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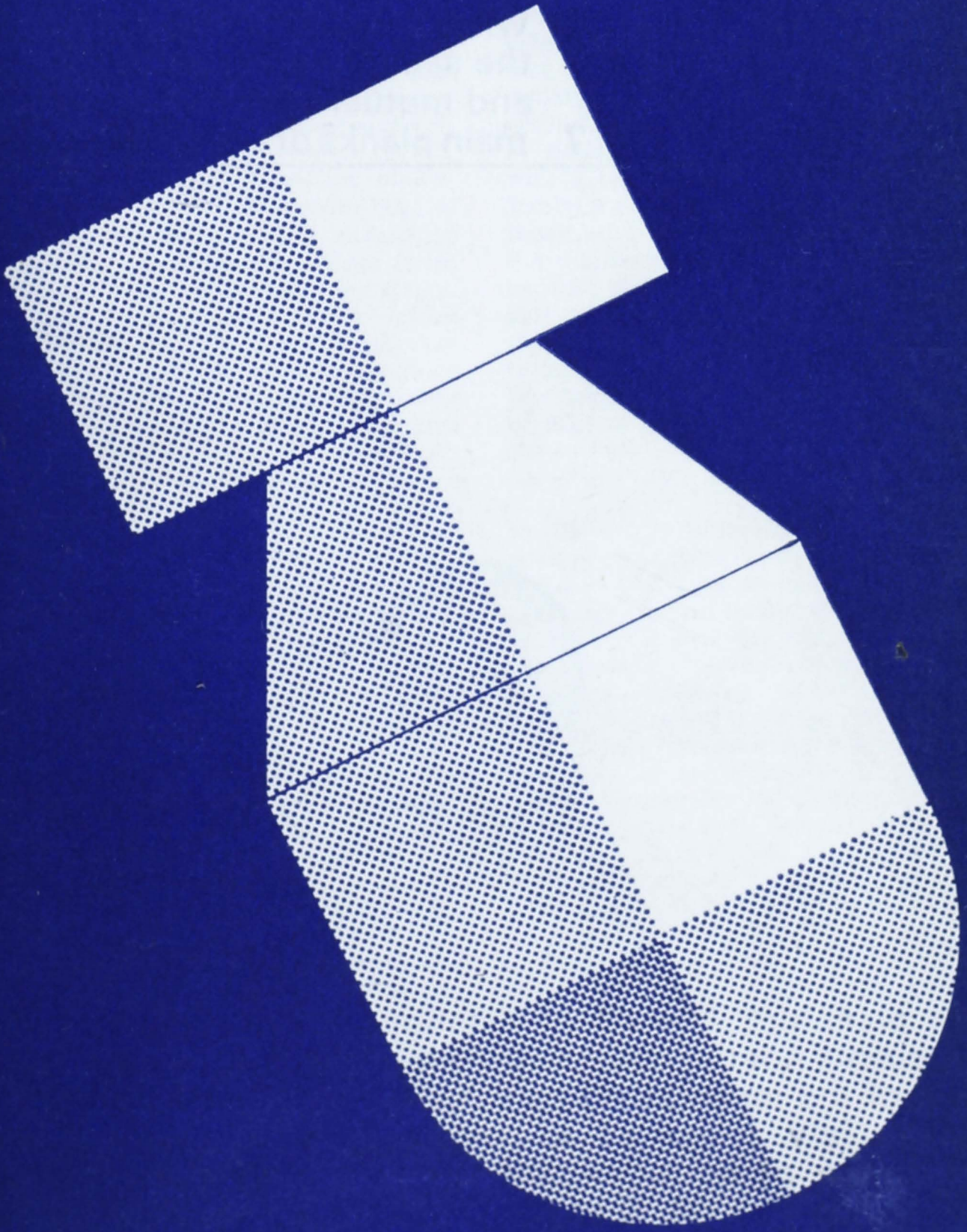
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BP 161511 (423)

still no disarmament

Wayland Kennet
fabian tract 423

25p



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still no disarmament

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30.5.73

this pamphlet, like all publications of the Fabian Society represents not the collective view of the Society but only the view of the individual who prepared it. The responsibility of the Society is limited to approving publications it issues as worthy of consideration within the Labour movement.
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1. introduction

"This conference . . . calls on the whole Labour movement to make urgent representations to the British government to support initiatives which would help to bring about an early conference of all European governments, with the object of ensuring a system of European security which is collective and open to all European states. The dissolution of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact, the creation of a nuclear free zone in central Europe and a substantial measure of nuclear and general disarmament must be the main objectives."

