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'Speak for England', Act for England: Labour's Leadership and British National Security Under the Threat of War in the Late 1930s

'Speak for England.' This appeal arose from the Conservative benches as Labour's deputy leader began to address the Commons on 2 September 1939. Germany's *Blitzkrieg* assault on Poland was under way, but Chamberlain's government had not declared war on Germany. 'Speak for England.' This article's thesis is that for the past two years, the Labour movement's moderate leadership and its major institutions had both spoken and acted on key strategic matters 'for England' — for Britain.

The thesis of this article is that, faced with rapid changes in international affairs and modern warfare during the late 1930s, most Labour leaders and most Labour institutions sought to serve effectively the people, principles, and institutions of their own constituencies — political and industrial. As such, before the Second World War began, and even while deeply distrusting Chamberlain's government, the Labour movement in both words and actions became concretely engaged in strengthening Britain's national security. This commitment and involvement during the late 1930s paved the way for Labour's much greater role throughout the 1940s in Churchill's War Coalition and Attlee's postwar Labour government.

This position differs from that of most analysts and contemporary critics, who date that shift as occurring during the Second World War or the postwar Labour government. Those interpretations associate that change with the Labour Party's holding national office and being influenced by the perceived responsibilities of power and by the traditionalists in the civil service and military. John Saville's recent work makes that approach clear.

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He asks: 'Why is it that all Labour governments since 1945 have accepted and operated a foreign policy that is basically the same as a Conservative government would follow?'[1] His answer is that:

> . . . the story must begin with the consensus in foreign affairs established during the Churchill coalition and carried over unchanged, into the era of the postwar Labour governments. This agreement on foreign politics was a new departure — for the Parliamentary Labour Party as well as for the broader Labour movement . . . Whatever the equivocations of the pre-1939 decade — and they were many — there was nothing comparable with the accord on fundamentals that emerged after 1940.[2]

Analyses of Labour's external policy at the outbreak of the Second World War range in interpretations and in focus. Much valuable work continues on the foreign and defence policy of the 1945–51 Labour governments. The emphasis is usually on Britain's role in the Cold War or on some concomitant theme of Britain's emerging economic-diplomatic-military ties to the United States, Britain's developing confrontation with the Soviet Union, or Britain's continuing imperial concerns. Most accounts explicitly or implicitly consider the Labour governments' policy to be based on Labour's wartime experience in the coalition government, on Labour's new problems in government (in both the coalition and postwar governments), or on the persistence of influence by Foreign Office officials and the Chiefs of Staff.[3] This article does not seek to presage the Cold War themes but rather to examine the Labour movement's perceptions of national security issues prior to the Second World War. This article also examines much broader features pertaining to national security and places the Labour movement's evolving policy more firmly in the context of national security issues of the 1930s than do some earlier works which recognized the Labour Party's and TUC's anti-nazi foreign and defence positions by September 1939.[4]

It is the contention of this paper that in the late 1930s, most Labour leaders and institutions developed a national security perspective that accorded neither to the 'socialist' nor 'traditional' model. Instead, they perceived their evolving position as the best means to serve their fundamental interests — their interests in social democracy (built on a British liberal/radical basis), in their own political and economic institutions, and in the people they served (both working-class people and the

British populace as a whole). Labour would apply this concept throughout the complicated and fluid era of the late 1930s on into the 1950s. This was a distinctly Labour concept. It emerged from Labour's leaders and institutions, with their dynamic, cumbersome, pluralistic, and generally open decision-making process. It represented Labour's strengths, not any ideological or moral weakness. This thesis complements recent investigations of the wartime coalition by Kevin Jefferys, Stephen Brooke, and others which stress Labour's integrity and control over its own domestic policies. They conclude that Labour was not blurring its policies into a wartime consensus with the Conservatives.[5] T.D. Burridge has also demonstrated that Labour played an effective wartime role in foreign and strategic policies, especially concerning post-war planning. Labour was not a captive of the Conservatives.[6]

The ambiguous terms 'national security' and 'Labour movement' encourage a wide-ranging inquiry in this article. 'National security' analysts lack agreement on the term's precise definition, though it includes elements of foreign affairs, military preparedness, and a nation's domestic social-economic-political strength and cohesiveness. Useful to this study is Barry Buzan's emphasis on the interrelationship of the individual, group, national, and international parameters of 'national security'.[7] The 'Labour movement' will be used as a common descriptive term to encompass the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress (TUC), including their affiliated unions, although these institutions did not always work in conformity.

Even now in the late twentieth century when national security analysts abound, governments and parties have difficulty making coherent the multifarious aspects of national security. In the late 1930s, the relationship of specific matters (foreign policy, the three fighting services, rearmament, war preparedness, and civil defence) affected many economic, social, partisan, and ideological issues. My thesis is that, overall, most official Labour institutions and leaders, by whatever means each reached decisions, moved the Labour movement into a fairly coherent position on national security prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. This involved many elements of the Labour movement: the national party in parliamentary opposition, many local Labour parties in municipal office, and some trade unions and the TUC increasingly involved in economic and policy activities affecting British national security.

This article will focus on the moderate leaders who guided Labour institutions into pronouncements and actions on several national security issues. This agonizing and cumbersome reappraisal faced intense criticism within Labour from pacifists and from some leftists. Their alternate but ultimately futile approaches are vital to a clear understanding of Labour in the 1930s, and some references to them are made at critical junctures throughout this article. Although they cannot be explored adequately within its confines, many other excellent works develop the positions of those individuals and groups.[8]

One major interpretative approach toward foreign policy long applied to Labour focuses on 'traditionalist' versus 'socialist' principles.[9] The 'traditionalist' approach to British foreign policy involved diplomatic flexibility, balance of power, imperialism, and naval supremacy, while the 'socialist' principles embraced internationalism (including supporting the League of Nations), international working-class solidarity (including supporting international socialist organizations and the Soviet Union), anti-capitalism anti-imperialism, and anti-militarism. Those 'socialist' fundamentals became irrelevant in the late 1930s since, for instance, no international working-class or socialist unity existed, not even western European 'social-democratic' unity, on foreign policy or international security.

More significantly, elements of the Labour movement became engaged in their functional roles on the domestic front in national security issues. Examinations of *foreign policy* have focused on Labour's *pronouncements*, whereas an examination of *national security* must include both Labour's *pronouncements* and *actions*. Pronouncements — parliamentary speeches and votes, party and TUC resolutions and policy statements, election tactics — are important and will be examined in this article, for they reflect changing views and demonstrate how the Labour movement remained united during the fractious 1930s. Actions are equally significant. Labour's actions on civil defence, rearmament production, and the national volunteer service involved trade unions and municipal Labour authorities deliberately engaged in major projects affecting defence preparations. This was done within Britain's evolving pattern of functional integration within the triangular relationship of government, employers, and unions. Unlike the often polemical and ideologically framed pronouncements on foreign policy, Labour's actions and pronouncements[10]

on national security confronted the increasing possibility of war in the late 1930s.

In exploring that reassessment and realignment regarding national security, this article is organized into four sections. The first surveys shifts in Labour's concepts of disarmament/rearmament and explores Labour leaders' and institutions' transition from their general support of internationalism to specific proposals for alliances. The second examines Labour's evolving proposals on military equipment, personnel, organization, and strategy. The third investigates Labour's involvement in related homefront matters of civil defence, the national voluntary service scheme, and conscription. The fourth provides a concluding analysis.

I

Even in the early 1930s, Labour's noted pacifism in its policies and statements reflected the circumstances, moods, and political tactics of the Labour movement but not necessarily the considered judgments of most leaders and of the Labour institutions. By mid-decade, Labour leaders began re-evaluating the movement's positions on defence and foreign policy.

The First World War and its aftermath had stunned the British public and the Labour movement. Appalled by high casualties and then the peace settlement, most Labour activists felt the government had manipulated them with wartime dilution of labour and merely token political participation, then exploited Labour through the coupon election and postwar recession. A decade later during the Great Depression, Labour endured similar frustrations. Within the three months from the 1931 August crisis to the disastrous October elections, the party lost office, lost several leaders, lost most of its parliamentary component, and lost its attempt to cultivate an image of competent governmental administration. Labour's international and strategic positions, though, were not discredited; they coincided well with the views of the public and of the new National government.[11] Labour wanted no new wars, either to restructure Britain's or the world's political, social, or economic systems, or to improve the nation's strategic position. The main military enemy in 1932 was not another country, it was war itself.[12]

Labour enthusiastically supported the League-sponsored

Disarmament Conference (1932–4), which the second Labour government helped initiate and whose president was its respected former foreign secretary, Arthur Henderson. As the Disarmament Conference stalled in 1933, Labour's disarmament rhetoric in by-elections proved temporarily popular,[13] and the party conference resolved to call a general strike in case of war. Labour also demanded the abolition of private firms' manufacturing and exporting armaments, even prodding a Royal Commission study, although its 1936 report disappointed Labour.[14] Yet the 1934 party conference quietly dropped the call for an anti-war general strike, and by the late 1930s Labour was urging rearmament directed by an effective ministry of supply.

In the mid-1930s, Labour agonizingly re-evaluated its positions on war. While still concerned about eliminating military and economic causes of war, Labour began confronting how Britain should use its military to prevent or to win a war. Labour's wavering pronouncements at mid-decade are demonstrated by some familiar episodes. At the 1935 annual conference, Ernest Bevin's stormy denunciation of George Lansbury's pacifism accented the party's resolution that Britain and the League of Nations oppose aggression in the Italian–Ethiopian war, even by military means. Labour's perspective on the Spanish Civil War (1936–9) mostly reflected ideological and 'foreign policy' concerns: denunciations of non-intervention and the concurrent rallying cry of 'Arms for Spain', appeals for humanitarian aid, condemnations of fascist aggression, and support for the broad-based leftist government of the Spanish Republic. While most Labour leaders ensured the civil war did not fragment their movement,[15] some realized during the crisis that wars do happen and that Labour must re-examine national security issues. However, from 1934 through 1936, Labour voted in Parliament against the government's service estimates, which contained rearmament expenditures, in order to demonstrate the party's opposition to the government's rearmament policy and inadequate support of the League of Nations. This parliamentary tactic was bitterly criticized by the General Council and some party executive members at special joint meetings in May 1935 and March 1936.

