) with a very full bibliography.
 52. Bullock, vol. 3, p. 405.
 53. K.O. Morgan, *Labour in Power, 1945-1951*, (Oxford, 1984), p. 275.
 54. In *Foreign Affairs*, XXV, (July, 1947), pp. 566-582.
 55. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, pp. 37-8.
 56. Bullock, vol. 3, Ch. 10.
 57. Morgan, *Labour in Power*, p. 277.
 58. *Ibid.*, Ch. 6, passim.
 59. *Ibid.*, pp. 276-7.
 60. *Ibid.*, p. 238.
 61. Bullock, vol. 3, p. 288.
 62. *Ibid.*, pp. 727-8.
 63. *Ibid.*, p. 833.
 64. *Ibid.*, p. 242.
 65. The most exhaustive study of United States' bases in the United Kingdom is Duncan Campbell, *The Unsinkable Aircraft Carrier. American Military Power in Britain*, (1984). A summary of his conclusions, with a complete list of US military bases and facilities in Britain was published in the *CND monthly Sanity*, No. 5, (May, 1984).