" . . . The presence of American nuclear bases prevents us from taking the kind of political stance which would encourage world nuclear disarmament. There is no doubt this country presents a sitting target. This conference is opposed to any British defence policy which is based on the use or threatened use of nuclear weapons either by this country or its allies, and demands the removal of all nuclear bases in this country."

the NEC reply

Those words are parts of two resolutions which were carried by the Labour Party annual conference of 1972. Joe Gormley, of the National Union of Mineworkers, on behalf of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the party, asked conference to accept those resolutions. In his reply he remarked that the debate had been "a short one; perhaps (it is) a little alarming that international politics can be discussed in such a short time by a big international movement like this. I do not think we are getting our priorities strictly correct when we are dealing with the business of conference." (Applause.) " . . . Unilateral actions would not bring the kind of results that those who urge them claim."

"For this reason we believe that a future Labour government should remain within the NATO alliance as a force for détente and disarmament. Our clear objective would be achieving progress in the security conference ahead. This, in my opinion, more than anything, would remove the need for military alliances . . ."

"In judging our defence spending it must be remembered that, in a volunteer army, the British soldier must be given better wages and conditions, and therefore it is possible that in certain areas no greater economies can be made . . . Many party activists believe that withdrawal from NATO and a Swedish policy of neutrality . . . would do away with the need for defence. This is a bit naïve because if you take examples, it does not work out that way . . . Neutral Sweden spends 184 dollars per head per year on defence, while Denmark, a member of NATO, spends 87 dollars per head per year . . . We are willing to seek, within the context of the Strategic Arms Limitation and Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions, an answer to the questions of nuclear bases (not only because they can now be sited in America and perhaps go over Britain) that is not the only reason, but the reason is we have to look further than this on this matter. We have to deal with the whole question of nuclear disarmament, and it is on that basis that" the resolution "must be accepted."

In the early 'sixties, the Labour Party nearly came apart on the problems of defence and disarmament, and it could come apart again today. The loss of office in 1970 revealed the old divisions once more, and has again given them play. The divisions will always be there; there are people in the party whose basic political assumptions are such that they can *never* agree on certain questions of policy (of which disarmament is one), but who yet certainly *ought* to be in the Labour Party, because they agree on all, or almost all, other questions, and because they would be miserable in any other party.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to contribute to a *modus vivendi* between the conflicting opinions in the Labour Party on defence and disarmament; but no opinion and no *modus vivendi* between conflicting opinions, can be much good unless it takes account of what has been happening, and what is happening, in the wide world today. That much of what is happening is illogical and discouraging, and may appear incomprehensible, does not render it negligible or irrelevant.

This pamphlet treats of three questions : weapons (who has what?), politics (what do they use it for?) and disarmament (how can they be persuaded to get rid of it?).

My strictures concerning the present strategic posture of the Soviet Union may seem rather harsh, but it should be pointed out that they are no more unsympathetic than what I wrote about the US posture in the early 'sixties. The world has changed much since then. For one thing, any unilateral West European disarmament now means strengthening Russia against China. It means taking sides in the bitter quarrel between Russian communism and Chinese communism, and Labour Party members will want to reflect well before doing that.

My belief in the need for an active and wide ranging British disarmament policy is quite unaffected by the failure of the last Labour government to achieve any disarmament. It did not seek to. The next Labour government should be as active and thorough in this supremely important field as the last one was superficial and contradictory . . . And now to work.