The next year was different. Without such a joint meeting in 1937, the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) reversed itself and abstained on the service estimates, thereby demonstrating tacit approval of rearmament.[16] This symbolic shift was consolidated

later that year when both the TUC and the party conference accepted their executives' policy statement that a future Labour government would need rearmament if current international problems continued.[17] What had changed between 1931 and 1937? The Disarmament Conference was dead; the League of Nations had failed to stop Japanese and Italian aggression; the Spanish Civil War was raging; Nazi Germany was rearming; France had a Popular Front government; and the Soviet Union was advocating a Popular Front foreign policy. Both Nazi Germany and authoritarian Austria had destroyed democracy, including their socialist parties and their independent trade unions.

Labour had changed too. Successful in the 1934 municipal elections, the London Labour Party led by Herbert Morrison now controlled London's government. The 1935 general election, in which Labour won only a disappointing 154 seats, nevertheless tripled the party's representation in Parliament. It also tripled to eighteen the number of Labour MPs with wartime military service (still proportionately much lower than Conservatives) and included more MPs with prior Labour ministerial experience in defence departments. The new party leader and former infantry major, Clement Attlee,[18] formed a defence committee consisting primarily of ex-servicemen, with Hugh Dalton, A.V. Alexander, and most other members favouring rearmament. Following the PLP's 1937 decision not to oppose the service estimates, the defence committee actively studied air rearmament, air defence, and some army and naval concerns, thus better preparing Labour for parliamentary debates and for private consultations with cabinet ministers.[19] Some ex-Liberals, who had joined the postwar party for military and foreign policy reasons, now as Labour MPs advocated rearmament. Among them, H.B. Lees-Smith was elected to the PLP executive, though Josiah Wedgwood, Seymour Cocks and R.T. Fletcher had no effective power base within the movement. Also, proportionately fewer pacifists were elected as Labour MPs in 1935 than in 1929 or 1931.[20] Although some vocal Labour MPs, notably Stafford Cripps and Aneurin Bevan, nevertheless feverishly insisted that Labour oppose every national security action of the capitalist National government and that Labour link its foreign policy to that of Soviet Russia, they failed to command majority support for their 'socialist' foreign policy.

Many other Labour agencies were also focusing more intensely on international and defence issues by mid-decade. The party's National Executive Committee (NEC) and its policy committee were increasingly concerned with difficult international issues. Through them, Labour's new defence committee processed a major 1939 policy statement, 'Labour and defence', to be discussed later. The TUC's General Council continued expanding its influence within the union movement. Several union leaders advocated rearmament: Walter Citrine (the TUC's determined general secretary), Ernest Bevin (Transport and General Workers' Union), George Hicks (MP, Builders' Union), James Walker (MP, Iron and Steel Union), and others. The General Council's most powerful subcommittee — the finance and general purposes committee — handled most issues affecting defence, civil defence, and rearmament. Moreover, the National Council of Labour (consisting of representatives of the General Council, the party's NEC, and the PLP) co-ordinated many party and TUC policies in the 1930s, including those on defence and international affairs.[21] Thus, institutionally the Parliamentary Labour Party, the NEC, the General Council, and the National Council of Labour were all more willing and able to make decisions on difficult national security issues.

More so than Conservatives and Liberals, Labour viewed international affairs and war from an economic perspective. International tensions, Labour asserted, were rooted in economic and imperialist issues.[22] Labour's foreign contacts, moreover, were usually through international socialist, union, and economic institutions (such as the International Labour Organization). British components were active in the Labour and Socialist International (LSI), the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU), and the International Trade Union Secretariats. British influence in them grew after the German and Austrian parties and unions became exiled and weak. British party and union leaders who visited foreign countries often did so as fraternal delegates to party or union congresses. The TUC also actively supported unions within the British empire and commonwealth. Many current Labour MPs and trade union leaders had served during the Great War on the home front in trade unions or in vital domestic employment. Labour agreed with the National government which in the 1930s considered Britain's 'economic stability . . . as a fourth arm of defence'.[23]

Even during the Depression, Labour did not advocate rearmament to stimulate the economy or even to relieve unemployment, except by occasional references to Royal Dockyards. Instead, most Labour commentators stressed that armament expenditures diverted the economy from useful functions, that any rearmament boom would be followed by a traumatic economic readjustment and higher unemployment, or that rearmament would militarize the economy as in contemporary Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.[24]

By the late 1930s, Labour developed three basic national security premises concerning a future war: first, that Britain must not fight alone; second, that Britain must initially defend itself (including its empire and world trade) and then use naval and air forces on the offensive, thereby incurring few British casualties; and third, that the British economy must survive and thus sustain the ultimate victory. Labour considered these tenets mutually reinforcing, and they agreed with the National government's general policy. Britain needed other countries to help deter an aggressor or to help win in war. Would the amorphous League of Nations provide this, or did Britain need to ally with specific countries against Britain's strategic threat? Moreover, was the empire a strategic asset or a liability?

Labour figures seldom questioned the empire from a strategic perspective. For decades, though, Labour had grappled with colonial issues, as scholars are increasingly demonstrating.[25] Most Labour leaders assumed the empire was important economically for Britain and should be defended from aggression. Nevertheless, Labour did not want to appear to be supporting continued 'capitalist imperialism'. Purely strategic imperial issues, however, attracted little Labour attention in the interwar years, even in the late 1930s, though later, in the wartime and postwar years, they became significant. Social, economic, and occasional political issues continued to be the focus of Labour's critics of Britain's imperial policies — especially by Charles Roden Buxton, Leonard Woolf, and others of Labour's Advisory Committee on Imperial Questions.[26] Many Labour critics of imperialism shared a capitalist-imperialist view on the basic cause of modern wars. Establishing socialist governments in the metropoles was the fundamental solution, but in the short run, international peace would be obtained best through alleviating international economic rivalry affecting colonies. Pronounce-

ments by various individual Labour figures or Labour institutions advocated ending the preferential system of the Ottawa Agreements, turning British and other colonies into League of Nations' mandates, or transferring some other colonies or areas into mandates administered by Germany, Italy, and Japan (with concurrent demilitarization of transferred areas).[27] From 1935 to 1938, the British government explored colonial appeasement and in early 1938 made a formal overture to Hitler. Even though the normally anti-appeaser Bevin supported that British initiative, by then it appalled most Labour critics of imperialism, and in 1939 both Cripps and Arthur Creech Jones renewed their denunciation of colonial appeasement.[28] The dominions were essential to collective security, especially in relation to a possible war with Japan, but Labour recognized that their support of Britain was uncertain.[29]

During that second half of the 1930s, Labour revised its concept of allies. Following the Great War, Labour insisted that Britain neither act alone diplomatically nor fight alone militarily. Both points emphasized Labour's theoretical internationalism and its pronounced military policy of mutual armament reductions. With which countries should Britain co-operate? Labour's answers were inconsistent. Labour's earliest apprehensions that the League of Nations merely perpetuated the victorious wartime alliance had changed into general support of the League by 1929.[30] In the 1930s, Labour urged League action against Japan and Italy.

The Labour movement began re-examining its commitment to the dying League of Nations in the traumatic spring of 1936 — the period of the League's ineffective sanctions against Italy, Germany's remilitarization of the Rhineland, and the PLP's controversial decision to continue to vote against the service estimates. On 3 March 1936 the NEC's international subcommittee, including Dalton and Attlee, thoroughly discussed a provocative eighteen-point paper prepared by the subcommittee's secretary, William Gillies. It raised tough questions the party had to confront: the need to identify areas vital for Britain to defend, the need for alliances, the need for collective military planning, and so forth.[31] Thus, some Labour leaders were probing the practical ramifications of defence and security.

Later in March, responding to Germany's remilitarization of the Rhineland and Hitler's peace proposal, LSI and IFTU

leaders met in London and accepted the concept of regional security pacts. This was acknowledged through a National Council of Labour pronouncement[32] and through the LSI executive's resolution that 'collective security be strengthened' by all European countries opposed to war: 'in particular a close co-ordination of the policy of Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union'. (Significantly, none of those countries' governments contained a Labour or socialist party with LSI membership.) The stress was always on regional agreements authorized by the League of Nations and open to all members abiding by non-aggression; alliances modelled on pre-First World War pacts were disdainfully rejected.[33]

A flurry of party committees heatedly debated Labour's role in the fluid international situation. At a joint meeting of the leaders of the PLP, party executive, and the TUC's General Council in September 1936, Dalton and Bevin demanded a thorough re-examination of the Labour movement's position.[34] It produced a statement on 'International Policy and Defence' which was hotly debated and overwhelmingly accepted at both the TUC and the party conference the following year. Outside public scrutiny, however, the party was coming to grips with alliances and international socialism.

Some Labour figures were realizing by 1937 that small, vulnerable European nations sought neutrality or even accommodation with Germany to avoid a hopeless war. The international realities and these practical national security considerations were being faced by continental socialist parties as well as by Labour. Socialist parties in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, and Switzerland all rejected military sanctions against Germany.[35] In 1939 the LSI's general secretary, Friedrich Adler, rashly tried to make the LSI a tightly disciplined international force, speaking in the expected crisis of war with one voice — his own. Labour helped block that,[36] for the Labour Party had always considered the LSI to be primarily a socialist forum; Labour supported its own goals through the LSI. Within the LSI, Labour now clearly recognized that no international socialist unity existed on foreign affairs and defence. Labour discerned that Britain itself must determine its own workable approach to collective security.

