

Let Us Face the Future: A Declaration of Labour Policy for the Consideration of the Nation (Labour Manifesto 1945, Extracts).

VICTORY IN WAR MUST BE FOLLOWED BY A PROSPEROUS PEACE

Victory is assured for us and our allies in the European war. The war in the East goes the same way. The British Labour Party is firmly resolved that Japanese barbarism shall be defeated just as decisively as Nazi aggression and tyranny. The people will have won both struggles. The
5 gallant men and women in the Fighting Services, in the Merchant Navy, Home Guard and Civil Defence, in the factories and in the bombed areas — they deserve and must be assured a happier future than faced so many of them after the last war. Labour regards their welfare as a sacred trust.

10 So far as Britain's contribution is concerned, this war will have been won by its people, not by any one man or set of men, though strong and greatly valued leadership has been given to the high resolve of the people in the present struggle [...]

The people made tremendous efforts to win the last war also. But when they had won it they lacked a lively interest in the social and economic problems of peace, and accepted the election promises of the leaders of the anti-Labour parties at their face value. So the "hard-faced men
15 who had done well out of the war" were able to get the kind of peace that suited themselves. The people lost that peace. And when we say "peace" we mean not only the Treaty, but the social and economic policy which followed the fighting.

[...] The Labour Party stands for order as against the chaos which would follow the end of all public control. We stand for order, for positive constructive progress as against the chaos of
20 economic do-as-they-please anarchy.

WHAT THE ELECTION WILL BE ABOUT

Britain's coming Election will be the greatest test in our history of the judgement and common sense of our people.

25 The nation wants food, work and homes. It wants more than that-it wants good food in plenty, useful work for all, and comfortable, labour-saving homes that take full advantage of the resources of modern science and productive industry. It wants a high and rising standard of living, security for all against a rainy day, an educational system that will give every boy and girl a chance to develop the best that is in them. [...]

JOBS FOR ALL [...] What will the Labour Party do?

30 First, the whole of the national resources, in land, material and labour must be fully employed. Production must be raised to the highest level and related to purchasing power. Over-production is not the cause of depression and unemployment; it is under-consumption that is responsible. It is doubtful whether we have ever, except in war, used the whole of our productive capacity. This must be corrected because, upon our ability to produce and organise a fair and generous
35 distribution of the product, the standard of living of our people depends.

Secondly, a high and constant purchasing power can be maintained through good wages, social services and insurance, and taxation which bears less heavily on the lower income groups. But everybody knows that money and savings lose their value if prices rise so rents and the prices of the necessities of life will be controlled.

40 Thirdly, planned investment in essential industries and on houses, schools, hospitals and civic centres will occupy a large field of capital expenditure. [...] The location of new factories will be suitably controlled and where necessary the Government will itself build factories. There must be no depressed areas in the New Britain.

45 Fourthly, the Bank of England with its financial powers must be brought under public ownership, and the operations of the other banks harmonised with industrial needs.

By these and other means full employment can be achieved. But a policy of Jobs for All must be associated with a policy of general economic expansion and efficiency as set out in the next section of this Declaration. Indeed, it is not enough to ensure that there are jobs for all. If the standard of life is to be high-as it should be-the standard of production must be high. This
50 means that industry must be thoroughly efficient if the needs of the nation are to be met.

INDUSTRY IN THE SERVICE OF THE NATION [...]

The Labour Party is a Socialist Party, and proud of it. Its ultimate purpose at home is the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain-free, democratic, efficient, progressive, public-spirited, its material resources organised in the service of the British people.

55 [...] In the light of these considerations, the Labour Party submits to the nation the following industrial programme:

1. Public ownership of the fuel and power industries.[...] 2. Public ownership of inland transport.[...] 3 Public ownership of iron and steel. [...]

EDUCATION AND RECREATION

60 An important step forward has been taken by the passing of the recent Education Act. Labour will put that Act not merely into legal force but into practical effect, including the raising of the school leaving age to 16 at the earliest possible moment, "further" or adult education, and free secondary education for all.

65 And, above all, let us remember that the great purpose of education is to give us individual citizens capable of thinking for themselves. [...]

HEALTH OF THE NATION AND ITS CHILDREN

By good food and good homes, much avoidable ill-health can be prevented. In addition the best health services should be available free for all. Money must no longer be the passport to the best treatment.

70 In the new National Health Service there should be health centres where the people may get the best that modern science can offer, more and better hospitals, and proper conditions for our doctors and nurses. More research is required into the causes of disease and the ways to prevent and cure it. [...]

SOCIAL INSURANCE AGAINST THE RAINY DAY

75 The Labour Party has played a leading part in the long campaign for proper social security for all-social provision against rainy days, coupled with economic policies calculated to reduce rainy days to a minimum. Labour led the fight against the mean and shabby treatment which was the lot of millions while Conservative Governments were in power over long years. A Labour Government will press on rapidly with legislation extending social insurance over the necessary wide field to all. [...]

A WORLD OF PROGRESS AND PEACE

85 [...] We must consolidate in peace the great war-time association of the British Commonwealth with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Let it not be forgotten that in the years leading up to the war the Tories were so scared of Russia that they missed the chance to establish a partnership which might well have prevented the war. [...]

90 The economic well-being of each nation largely depends on world-wide prosperity. The essentials of prosperity for the world as for individual nations are high production and progressive efficiency, coupled with steady improvement in the standard of life, an increase in effective demand, and fair shares for all who by their effort contribute to the wealth of their community. We should build a new United Nations, allies in a new war on hunger, ignorance and want.

95 The British, while putting their own house in order, must play the part of brave and constructive leaders in international affairs. The British Labour Movement comes to the tasks of international organisation with one great asset: it has a common bond with the working peoples of all countries, who have achieved a new dignity and influence through their long struggles against Nazi tyranny.

100 And in all this worth-while work-whether political, military or economic-the Labour Party will seek to promote mutual understanding and cordial co-operation between the Dominions of the British Commonwealth, the advancement of India to responsible self-government, and the planned progress of our Colonial Dependencies. [...]