From 1964 to 1970, defence expenditure was, proportionately to other expenditure, substantially reduced, but no disarmament was achieved ; nor (except in the marginal field of biological weapons) was any proposed. Certain aspects of the government's foreign policy were also found deeply insulting by large sections of the party and of the politically conscious young. A little self searching has followed: is a socialist foreign policy possible at all? What can we do to ensure that next time our ministers are not swallowed whole by the Whitehall machine, as many people suspect they were last time? For a minister to succeed in what he wants to do, he needs two things: a sound understanding of the field, together with access to more sound understanding other than that channelled through the administrative civil service ; and a coherent and sustainable policy which has enough support, in the country and in the parliamentary party, to be acceptable to a cabinet each of whose members is necessarily pre-occupied with (and better informed about) other things.

The long term foreign policy objective for the Labour Party is perhaps not too hard to agree upon. We would like Britain under a Labour government to forward, by example and by action, the transformation of the world into a place of peace, disarmament, and social and human justice, under a rationalised United Nations Organisation. The goal unites us. It is the route that divides. For my part I want Britain, in the phase between the end of empire and the beginning of consensual world government, to be a peaceful, democratic, socialist, stable, ingenious, tolerant and generous country ; and not to be pushed around. I want all other countries to be like that too ; but for the sake of convenience and modesty, I look at Britain first. As between the Spanish and the Swedish way at the end of empire, I want us to choose the Swedish way ; social democracy, social justice, prosperity with generosity and internationalism. However, I want Britain to do more than Sweden could for the creation of general social democracy in western Europe ; I am dissatisfied with the nation state, which has a terrible history, and I want us to take, within the European Community, our first minute steps beyond it.

We shall, of course, be in the company of other states which are democratic and have, like us, a strong foundation of socialist thought and experience to build on. In this framework I want us to get on with the job of general human socialism ; the purposeful allocation of resources among all human beings now living, and between the living and the unborn.

the European context

We are Europeans: we have been since the beginning of history. The dominating factor in Europe now is that Soviet Russia is not only the biggest country there, it is also the most highly armed, the most modernly armed, and politically the most backward and authoritarian. Democracy has, in effect, never been known there. Soviet socialism has been achieved without democracy and without liberty ; it offers no competition to democratic, libertarian socialism. The latter, on the other

hand, offers strong competition to despotic bureaucratic socialism, which is why the Russian government goes to such lengths to make sure its peoples do not find out about it. The more successfully we build democratic socialism in western Europe, the more threatening, politically, will western Europe appear to Russia; and this will tax our diplomacy. That the Soviet Union is the successor state to the nineteenth century Russian empire and has not yet taken even any tentative steps towards its dissolution, makes the Soviet situation yet more incalculable.

How, then shall we approach our aim of a peaceful, disarmed, and just world? *Can* we, as a fact, ever hope to introduce a world order based on a better social organisation than the sovereign nation state? If not, can we induce the nation states themselves to disarm, without any transfer of sovereignty to other organisations? All democratic socialists, and most democrats of any persuasion, will answer "yes" to both these questions; yes, but it will take time. Thus, since we have to live for a while, probably quite a long while, in an armed nation state we need a defence policy to cover that period, as well as a disarmament policy to ensure that it is as short as possible, and to bring us to the next period, the one we seek.

Is our nation armed in the right way, and to the right level? These questions can only be answered by considering, on the one hand, the threats which are, or are believed to be, held off by our armament whether they are external (the Soviet Union) or internal (Northern Ireland), and on the other, our resources and the conflicting claims on them. Since modern armed forces, and especially volunteer forces, are very expensive, our nation state should be no more heavily or expensively armed than it need be. The threats we perceive, however, though remote ones, are threats of the most disastrous events (subjugation and civil war), so our nation state must not be so little or so cheaply armed that it cannot avert them. Disaster lies both ways; the United States was over armed during the period from 1960 to 1968, and this led indirectly to the Canossa of Vietnam. Britain and

France were under armed from 1935 to 1940, and this led directly to the Canossa of Dunkirk. (I do not further consider the internal threat of civil war in Northern Ireland; it is enough to note its existence.)