By 1937, too, some Labour leaders began favouring an alliance bloc, a concept Labour had long detested. The alliance

clearly must include France, whose foreign policy Labour had generally criticized. In 1938, France lost her Popular Front government and reversed many of its recent Popular Front domestic programmes; moreover, France had a weak trade union movement and a collapsing socialist party. The alliance should also include the USSR, despite its purges and Labour's rejection of a British popular front in co-operation with the Communist Party, and perhaps even also authoritarian Poland. The League was dead; by 1939 Labour urged *Realpolitik*: seek alliances or co-ordination with any countries having the compatible policy of opposing Germany.[37] Concurrently, Labour needed to advocate a coherent British defence policy capable of attracting allies.

II

Re-evaluation of the fighting forces — air force, navy, and army — posed complications for Labour: indeed, for Britain as a whole. These involved the sometimes mutually incompatible issues of strategy, accommodation with potential allies, and internal British political and economic concerns.[38] Labour urged coherence in national security planning.

Air warfare was the key. Most British advocates stressed its cost-effectiveness, both in some imperial 'police-keeping' duties and in major wars. Air warfare was considered Britain's most decisive way to take offensive actions within an enemy's territory, yet Britain itself could receive destructive air attacks. The navy provoked less emotion. Labour supported efforts to keep it sufficiently strong — because of British maritime tradition, because of Labour's liberal heritage which favoured this technological and professional arm over a large conscript army,[39] and because of Labour's current concern to defend British territory and its world trade. The army was the step-child. The government and the army wavered about its role (whether it should fight in Europe, defend the empire, or just defend Britain) and about its composition (a small professional army, a conscript army, or a professional army augmented by a large volunteer Territorial Army).[40] Civil defence added a major new dimension: Britain must keep its economy functioning while defending against or coping with enemy air attacks or invasion.

Those military complexities accentuated Labour's repeated

calls for a Ministry of Defence. Labour believed the existing Committee on Imperial Defence, even with Sir Thomas Inskip's appointment as the first minister for the co-ordination of defence in 1936, gave insufficient strategic direction. Attlee, who had long advocated a Ministry of Defence, ultimately developed the party position accepted within the comprehensive statement 'Labour and Defence' at the party's 1939 conference.[41] The proposed minister would preside over a defence council consisting of the appropriate ministers from the army, navy, air force, civil defence, and supply, and he would also be on a revised Committee of Imperial Defence co-ordinating Britain's military, imperial, and pertinent financial and economic policies.

Some analysis of Labour's concerns about strategy, size, and procurement is necessary in relation to each of the three branches.

Air power demanded the most attention. Even though the British government had begun considering general rearmament in 1932, Nazi Germany's developing air threat soon riveted governmental and public attention on air warfare. Neville Chamberlain and the Treasury forced the government to prioritize its rearmament efforts. It authorized the most extensive expansion for the air force because financially it was considered the most cost effective, economically it would disturb the country the least, and politically it was the most palatable. After Britain expanded its bomber-based air force but failed to maintain its announced goal of parity with Germany, in early 1938 the government surreptitiously refocused on home defence and shifted to cheaper, more easily built fighter planes.[42]

In the 1930s no one knew how best to use an air force to protect Britain. Many echoed Stanley Baldwin's famous 1932 warning, 'The bomber will always get through.' Although Labour had long advocated abolishing national air forces and internationalizing civil aviation, by 1936 it recognized that those concepts were unfeasible. Air rearmament was the decisive issue as the PLP shifted from opposing to abstaining on the service estimates in 1937. Yet, what air strategy should Britain adopt? While Labour officially formulated no strategic air policy, generally its spokesmen agreed with the announced governmental strategy of deterrence. This optimistic plan stressed prevention of war, but it required that Britain publicly assert it would retaliate by using the same mass bombing which Labour

criticized as so uncivilized. No one knew if fighters could defend Britain against bombers, and the secret radar system was still in its infancy.

Labour entered into the swirling air warfare controversies affecting both procurement and strategy. Shortly after the 1937 decisions of the PLP to abstain on service estimates and of the party conference and the TUC to support rearmament, the PLP began criticizing Britain's laggard air rearmament and air defence. Attlee privately discussed this with Chamberlain in January 1938 and subsequently sent the new prime minister an eleven-point note. Refusing overtures for merely informal discussions with the air minister, Attlee demanded an immediate confidential 'investigation by qualified and independent persons' or Labour would initiate a full parliamentary debate.[43] Receiving no assurances, the PLP pressed unsuccessfully for an investigation.[44] Attlee then entrusted Dalton with directing Labour's efforts on air rearmament. Meanwhile, some alarmed air force officers were surreptitiously providing detailed information to Dalton, as well as to Winston Churchill and to Archibald Sinclair of the Liberals.[45] Dalton passed it on to Labour's defence committee, where young researcher W.A. Nield also eagerly combed other public records to provide detailed, insightful memoranda on air rearmament problems. Although Churchill was privately in contact with Chamberlain and was publicly urging changes, the Labour Party had the staff, the desire, and the formal position as opposition to press for a parliamentary debate and vote on an inquiry. Even though Chamberlain appointed a new minister of air in mid-May, Dalton soon thereafter made a powerful Commons speech detailing problems in aircraft production, the air ministry's internal organization, anti-aircraft guns and other aspects of ground defences, and air raid precautions.[46] Treated by Chamberlain as a vote of censure, the motion for an inquiry was defeated. Labour intensified both its private and public efforts throughout the summer and fall, especially when Britain's defence unreadiness was revealed by the September Czechoslovakian crisis. By mid-1939, however, Labour critics realized that the government was making significant improvements.[47]

To accelerate rearmament, Labour increasingly advocated a ministry of supply. Revising arguments criticizing the inefficiency and profiteering of private manufacture of arms, Labour

at its 1939 conference stressed the need for more coherent planning and production, citing recent procurement problems. Labour proposed the new ministry operate some armament factories, regulate existing private firms, but *not* control the work force in peacetime. Labour wanted no repetition of the Great War experiences.[48]

The TUC believed that individual unions, or groups of affected unions, should negotiate any new conditions arising from rearmament.[49] The building unions, building firms, and government created a Joint Consultative Committee in 1937 which produced satisfactory settlements. Air rearmament, however, faced difficulties in the engineering trades. The pivotal Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU) had felt itself abused by the Great War's work-place agreements and postwar slump, and in the early 1930s its members suffered serious unemployment and total pay reductions. This craft union still cherished the 'new model union' approach of bargaining from its own strength. A decentralized union, it used a cumbersome decision-making process and often quarrelled with other unions and with the TUC.[50] The AEU adamantly resisted negotiations on diluting Labour in armament production, for it misleadingly claimed enough unemployed engineers existed to be absorbed by rearmament. Despite this official AEU stance, gradually in factory after factory new recruitment and dilution of labour occurred, which the AEU finally acknowledged in a national contract in summer 1939.[51] The process inadvertently hurt Britain strategically, for the AEU's relative weakness in the Midlands and South encouraged firms to expand aircraft production there, geographically more vulnerable to enemy bombing than the North and Scotland.[52] Meanwhile, the AEU rejected efforts by other unions containing engineers for joint negotiations with management, and the AEU acerbically accused the General Council of interfering in the union's right to negotiate. The AEU's president sometimes defended its opposition to rearmament on political grounds, recalling that the AEU told the British government that the union would facilitate rearmament if the government allowed arms sales to the Spanish Republic in the Civil War.[53] The AEU's members, afterall, were considered quite leftist, and many actively supported the Spanish Republic through volunteer efforts and even some job action.[54]

What was the General Council's role? There were two levels,

industrial and political. On certain industrial matters, could the General Council initiate a process to which an individual union objected? Yes, believed Citrine, whose own power base lay solely in the TUC. Equally important was Bevin, TUC chairman in 1936–7 and secretary of Britain's largest union, the TGWU, itself with many members in aircraft, motor, and general engineering firms. Bevin agreed with the AEU's position that the General Council should not intervene without the AEU's consent, even though Bevin disliked the AEU's intransigence.[55]

On political matters, the General Council claimed that the TUC represented union and working-class interests on both industrial and political issues, while recognizing the Labour Party's joint claim on politics.[56] In 1935–6 the General Council wanted the PLP to bargain its support in Parliament for rearmament in exchange for the government's pledge to support collective security. Whenever the General Council met with Chamberlain on the industrial aspects of rearmament, Citrine always urged the political point of collective security.[57] So, when dealing with the Labour Party or the government, the General Council linked rearmament and foreign policy. Yet when dealing with the TUC's constituent unions, the General Council insisted on their separation. Frankly, this was manipulative. Citrine argued at the 1937 congress that the accepted policy statement supported current rearmament.[58] Thereafter, Citrine attacked union rearmament critics for seeking to reverse a joint TUC-party political decision, insisting that the AEU wrongly mixed the political issue of rearmament with industrial trade union issues.[59] Citrine and the General Council thus branded rearmament as either an industrial or political issue, whichever served their immediate interest. The Labour movement actually revealed weaknesses here. Despite the TUC's growing power, it could not always influence component unions such as the AEU; moreover, the AEU failed to prevent the dilution of labour affecting engineers. Yet, through the advocacy of the General Council and of many union leaders, the union movement became increasingly committed to strengthening the nation's defence.