What, then, is the external threat facing this country now? To attempt an answer to this question we must first ask: how does one recognise a threat when one sees it? Is the proclaimed hostile intent of another nation state a threat by itself, or only in so far as it is accompanied by a degree of armament which might plausibly worry us, given our own armament level? Equally, is a hostile intent which we infer, but which the other nation state does not proclaim, a threat by itself or only when linked with a worrying level of armaments? Conversely, is a worrying armament level a threat if it is combined with a proclaimed hostile intent, an inferred hostile intent, or neither?

In practice, the conceptual and social structure of all nation states has always been, and will very likely always be, such that they act on the worst assumptions about each other. This is what they call "common prudence." They will determine their level of armaments partly in accordance with the degree of hostility proclaimed by or inferred about another state, and partly in accordance with what they know of its level of armaments. The reason for this is plain: an unarmed state yelling abuse and hatred at us is no threat unless and until it gets armed, which will take it some years. A state which is traditionally friendly towards us, but is armed to the teeth, is no threat unless and until it becomes hostile, and this would be a major political change also taking some years. We will not feel impelled to arm against either of these. But a nation state which is armed to the teeth and is, in general, hostile to us, can become a physical threat in a few days or even hours. Against such a state we will feel impelled to stand armed. These truisms lie at the base of all political thinking by chiefs of staff and all strategic thinking by ministers and officials; be they Chinese or Indian, Israeli or Roumanian. An incoming minister, unfamiliar with them, would have them brought to his attention.

2. the Soviet threat

When we say "threat" we must continue "of". In the instance of Soviet Russia, what action do we, the British, fear? Invasion? Hardly; we remember that we have not been invaded and occupied for over nine hundred years. (On the other hand, we have not been disarmed for over nine hundred years either; and of course France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Russia were invaded and occupied only 30 years ago, Hungary 17 years ago, Egypt six years ago, Czechoslovakia once again five years ago, and East Pakistan, as it then was, two years ago. They did not have the advantage of the Channel as we have). The ultimate act of violence is no longer conquest and occupation, but nuclear annihilation. Against conquest and occupation there was always the possibility of defence; against rocket bombardment, to which we became vulnerable for the first time in our history in 1944, there can be no defence, but only deterrence. The threat of nuclear annihilation by rockets has been plainly made by Russia; to Britain and France in 1956, and to China in 1969. That very water which has saved us from the constant invasions and occupations suffered by our neighbours is also a source of weakness; we are an energy and food importing country. Most of the energy comes, and

will continue to come, over long sea lanes. The food comes partly over long sea lanes, and partly over the short ones of the Channel and the North Sea: and Russia has, over the last decade, acquired the capacity to blockade Britain; it has built up a powerful offensive submarine force. So what is the Russian "threat" a threat of? It is simply the threat inherent in all military and naval preponderance, that of being able to push another nation around. Such a threat is felt very differently by countries which have their own second strike nuclear force, and those which do not; by those which are islands and by those which are not.

The Soviet Union with its allies has stood for a quarter of a century armed to the teeth up against a line on the other side of which we stand armed to the teeth, with our allies. What has been happening to the relationship between the military power of the two sides? In considering the tables which follow, we have to remember that the figures all come from western sources, because the Soviet Union does not publish any. It has been the Soviet choice for a whole generation now that the world shall have to rely on US intelligence estimates in judging their military strength. This in itself causes distrust, arms race escalation, and world instability.

TABLE I
THE "BALANCE OF TERROR" BETWEEN THE SUPER POWERS: STRATEGIC NUCLEAR POWER

	the United States of America	the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
1. total number of fixed Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) and Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) allowed by the Strategic Arms Limitation Interim Agreement (1)	1,710	2,419
2. total number of nuclear warheads currently carried by strategic missiles and heavy bombers (1)	5,900	2,200
3. megatonnage launchable by ICBM or SLBM (2)	2,400	11,400
4. equivalent megatonnage (3) launchable by ICBM or SLBM (2)	2,300	5,600
5. missiles launched by diesel powered submarines and cruise missiles, not covered by the Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement (SALA)	nil	398

Sources: (1) Department of State, *Washington news release*, 1 August, 1972. (2) *The military balance 1972-73*, International Institute of Strategic Studies, London. (3) For "equivalent megatonnage" see below, page 5.