Labour thus supported expanded production for air defence and air warfare, which raised related issues of production types and air strategy. Strategic or long-range bombing was one key approach. This was advocated by some Labour leaders such as Dalton, Attlee, and Fred Montague (former Labour under-

secretary for air), and Labour newspapers sometimes carried articles by Air Commodore L.E.O. Charlton, a leading strategic bombing proponent.[60] But Montague early raised a key issue: an internationalist, collective-security policy should recognize no automatic allies; thus Britain needed long-range bombers which could reach deep into Europe from British bases (and not necessarily from Belgium or French bases). However, Britain's additional efforts to build fighters, medium-range bombers, and naval planes hampered its production of strategic bombers.[61] In 1938–9, Labour's defence committee's air subcommittee grew alarmed that despite public declarations, British bombers lacked the range for strategic bombing. Those bombers apparently would be used to attack nearby enemy air bases and to provide tactical air support for army ground operations, but Labour was opposing such a massive British continental army commitment. In letters, memoranda, and personal contacts, Dalton implored the air minister to strengthen Britain's strategic capacity to bomb areas throughout Germany, including the Ruhr, the Black Forest, and distant Berlin. Dalton, Arthur Greenwood, and others hoped the Soviet air force would support the anti-German effort, though the British air ministry correctly discounted its effectiveness in 1939.[62]

When war came in September, many Labour leaders wanted Britain to unleash the RAF on Germany to help Poland defend itself (although that was unfeasible), to station more air squadrons in France (although the government feared losing them there), and to begin strategic bombing of German military and civilian areas (although the Chamberlain government was still practising deterrence and hoping neither side would initiate strategic bombing for fear of retaliation).[63] Moreover, John Anderson, Minister of Home Security, privately told Herbert Morrison that if Britain began bombing Germany and even crippled the Luftwaffe, thus saving London from air bombardment, that action would provoke a German land attack on France which might crush Britain's only remaining continental ally.[64] Nevertheless, Labour's impatience with Chamberlain's timorous air strategy once war began partly influenced Labour to initiate the ouster of Chamberlain and bring Labour into Churchill's bolder War Coalition in 1940.

Labour's public declarations for home defence more closely corresponded with the government's later focus on fighter planes

and anti-aircraft guns. Doubters, though, asserted such claims of air defence and air raid precautions would lull the public to accept war, thus encouraging Britain to wage war. Yet rearmament advocates such as Walker and Lees-Smith joined anti-rearmament figures such as Morrison to place priority on fighter planes, effective ground anti-aircraft guns and crews, and even balloon barrages.[65] Defending Britain's population and economy appealed to the public and to Labour's constituencies, and on this Labour made its most telling criticisms of military unpreparedness, especially following the chaotic war scare during the Munich crisis. Air warfare was the central public defence concern, a concern Labour well articulated by the eve of war.

The navy posed no such controversial problems for Labour, which perceived no new naval questions comparable with those about air rearmament, air raid precautions, and conscription. Labour organizations presented no extra-parliamentary pronouncements on basic naval issues, so the PLP's frontbench statements expressed Labour's public position. Throughout the decade, the party always asserted it supported an adequate navy within a collective security framework to defend Britain from invasion, defend its empire, protect its economy and world trade, and blockade the enemy. In the 1931 Parliament, Labour had generally opposed even modest naval expenditures, stressing financial restraint during the Depression, praising the second Labour government's Treaty of London on naval limitations, and encouraging the ongoing Disarmament Conference. Labour did criticize the 1935 Anglo–German Naval Pact for legitimizing nazi German rearmament and encouraging a naval arms race.[66]

By mid-decade, Japan's Asian expansion, the Italian–Ethiopian War, and the Spanish Civil War all reinforced Labour's view that even a stronger British navy alone could never protect worldwide British interests: collective security was a necessity. When pro-rearmament A.V. Alexander returned to Parliament in 1935, this former and future First Lord of the Admiralty provided Labour with a knowledgeable, experienced, and often bipartisan spokesman on topics of naval personnel, procurement, and strategy. Usually supported by Churchill, Alexander by 1938 advocated more ships, especially light destroyers for anti-submarine activities and cruisers for flexible global operations. Less concerned about capital ships for use against Germany and Italy, he urged Britain to develop modern

ones to compete with Japan, although he did not stress aircraft carriers. While constantly proclaiming that the Royal Navy itself could handle Germany and Italy, Alexander insisted collective security was essential to allow Britain and future allies to divert sufficient naval forces to the Pacific. Alexander believed Britain needed stronger naval forces in the North Sea, the central Mediterranean, and the Pacific.[67] Even so, in late 1938 Alexander complacently assured Labour's defence committee that unlike air rearmament, naval rearmament was proceeding satisfactorily.[68]

Land forces posed different problems. Labour continued the British liberal/radical opposition to a large standing army, partly because conscription violated individuals' rights and because an army could be used internally against its own citizens.[69] More particularly, Labour believed that the military could be used to break strikes and intimidate workers, as had happened sporadically from 1919 to 1926; and army actions in India and the empire often consisted of domestic maintenance of order.[70]

Labour had no true military constituency, but the movement's main interests were the interrelated ones of improvement of soldiers' conditions and pensions. This reflected both trade union and local MP concerns, but also they were major bipartisan issues supported by pro-army Tories.[71] Labour's additional call for the democratization of forces was also a radical/socialist position reflecting a distrust of a class-based regular army with officers from the upper and middle classes and with rankers from the 'poorer classes who have failed to "make good"' in civilian employment.[72] Labour viewed the Territorial Army in the same way, while also criticizing it for its cost and inefficiency.[73] Labour was so concerned with this democratization of forces that, as a result of Attlee's prodding and efforts, this formed the first of the three-part policy statement, 'Labour and Defence', which the party accepted at its May 1939 conference. It insisted that 'a democratic state must have democratic forces to serve it', and improvements were needed in recruitment, pay, career opportunities, leisure time, and redress of grievances for the rankers, and for officers more open recruitment, better pay, and promotion based on merit.[74]

Labour overwhelmingly rejected the military policy of using a large army for a European continental commitment. Until the mid-1930s, the issue was only hypothetical. As exemplified by the second Labour government's modest actions, Labour

favoured modernization and mechanization of the small professional army, yet contradictorily opposed such new costs.[75] Labour generally accepted the standard British strategy of defending British territory, empire, and trade routes, and of supporting future allies, primarily France. By the 1930s France stressed land defence behind its new Maginot Line, but Britain was uncertain about its army's mission. Sharing the dominant postwar British wish that Britain never again allow the slaughter of so many soldiers in futile offensive actions, Labour asserted that, should there be a continental commitment, Britain provide only a small defensive force. Labour also shared the mistaken belief that the Maginot Line could be held by France, bolstered by only a few British divisions. Thus even late in the decade, most Labour figures opposed conscription in wartime and especially during peace, believing manpower would be better used in the productive work force.[76]

Labour also warned that military conscription could be manipulated to pressure workers and unions into docility.[77] No one knew if air bombardment would ignite social unrest, panic, or revolution, but in 1937 the British military theoretician (and fascist), J.F.C. Fuller, advocated a conscript army to maintain order within Britain.[78] Labour preferred the analysis of Basil Liddell Hart, advisor to the minister of war and military correspondent to the *Times*. Through Dalton, Liddell Hart met occasionally with *Labour* leaders in late 1938. Liddell Hart generally believed during 1937–40 that France's conscript army could hold the Maginot Line, thus Britain should maintain only a small professional army while concentrating on its air force and navy and on war production. Labour referred to his authority to bolster the party's own opposition to a large British army even in wartime.[79] Labour understood the morale and diplomatic repercussions of Munich, and later of Prague, much more clearly than it did the military repercussions, and continued to formulate its position of favouring a small professional army based on its other strategic and domestic interests.

III

The Labour movement also became intensely engaged in many controversial facets of war preparedness within Britain.

As Britain awakened after Munich, the government began planning a national voluntary service. This would co-ordinate civil defence and the home front in case of war, and it would both register citizens for civil defence services and list individuals whose essential civilian jobs would defer them from military service. A furious controversy arose within Labour.[80] Some denounced it as a first step toward industrial and military conscription, as a growth of state power, and as an attempt to associate the entire people with Chamberlain's discredited foreign policy. Others viewed it as a realistic necessity or as an opportunity to expand Labour's power. Bevin boldly advocated these last two positions and carried the bulk of the Labour movement with him, while Attlee, Greenwood, and Chuter Ede spurred the party to co-operate on both the national and the critical local levels.

Functional integration within the triangular relationship of the government, employers, and unions became the pattern.[81] Only one day after the government proposed the national voluntary service scheme in Parliament on 6 December 1938, Bevin seized the initiative in a special General Council meeting. 'The liberty and future of our Movement is at stake', he insisted. The government's original proposal projected local committees making most decisions, but Bevin warned those could be manipulated into detrimental arrangements or into industrial conscription, as governmental and business representatives would likely dominate weak local Labour figures. Bevin successfully prodded the General Council to demand a national committee to develop general policy and to insist that existing union negotiating machinery be used whenever possible. When the AEU's member questioned the General Council's expanding influence at the expense of the separate unions, Bevin explained: 'Well, we live in two worlds, Kaylor, we live here [in the General Council] and we live in our own Union . . .' Soon George Isaacs added that they also had responsibility to 'the individual members of our Unions'.[82]

The party in Parliament had already conditionally accepted the national volunteer service scheme, while urging modifications, criticizing the government's foreign and defence policy, and warning against conscription.[83] Aneurin Bevan and a few other MPs objected, but the most penetrating critic of this evolving functional integration was George Buchanan, an Independent

Labour Party MP (who shortly afterwards rejoined Labour) and chairman of a small union. Buchanan warned that Parliament was being bypassed. He himself, he declared, would:

> . . . get consulted [as a union leader], but never as a Member [of Parliament] representing poor people . . . . Let us be frank. Each union leader fights for his men and fights often against other unions.

The big unions would probably win.

> We [MPs] have not to decide it, but the union men, in utter privacy, over which the democratic forces have no control, will decide this issue. And then we are told that this is a democratic country.[84]

The detailed arrangements were indeed handled outside Parliament. The unions and to a lesser degree the party played a role. If they did not, Bevin reasoned, problems would become worse than during the First World War, with perhaps a Labour government to face that chaotic future.[85] Throughout the winter, Bevin argued his point everywhere: in the General Council and its powerful finance and general purposes committee, in the National Council of Labour, at union meetings, in delegations to ministers, and on the official Central National Service Committee. A multitude of decisions were made on civil defence personnel matters and on mobilizing the home front — decisions affecting overtime pay, safety provisions, death benefits, and procedures to determine which workers held essential positions exempting them from military service. Bevin, Hicks, and other union leaders also helped formulate new war-preparedness arrangements for construction, transportation, the docks, and the flour-milling and food industries. Bevin kept stressing that the state would be making these decisions even without Labour's involvement, so it was essential that the unions participate both to help formulate principles and to influence the detailed decisions on wages, hours, working conditions, and other basic trade union concerns.

Disagreeing, some unions refused to participate: the National Union of Railwaymen, the Shop Assistants, and the South Wales Miners. Eventually, the relatively minor Scottish TUC withdrew its support. Amid this growing bitterness, the General Council assembled a conference of its affiliated unions' executives on 19 May 1939, where they overwhelmingly supported participation.[86]

Thus, instead of remaining aloof from a Britain in crisis, the union movement chose to act on matters directly affecting its own interests[87] and affirmed that those actions were in the public interest of all Britain.

The party was similarly involved in civil defence planning. Called at the time Air Raid Precautions (ARP), civil defence included air raid warnings, medical treatment, fire fighting, evacuation of children, and other multifarious matters, many of which overlapped with national voluntary service in the chaotic year following Munich. Civil defence primarily affected local authorities, especially London, so close and vulnerable to bombers from the continent. As leader of the London Labour Party, which controlled the government of London and many of its boroughs, Herbert Morrison was the key, as both he and the National government recognized. Although a bitter opponent of Britain's foreign policy and a former wartime conscientious objector, Morrison was concerned about his Londoners. Beginning in 1935 with the government's first hesitant steps toward civil defence, Morrison had eagerly participated and prodded the government to do more, especially to expedite planning, to provide more equipment, and to finance civil defence nationally rather than locally.

Though often castigated for collaborating with the National government and for diverting funds from critical social services during the Depression, Morrison insisted that local authorities must place a high priority on people's welfare in case of war. Morrison used every forum available: the London Labour Party, national party executive meetings, the pages of the *London News* (the local party paper he controlled), speeches in Parliament, and a controversial appearance with governmental officials at an Albert Hall rally in January 1939.[88] Defending that appearance, Morrison asserted: 'We [Labour in London] are in power. We have responsibilities to our citizens. We cannot flit all over the place at the behest of what Lenin once described as the "infantile sickness of the left".'[89] The party conference met next in May 1939, two months after the German takeover of Bohemia. Even during a heated debate over Chamberlain's foreign policy and possible Labour responses, Labour's support for ARP was consistently encouraged, and later the conference unanimously endorsed continuing in ARP.[90] Morrison for London and Thomas Johnston for Scotland, though, declined appointment as

regional commissioners for civil defence, refusing in peacetime to hold those official positions under the existing government.[91] Yet they and many other Labour officials on the local level were taking action to enhance Britain's survivability in war.

In actions, the Labour movement became increasingly engaged in the British defence preparations, although primarily through functional responsibilities impacting upon its own institutional positions and serving its union or constituency interests. In pronouncements — words, public rallies, and so forth — Labour swirled in controversy as Cripps launched his Petition Campaign.

Having championed ideological socialist purity throughout the decade, Cripps now responded to the international crisis by crusading for a popular front — a coalition of Labour, Liberals, Communists, and the ILP (some allies also wanted Conservative anti-appeasers). Following the anticipated rejection by the NEC in mid-January 1939, Cripps immediately began his appeal to local Labour parties and individual members — especially the youth. The petition's two points dealing specifically with national security were already Labour positions: 'organise a Peace Alliance with France and Russia, that will rally the support of the United States and every other peace-loving nation' and 'provide effective protection for the common people against air attack and starvation in the event of war'. The controversy was over Cripps's tactical political campaign to reject the NEC's decision, to agitate within the party, and to seek an interparty coalition. The Labour Party expelled the persistent Cripps, Bevan, and several others, as it still rejected political coalitions in this same decade as the August 1931 crisis.[92] Moreover, in late April 1939, the government's sudden proposal for peacetime conscription drew a volley of Labour pronouncements against it.

After Germany's occupation of Prague in March 1939, the Chamberlain government altered its appeasement policy, announced a doubling of the volunteer Territorial Army for expanded home air defence, pledged to defend Poland, Greece, and Romania, and broke its 1935 general election campaign pledge by introducing a peacetime military conscription bill. Intensive appeals for conscription had recently erupted in the press, in Parliament, and within the government, especially from the war office. Posturing was important — Chamberlain and others publicly stressed that conscription would demonstrate to

both Germany and France that Britain would defend France. By this time, the British government had decided on a continental commitment of a modestly-sized British land force. Chamberlain had hesitated to introduce conscription, asserting in Cabinet that opposition by Labour, especially by the unions, would impair other rearmament and war preparation efforts. Hoping to mollify Labour, Chamberlain proposed an (albeit weak) Ministry of Supply and made this new conscription bill as conciliatory as possible.[93]

Labour was furious. Brushing aside appeals to support conscription from the French socialist Leon Blum and from continental socialist parties,[94] most Labour figures lambasted the government with all their usual objections. Strategically, they insisted, Britain's contribution should remain its navy and air force, citizens should be used as war-industry workers not soldiers, military conscription could lead to industrial intimidation or conscription, and conscription would violate civil liberties.[95] Additionally frustrating, the government had broken its pledge to Labour. Even Dalton, Walker,[96] and others supporting conscription criticized the government on this.

Labour's greatest chagrin, though, was over its own weakness. Citrine especially had deluded himself in thinking that he had a special relationship with Chamberlain not shared by the Labour Party. Citrine and the General Council, however, had neither influenced British foreign policy in exchange for TUC approval of rearmament nor obtained the repeal of the 1927 Trades Unions and Trades Disputes Act in exchange for union cooperation in the national volunteer service scheme.[97] Union and party leaders had striven to gain influence in the national volunteer service scheme, partly to protect union members' interests and partly to demonstrate that a voluntary system could succeed. With difficulty they had persuaded the Labour movement to participate, and now the government unilaterally broke its pledge, scrapped part of the scheme, and introduced conscription. Yet all the General Council received from its special relationship with the government was a brief courtesy meeting to give it prior notice of the government's announcement.[98]

What action could Labour take? The General Council, the party executive, and then the National Council of Labour explored their options, primarily those of withdrawing in protest from participation in the national voluntary service scheme, from

civil defence planning, and from early discussions on wartime use of labour. John Marchbank of the Railwaymen and some others urged a strike to oppose conscription, but Citrine insisted 'that it would be disastrous for the Trade Union Movement to embark on any such course, as it would fail'.[99] The General Council did assemble that 19 May 1939 meeting of unions' executives which endorsed remaining in the national voluntary service scheme, although the Scottish TUC withdrew. Meeting later in May, Labour's annual conference unanimously reaffirmed participation in air raid precautions but feverishly debated continued involvement in the voluntary service scheme. Critics representing the party's youth movement and some local parties referred to 'gentlemanly Fascism', to workers suppressed by conscript armies, and to young men forced into military service. Morrison and Ivor Thomas supporting the NEC's position emphasized that air raid precautions could not be separated from other aspects of the voluntary scheme, and that rejection of the scheme would weaken British defences and thus favour Hitler's aggression. A solid card-vote majority supported the NEC's position that Labour continue in the national voluntary service scheme.[100]

What action did Labour actually take? Labour limited its efforts to mere pronouncements and to parliamentary opposition and attempts for constructive amendments. After the bill became law, Labour participated in the conscription appeals boards,[101] reflecting even there the trend of functional integration.

Labour still abhorred a large British army. A few years earlier, Dalton had told anti-rearmament colleagues acerbically that they were wanting Russian soldiers to implement Labour's foreign policy.[102] That was still true in 1939. As Deputy Leader Greenwood reiterated in Parliament in 1939, Labour's strategic position called for a strong navy, air force, and air defence system to protect Britain, its world trade, and its economy; for a strong economy to produce war material for a long war; and for a reliance on continental allies to bear the brunt of land warfare.[103] Neither Labour nor the British government yet realized that even in a successful war, Britain would need land forces to help liberate European peoples, to help occupy and restructure a defeated Germany, and to help mould vital areas of Europe in the interest of Britain's long-term national security.

IV

The Labour movement's ethos affected its approaches both toward resolving issues in foreign affairs and toward making internal decisions. This Labour ethos grew from both its liberal/radical political roots and its trade union experiences.

Concerning foreign affairs, Labour perceived that countries should negotiate settlements based on their mutual interests: for instance, on disarmament or perhaps on colonial appeasement. Of course, Labour never blindly supported all possible negotiations. On the one hand, Labour officially criticized negotiations which legitimized the rearmament of Nazi Germany. On the other hand, and ironically, Labour — while wanting France and Russia as military allies — continued to oppose British conscription even when it was designed to encourage such alliances. Still, the moderate Labour leadership in words and action now fundamentally supported collective security backed by military preparedness.

Labour's negotiating mien was very effective within Britain. While the French socialist party was dissolving and many other European socialist parties and unions were declining, Labour survived intact despite its controversies over national security issues, as well as over domestic matters.

Labour's and the government's basic national security positions were converging by summer of 1939. Labour came to its position based on its own interests and its own evolving perceptions of national security. This journey is important in understanding how the party and movement prepared themselves to face war and to face the burdens and responsibilities of power both in the wartime coalition and the postwar Labour governments. This journey does not mean that Labour itself significantly altered the Chamberlain government's actions on national security in the immediate prewar period. After all, Labour was still relatively weak. Faced with some governmental decisions which it disliked, such as conscription, Labour was also too committed to the existing economic and political system to attempt massive resistance, as Chamberlain had feared.[104] Besides, Labour was increasingly involved within the system, especially concerning national security: civil defence, peacetime rearmament, and Britain's wartime production capacity. Labour's

actions — not merely its pronouncements — demonstrated its evolving position of supporting national security.

Neville Chamberlain did have a point. In the late 1930s, he hesitated to work closely with the Labour movement on rearmament for he feared Labour would require changes in foreign policy (to include closer ties to the USSR) and a reorganization of armament production practices acceptable to itself. Without gaining such concessions, though, Labour was participating in many peacetime military and civil defence activities. Yet Labour only wholeheartedly supported the war effort after it had helped drive Chamberlain from office in 1940, and had gained a significant role in the War Coalition government — a role upon which Labour built its wartime and postwar power.

On fundamental national security matters, this article has stressed that from the mid-1930s, the Labour movement through its actions and some pronouncements was making difficult but practical decisions which ignored theoretical constructs such as 'traditionalist' versus 'socialist' foreign policy. Labour realized that countries in the League of Nations and socialist parties in the LSI were primarily supporting their own particular interests rather than general international causes. Labour was as willing to work with 'capitalist' and 'imperialist' France as with the 'socialist' Soviet Union whenever either of those countries' defence positions supported British interests. Labour's focus on British defence included a protection of most of its current 'imperialist' colonial territory and its 'capitalist' world trade; even its opposition to military conscription stressed that this would both weaken Britain's total air and sea defences and reduce Britain's ability to build a strong war economy.

The Labour movement's approach to national security in the late 1930s may have been neither 'socialist' nor 'traditionalist', but it was clearly 'British' within the Labour movement's perspective. It focused on a strong economy with increased trade union influence, civil defence for its cities and its workers, sufficient British air and sea power to protect Britain and its world economy from destruction in war and to engage in economic warfare, and only a small army so that Britain and its people would escape the slaughter and the continental focus of another Great War. The Labour movement, consisting of many different individuals and institutions, faced complex and changing circumstances throughout the 1930s. An evolving consensus emerged,

however, in which it generally supported what it believed to be the best policy for British national security.

Labour did not 'abandon its socialist foreign policy' or national security policy during the Second World War or under the 1945–51 Labour government. Realizing that it must speak and act within the conditions faced by Britain and the world by 1937, most of its leaders refused to limit Labour's role by any theoretical 'socialist' model. In order to oppose Nazi German aggression against authoritarian Poland in 1939, without the support of Communist Russia but with that of non-socialist France, Britain was prodded by the Labour movement into the act of war.

Notes

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1. John Saville, 'The Crisis in Labour History: A Further Comment', *Labour History Review*, Vol. 61 (1996), 327.

2. John Saville, *The Politics of Continuity: British Foreign Policy and the Labour Government, 1945–46* (London 1993), 117.

3. Two fine review essays are helpful, though both are now a decade old. John W. Young, 'Idealism and Realism in the History of Labour's Foreign Policy', *Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History*, Vol. 50 (1985), 14–19; and Peter Weiler, 'Labour and the Cold War: The Foreign Policy of the Labour Governments, 1945–1951', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 26 (1987), 54–82. David Reynolds incorporates more recent works into his historiographical analysis in his chapter on 'Great Britain' in David Reynolds, ed., *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe: International Perspectives* (New Haven 1994), 77–95. Following are samples of some recent works explicitly or implicitly attributing Labour's post-war foreign policy to either its wartime coalition experience or to circumstances it faced in its postwar government, influenced somewhat by Foreign Office officials or military figures. Peter Weiler, *Ernest Bevin* (Manchester 1993), 145; Raymond Smith, 'Introduction', in John Zametica, ed., *British Officials and British Foreign Policy, 1945–50* (Leicester 1990), 1–7; Anne Deighton, 'Towards a "Western" Strategy: The Making of British Policy Towards Germany, 1945–46', in Anne Deighton, ed., *Britain and the First Cold War* (New York 1990), 54, 57; Stuart Croft, *The End of Superpower: British Foreign Office Conception of a Changing World, 1945–51* (Aldershot 1994), 10; Dan Koehane, *Labour Party Defence Policy Since 1945* (Leicester 1993), 1–3; John Kent, *British Imperial Strategy and the Origins of the Cold War, 1944–49* (Leicester 1993), 77; Peter J. Taylor, *Britain and*

the Cold War: 1945 as Geopolitical Transition (London 1990), 61; Jonathan Schneer, *Labour's Conscience: The Labour Left, 1945–51* (Boston 1988), 28.

4. Some historians have pointed out that Labour Party leaders and institutions did create a coherent foreign and defence policy by the outbreak of the Second World War. John Naylor, in his pioneering work on *Labour's International Policy: The Labour Party in the 1930s* (Boston 1969), 313–14, concludes:

> On 3 September 1939 Labour's foreign and defence policies, too often at odds in the past, fused into one aim — the winning of the war against fascism. Throughout the 1930s, the Labour Party had moved slowly and haltingly toward the realization that such a war would be necessary, and this process of realization had been the dominant theme of their international policy. Now that theme had come to a grim climax, and war was at hand.

Naylor's work focuses primarily on the party and was written three decades ago, before the developing new lines of historical inquiry and before the availability of many party and union archives. Also concentrating on the national party, Trevor Burridge, in introducing his study of *British Labour and Hitler's War* (London 1976), 15–16, 21, comments that 'the challenge of war brought to the fore in the Labour Party a maturity long residing in it, notably an otherwise unavailable expertise [in foreign affairs] not now distorted by ideology.' 'The emotional catharsis which the Party underwent during the last few days of peace . . . was of a . . . profound character.' Michael Blackwell, in *Clinging to Grandeur: British Attitudes and Foreign Policy in the Aftermath of the Second World War* (Westport 1993), 5, reminds us of the contemporary public view (accented by the Conservatives in the 1945 election) that Labour's prewar international policy supposedly opposed effective war preparation. The approach of this article is more akin to the wide exploration of the Labour movement in words and actions carried out by Tom Buchanan, *The Spanish Civil War and the Labour Movement* (Cambridge 1991), although the scope of this article does not focus on the Spanish Civil War.

5. Kevin Jefferys, *The Churchill Coalition and Wartime Politics, 1940–1945* (Manchester 1991); and Stephen Brooke, *Labour's War: The Labour Party during the Second World War* (Oxford 1992).

6. Burridge, *Labour and Hitler's War*.

7. Barry Buzan, *People, States, and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations* (Chapel Hill 1983), 214–26; and Cecil V. Crabb, Jr and Kevin V. Mulcahy, *American National Security: A Presidential Perspective* (Pacific Grove 1991), 4–8.

8. See especially Ben Pimlott, *Labour and the Left in the 1930s* (Cambridge 1977); James Jupp, *The Radical Left in Britain, 1931–1941* (London 1982); Martin Caedel, *Pacifism in Britain, 1914–45: The Defining of a Faith* (Oxford 1980); and James Hinton, *Protests and Visions: Peace Politics in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London 1989).

9. Michael R. Gordon, *Conflict and Consensus in Labour's Foreign Policy*, 1914–1965 (Stanford 1969), 1–4.

10. For a different interpretation, see ibid., Ch. 6. H.M. Drucker, *Doctrine and Ethos in the Labour Party* (London 1979), Ch. 1, explores this Labour ethos fully, though not concerning national security policy.

11. Gustav Schmidt, *The Politics and Economics of Appeasement: British*

Foreign Policy in the 1930s, trans. Jackie Bennett-Ruete (New York 1986), 308–13.

12. See Buzan, *People, States, and Fear*, 29, for similar fears in the early 1980s.

13. See Patrick Kyba, *Covenants without the Sword: Public Opinion and British Defense Policy, 1931–1935 (Waterloo, Ont. 1983), 71–4, 98–108.*

14. *Report of the Royal Commission on the Private Manufacture of and Trading in Arms*, Cmd. 5292 (1936). See Anthony Sampson, *The Arms Bazaar from Lebanon to Lockheed* (New York 1978), 83–91.

15. See Buchanan, *Spanish Civil War.*

16. These episodes are best explored in Naylor, *Labour's International Policy*, 154–7, 191–6, although the records of the PLP, GC, and NEC, and their joint meetings in 1935 and 1936, which have become available since Naylor's research, reflect not only the tension among those institutions but also their commitment to maintain intact the Labour movement.

17. Jerry H. Brookshire, 'The National Council of Labour, 1921–1946', *Albion*, Vol. 18 (1986), 64.

18. For Attlee's own re-evaluation, see Jerry H. Brookshire, *Clement Attlee* (Manchester 1995), 157–69.

19. Partial records of the defence committee are located in the Dalton papers, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), and in the Labour Party Archives. See also C.R. Attlee, *As It Happened* (London 1954), 97–9; Hugh Dalton, *Memoirs, II: The Fateful Years: 1931–1945* (London 1957), 165; and Ben Pimlott, ed., *The Political Diaries of Hugh Dalton, 1918–40, 1945–60* (London 1986), 234. The committee's size and organization shifted throughout its lifetime.

20. Caedel, *Pacifism in Britain*, 85.

21. Brookshire, 'National Council of Labour'.

22. Naylor, *Labour's International Policy*, 215–17. Schmidt, *Politics and Economics of Appeasement*, presents a comprehensive examination, with some reference to Labour, of Britain's interest in 'Economic Appeasement' in Ch. 1.

23. CAB 24/273, CP 316 (37), 15 December 1937, Public Record Office (PRO), Inskip's interim report on defence expenditure in future years. Cited in Robert Paul Shay, Jr, *British Rearmament in the 1930s: Politics and Profits* (Princeton 1977), 167.

24. 311 *H.C. Deb*., 23 April 1936, col. 426; 342 *H.C. Deb*., 1 December 1938, cols. 562–4; 348 *H.C. Deb*., 5 June 1939, cols. 81–91, 156, 162–3; 'Points of Policy', by Attlee for NCL, March 1936; Herbert Morrison, transcript of lecture, 21 August 1936, box 'Foreign/Defence policy, 1939–44,' LPA. Defence procurement did significantly expand employment: Mark Thomas, 'Rearmament and Economic Recovery in the late 1930s', *Economic History Review*, Vol. 34 (1983), 552–79. See Arthur Deakin, 'Air Raid Shelters: The Nation's Need Revives a Depressed Industry', *The Record* (TGWU), March 1939; and *Trades Union Congress Annual Report* (TUC Report), 1938, 308.

25. For an historiographical coverage, see Stephen Howe, *Anticolonialism in British Politics: The Left and the End of Empire, 1918–1964* (Oxford 1993), 1–26.

26. David Goldsworthy, *Colonial Issues in British Politics: From 'Colonial Development' to 'Wind of Change'* (Oxford 1971), 113–20; and Partha Sarathi Gupta, *Imperialism and the Labour Movement* (New York 1975), 225–37, 260–6. See Leonard Woolf, *Downhill All the Way: An Autobiography of the Years 1919–1939* (New York 1967), 232–9.

27. See for example, 'Resolution on Italy and Abyssinia', *Labour Party Annual Report (LPAR)* 1935, 153–4; and 'The Demand for Colonial Territories and Equality of Opportunity', August 1936, a pamphlet which the NEC published but did not consider bound by all its recommendations; NEC Min., 22 July 1936. Charles Roden Buxton, long-time chair of the party's imperial affairs committee, thoroughly developed these themes in *The Alternative to War: A Programme for Statesmen* (London 1936), 103–13. Buxton insisted that 'the Party should make it its main business to demand reorganisation of the world's system of "exclusive Empires", and it should begin with our own.' 'The Empire — What Next?', *Labour* (July 1937), 267–8. Disturbed that Labour's proposed economic sanctions on Japan could produce war, he resigned as committee chair in late 1937, and he continued to advocate redistributing African colonial territory to Germany in 1939. Naylor, *Labour's International Policy*, 212–13; and Victoria de Bunsen, *Charles Roden Buxton: A Memoir* (London 1948), 156–7.

28. Scott Newton, *Profits of Peace: The Political Economy of Anglo–German Appeasement* (Oxford 1996), 73–8; R.A.C. Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement: British Policy and the Coming of the Second World War* (New York 1993), 129–33; Howe, *Anticolonialism in British Politics*, 106–7; and P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Crisis and Deconstruction, 1914–1990* (London 1993), 227–8. Bevin's support continued even after the Munich Agreements; Ernest Bevin, 'Impressions of the British Commonwealth Relations Conference, 1938', *International Affairs*, Vol. 18 (1939), 63–5.

29. 'A Note on Proposals for Economic Action Against Japan', prepared by the Advisory Committee on International Questions, in NEC Min. Jt. Cmtte, 7 January 1938; Bevin, 'Impressions', 60–2; Hugh Dalton, 'The Dominions and Foreign Policy', *Political Quarterly*, Vol. 9 (1938), 489–90.

30. Henry R. Winkler, *Paths not Taken: Labour and International Policy in the 1920s* (Chapel Hill 1994).

31. International sub-committee of the NEC, 3 March 1936, Box 'International sub-committee, 1929–1939', LPA.

32. NCL, 21 April 1936, 28 April 1936, and 5 May 1936; 11-page 'Labour and the Defence of Peace', LPA.

33. 'Regional Agreements and the Policy of the Labour Party and International', by William Gillies, 1 September 1936, Box 'International sub-committee, 1929–39', LPA.

34. Joint meeting of NEC, GC, and PLP ex., 4 September 1936, LPA. 'Memorandum on the Attitudes Which the Party Should Adopt to Propose Reforms of the League', ACIQ No. 468A, July 1936, Box 'Foreign/Defence policy, 1936–44', LPA.

35. 'Fight for Democracy', n.d., and Gillies to Adler, 11 February 1939, LSI, Box 22, LPA.

36. 'The Position of the LSI', by Friedrich Adler, 22 April 1939, and 'International Information' of 20 June 1939 and 26 February 1940, LSI, Box 22, LPA; International sub-committee, 13 July 1939, NEC Minutes and Records.

37. For one thorough discussion, see 'The Position of the Labour Party after Munich', 'Notes of Policy Committee Discussion', and 'Labour Policy after Munich', No. 8, 8 October 1938, 4/3, Dalton Papers.

38. See Clive Ponting, *1940: Myth and Reality* (Chicago 1991), Ch. 2; and Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement*, Ch. 13 for overviews of Britain's rearma-

ment and military predicaments.

39. A contemporary reference is R.H.S. Crossman, 'Labour and Compulsory Military Services', *Political Quarterly*, (July–September 1939), 315–16.

40. See Michael Howard, *The Continental Commitment* (London 1972); and Brian Bond, *British Military Policy between the Two World Wars* (Oxford 1980).

41. *Labour and Defence* (London 1939), 20–4.

42. See Malcolm Smith, *British Air Strategy between the Wars* (Oxford 1984); and Uri Bialer, *Shadow of the Bomber: The Fear of Air Attack and British Politics, 1932–1939*.

43. Attlee to Chamberlain, 19 January 1939, PREM 1/238, PRO.

44. 333 *H.C. Deb*., 15 March 1938, cols. 242–59.

45. Dalton, *Memoirs*, II, 165; Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill*, V, *1922–1939: The Prophet of Truth* (Boston 1977), 837–9.

46. 336 *H.C. Deb*., 25 May 1938, cols. 1233–53. Dalton's speech was reprinted as a party pamphlet.

47. Defence sub-committee files, LPA; 'Memorandum on the Position Regarding Air Defence', June 1938, 4/2, Dalton papers; numerous documents in PREM 1/238 and AIR 19/67, PRO; and Nield to Dalton, 27 February 1939, 4/1, Dalton papers.

48. *Labour and Defence*, 14–9; memoranda 5, 6, and 9, December 1938–April 1939, Defence supply, Defence sub-committee, LPA. 336 *H.C. Deb*., 25 May 1938, cols 1233–1330. The ex-Liberal Wedgwood was willing for control over workers to produce more planes (cols. 1299–1305).

49. This issue is covered masterfully in R.A.C. Parker, 'British Rearmament, 1936–9: Treasury, Trade Unions and Skilled Labour', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 96 (1981), 306–43. The subsequent notes on this topic will be only on points or sources not included in that article.

50. Hugh Armstrong Clegg, *A History of British Trade Unions since 1889*, II, *1911–1933* (Oxford 1985), 191, 432–5, 437, 461, 495–6, 546–7. Other non-rearmament AEU disputes were with miners, shipbuilders, and other engineers (Finance and general purposes committee of the General Council, 22 March 1937, 21 February 1938, 21 March 1938, 21 November 1938, 24 April 1939) and with the TUC over affiliation dues (FGPC, 22 March 1937).

51. Yet the AEU still had acrimonious relations over wartime production with other unions containing engineers. GC, 20 March 1940, 22 May 1940.

52. Peggy Inman, *Labour in the Munitions Industry* (London 1957), 22; and David Thoms, *War, Industry, and Society in the Midlands, 1939–45* (London 1989), Ch. 1. For a list see Montague, 'Memorandum on Royal Air Force Organisation', Defence sub-committee, No. 2, March 1938, LPA.

53. TUC *Report*, 1938, 301–2.

54. James B. Jefferys, *The Story of the Engineers, 1800–1945* (London 1945), 247–8; Richard Croucher, *Engineers at War* (London 1982), 43–4, 65.

55. Syles to PM, 25 March 1938, PREM 1/251; *Daily Express*, 24 March 1938; Special meeting of General Council, 7 December 1938, 49-page verbatim transcript, TUC, 883.4(1), MRC. For the TGWU membership in engineering firms, see Croucher, *Engineers at War*, 58–61, and Alan Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin*: I, *Trade Union Leader: 1881–1940* (London 1960), 525.

56. GC, 4 March 1936. See Brookshire, 'The National Council of Labour', 54–5.

57. Joint meeting of PLP, GC, and NEC, 4 March 1936; GC, 27 April 1938, 25 May 1938; and the documents for March–June 1938 in PREM 1/251.

58. TUC *Report*, 1937, 402–26.

59. Ibid. 1938, 301–2, 307, 311–12.

60. Articles in *Reynolds News*, 9 January 1938, and *The Daily Herald*, 31 March 1939. See Smith, *British Air Strategy between the Wars*, 48, 50.

61. 'Britain's Air Choice: Alliances or Law?' *Reynolds News*, 10 May 1936.

62. Attlee to Chamberlain, 11 January 1938, and accompanying notes, PREM 1/238; 29 May 1938, Dalton diary; 'Talk with Two Air Force Officers', IIA 4/1, Draft of 'Air Document', 1 December 1938, IIA 4/1, and 'Statement on the Preparedness of the RAF in the Recent Crisis', (draft), 13 January 1939, 4/1, Dalton papers; Greenwood, 'The Soviet's Fighting Forces', and 'Comments' by DDI(2), 6 May 1939, AIR 19/67, PRO.

63. 11, 13, 18, and 19 September 1939, Dalton diary.

64. Herbert Morrison, *An Autobiography* (London 1960), 169–70.

65. Walker, 'The Political Scene', *Man and Metal* 15, No. 1 (December 1937); 332 *H.C. Deb*., 7 March 1938, cols 1567–76 (other Labour MPs had objected to Lees-Smith's statements, col. 1671); 'Informal Discussion on the New International Situation and Labour Party Policy in Regard Thereto', 19 October 1938, IIA 4/1, Dalton papers; Defence sub-committee files, LPA.

66. 262 *H.C. Deb*., 7 March 1932, cols 1505–12; 275 *H.C. Deb*., 16 March 1933, cols 2171–81 (but for Seymour Cocks's personal advocacy of naval rearmament, cols 2212–14); 304 *H.C. Deb*., 11 July 1935, cols 538–9, 603–10, and 22 July 1935, cols 1499–560. PLP meeting, 9 July 1935, and George Hall, 'The Anglo–German Naval Agreement', *Labour* 2, No. 12 (August 1935).

67. Best revealing Labour's position were naval debates on 17 and 22 March 1938 and 16 March 1939. For Alexander's comments, see 333 *H.C. Deb*., cols 646–56, 1134, 1157–60; 345 *H.C. Deb*., cols 664–73. For the government's naval policy, see Eric J. Grove, 'A War Fleet Built for Peace: British Naval Rearmament in the 1930s and the Dilemma of Deterrence versus Defence', *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 44 (1991), 82–92.

68. 'Naval Policy' by Alexander, November 1938, Defence sub-committee, 4/3, Dalton papers.

69. E.g., David Adams's speech, *H.C. Deb*., 8 March 1932, col. 1718; and J. A. S. Douglas's speech, *LPAR*, 1939, 284–5.

70. Peter Dennis, *The Territorial Army, 1906–1940*, Royal Historical Society series, No. 51 (Woodbridge, Suffolk 1987), 177–8; Anthony Clayton, *The British Empire as a Superpower, 1919–39* (Athens, GA 1986), 98–112, Chs 4, 7, *passim*.

71. As early as 1920–5, the party and TUC had studied those personnel issues; 'Advisory committee on army, navy and pension problems [1920–5]', in Defence sub-committee records, LPA.

72. 'Preliminary Memorandum: A Brief Survey of the Army Hierarchy of the United Kingdom as It Is To-day', 2, Defence sub-committee No. 3, March 1938, LPA.

73. For example, speeches by Attlee and other Labour MPs on the army estimates. 275 *H.C. Deb*., 30 May 1938, cols 1787–8.

74. 'Labour and Defence', May 1939 (quotation on page 1), LPA; see also NEC, 28 July 1937; and Attlee's 'Introduction' to Lewis Clive, *The People's Army*

(London 1938), 9–11.

75. Bond, *British Military Policy*, 148–50. Ironically, a mechanized army suited best a European offensive campaign, which Labour opposed.

76. Dalton, conversation with Count Raczynski, Polish ambassador, Dalton diary, 23 April 1939.

77. Aneurin Bevan's feisty speech epitomized the views of many in Labour that the government wanted 'conscription in order to keep the civilian population docile', 336 *H.C. Deb.*, 30 May 1938, cols 1787–8.

78. Robin Higham, *The Military Intellectuals in Britain: 1918–1939* (New Brunswick 1966), 78–9.

79. Basil H. Liddell Hart, *Memoirs*, II (London 1965), 163–5, 253–5. Dalton, *Memoirs*, II, 175; Pimlott, *Political Diary of Hugh Dalton*, 243–4, although this does not include the meeting with Liddell Hart by Labour leaders on 14 September 1938. 344 *H.C. Deb.*, 8 March 1939, cols 2270–7; Address by Liddell-Hart to the defence sub-committee, 20 December 1938, IIA 4/1, Dalton papers; *Times*, 7, 8, 24 February 1939; *Manchester Guardian*, 7 January 1939; Bond, *British Military Policy*, 301–2.

80. During the winter and spring of 1938–9, virtually every meeting of the party executive, the General Council, and the National Council of Labour dealt with the complicated issues arising from support of and participation in the scheme. There was public debate, too; e.g., the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation journal, *Man and Metal* Vol. 16, No. 2 (January 1939), strongly supported participation, as did James Walker, its top political official (418, 428).

81. See Keith Middlemas, *Politics in Industrial Society: The Experience of the British System since 1911* (London 1979), 372–8. Samuel Beer, *Modern British Politics: Parties and Pressure Groups in the Collectivist Age* (New York 1982), 211, 352–3, and 389–90; Samuel Beer, *Britain Against Itself: The Political Contradictions of Collectivism* (New York 1982), 3–4.

82. Special meeting of General Council, 7 December 1938, 49-page verbatim transcript, TUC, 883.4(1), MRC.

83. 342 *H.C. Deb.*, 6 December 1938, cols 1023–140.

84. Ibid., 20 December 1938, cols 2774–5.

85. GC, 25 January 1939, TUC, 883.4(1), MRC; Memorandum of interview, 6 February 1939; TUC, 883.4(1), MRC, General Council deputation minutes, 24 February 1939; GC, 23 March 1939; Reports on Central National Service Committee meetings on 9 March, 30 March, 27 July 1938, H.O. 186/70, PRO; and on 22 June 1939, TUC, 883.4(1), MRC. See also Bullock, *Bevin*, I, 634–5. For a summary of jobs in voluntary service, see *Times*, 6 May 1939.

86. Finance and general purposes committee of the General Council, 16 January, 23 January, 20 February, and 20 March 1939; Citrine to Hugh Murdoch, 5 June 1939, TUC, 883.4(1), MRC; and Press statement, 19 May 1939, TUC, 883.71(1), MRC.

87. In Ross M. Martin, *TUC: The Growth of a Pressure Group, 1868–1976* (Oxford 1980), Ch. 9, Martin focuses on the General Council's role from March 1938 to May 1940. Briefly considering rearmament issues and the national volunteer service scheme, Martin also examines the abortive spring and summer 1939 negotiations for joint Governmental-General Council procedures on wartime use of labour. On a point outside this article's scope, Martin concludes that these prewar General Council decisions ensured that the TUC became the prime agency

for trade union relations with the government during both the wartime and postwar periods.

88. H.J. Hodsoll to A.S. Hutchinson, 29 January 1938, 4/39, Hodsoll Papers, Churchill College, Cambridge. Morrison's important role is well covered in Bernard Donoughue and G.W. Jones, *Herbert Morrison: Portrait of a Politician* (London 1973), 206, 221, 260–1, 264–7, and the 1939 Labour Party conference in Naylor, *Labour's International Policy*, 291–2. Deputation from local authorities to lord privy seal, 21 July 1939, H.O. 186/52, PRO. Although the PLP opposed the early ARP efforts (304 *H.C. Deb*., 16 July 1935, cols 903–17, 938–45) and Josiah Wedgwood continued even in 1938 (C.V. Wedgwood, *The Last of the Radicals: Josiah Wedgwood, M.P.* [London 1951], 231), the party's national executive and the General Council all supported it by 1938. NEC Minutes, Letter by local government dept., 14 December 1938; GC, 1 September 1938; LPAR, *1939*, 20–2. *London News*, No. 130, August 1935, No. 132, October 1935, No. 169, November 1938, and No. 172, February 1939.

89. *London News*, No. 172, February 1939.

90. *LPAR*, 1939, 243–53, 306.

91. Donoughue and Jones, *Morrison*, 267; and Graham Walker, *Thomas Johnston* (Manchester 1988), 145–6.

92. Pimlott, *Labour and the Left*, 170–82, quotation from 174–5; Jupp, *Radical Left in Britain*, 115–20; Colin Cooke, *The Life of Richard Stafford Cripps* (London 1957), 228–33; and John Campbell, *Aneurin Bevan and the Mirage of British Socialism* (London 1987), 79–87.

93. Peter Dennis, *Decision by Default: Peacetime Conscription and British Defense, 1919–39* (Durham, NC 1972), Ch. 11.

94. Dalton diary, 10 May 1939; J.W. Albarda to Dalton and Gillies, 2 May 1939, Box 23, 1/25, LSI, LPA; *London News*, No. 176, June 1939, for English translation of Blum's article in *Populaire*; Francis Williams, 'The Case against Conscription', *Daily Herald*, 27 April 1939.

95. 346 *H.C. Deb*., 26–27 April 1939, cols 1150–4, 1343–52.

96. James Walker, 'The Political Scene', *Man and Metal* Vol. 16, No. 6 (May 1939).

97. Walter Citrine, *Men and Work: An Autobiography* (London 1964), 367–8; Deputation to prime minister, GC minutes, 24 February 1939.

98. GC minutes, 26 April 1939. The General Council insisted that this not be construed as concurring with the bill. Joint meeting of GC, NEC, and PLP ex., 9 May 1939. See Bevin's public comments in *The Record* (May 1939), 288–9 and private ones to Anderson, 4 May 1939, LAB 25/131, PRO.

99. NCL minutes, 1 May 1939, 3/3, Citrine papers, LSE.

100. *LPAR*, 1939, 281–9, 305–9.

101. See Crossman, 'Labour and Compulsory Military Service'; *Manchester Guardian*, 27 April 1939, 28 April 1939, and 4 May 1939.

102. Dalton, *Memoirs*, II, 64. Converted, Morrison made the same point in 1939, *LPAR*, 1939, 288.

103. 346 *H.C. Deb*., 27 April 1939, cols 1437–45.

104. Chamberlain had feared that organized Labour would disrupt conscription; Dennis, *Decision by Default*, 212–17. Dalton knew Labour better and told Blum in April that Labour would soon accept it; Dalton, *Memoirs*, II, 254.

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