TABLE II
NUCLEAR WARHEADS IN EUROPE & MIDDLE LEVEL TECHNOLOGY

	NATO	Warsaw Pact	(of which USSR)
nuclear warheads in Europe	7,200	3,500?	3,500
main battle tanks in operational service	8,100	21,200	11,600
tactical aircraft in operational service	2,914	5,390	3,270

Source: *The military balance, 1972-3.*

The Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement (SALA) of 1972 between Russia and America naturally concerns only those arms which appear strategic to them. It is obvious that, wherever we live, a strategic nuclear weapon is one which can hit us, and a tactical nuclear weapon is one which can only hit other people. To us British, then, "tactical" nuclear weapons in Europe are very strategic indeed. The largest American missiles are the Pershings, with a range of 500 miles and a kiloton warhead. The largest Soviet ones are the 600 Medium Range Ballistic Missiles (MRBMs) and Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBMs) with ranges of 1,200 and 2,300 miles, and a megaton warhead.

Commenting on the tables of which II and III are simplifications, *The military balance 1972-3* points out that "the comparisons . . . are not very different from those of a year ago, but over a longer time span the effect of small and slow changes can be marked and the balance can alter. In 1962 the American land, sea and air forces in Europe totalled 434,000; now the figure is 300,000. There were 26 Soviet divisions in eastern Europe in 1967; now there are 31. The numbers and quality of surface to air missiles in the Warsaw Pact forces have grown, presenting now a most formidable defence, and the Soviet tactical aircraft numbers have grown with

them. The pattern over the years has been a gradual shift in favour of the East."

These tables are by no means the whole picture. When considering the Soviet Union's new superiority in strategic rocketry, we must also remember that the United States still has a superiority of 500 to 140 in strategic bombers, and has carrier based nuclear bombers; although, on the other hand, the ability of bombers to penetrate enemy defences is much lower than that of rockets. We must also remember that the US contends that gross megatonnage is not what counts, and that "equivalent megatonnage" is more important (see Table I). Three one-megaton rockets will do more "floor area destruction" than one three-megaton rocket, and in "equivalent megatonnage" (which takes account of that fact) Russia is only two and a half times as strong as America, not five times. But the Russians can do sums too, and they have, for reasons unknown to us, chosen to go in for very large warheads. Moreover, the "equivalent megatonnage" calculation applies only to blast, not to radiation.

Although the Warsaw Pact has more tanks than NATO, NATO has better anti-tank weapons, and eastern tanks are not held to be as good as the best western tanks in the first place. Naturally, this will not continue to be so unless we so decide.

TABLE III
TOTAL ARMED FORCES (IN THOUSANDS)

country	1965	1968	1971
USSR	3,150	3,220	3,375
USA	2,723	3,547	2,699
France	510	505	502
United Kingdom	424	405	365

Source: *The military balance, 1972-3.*

The picture at sea has changed even more sharply than anything on land. In the last decade the Soviet Union has acquired naval port facilities in the Caribbean, the Levant, Arabia, North Africa and East Africa, and has in the same period become the world's second naval power. Measured in manpower, the Soviet navy is nearly as big as the American, about three times bigger than that of China (the third naval power), and about five times bigger than ours (we are the fourth). By and large it is also much newer.

the qualitative arms race and comparative expenditure

A new Soviet supersonic bomber is flying; the American B-1 will not fly before July 1975. Soviet Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABMS) are operational; American ones are not. A Soviet Orbiting Bombardment System is operational; there is no equivalent Ameri-

can programme. The Soviet Anti-Satellite Satellite has been successfully tested: the equivalent American programme is on the drawing board. A new very long range Soviet Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) has been tested; the equivalent American missile, to go in the Trident system, is on the drawing board. On the other hand the Americans are well ahead of the Russians in Multiple Independently Targeted Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs), the only one of these innovations which is at all familiar to readers of the British press. Both America and Russia, of course, have the simpler multiple re-entry vehicles (MRV). The Soviet Union has mobile, land based intercontinental missiles, America only has fixed ones.

In all comparisons of expenditure upon defence there is bound to be a wide margin of error because of the many different ways of calculating things, even

TABLE IV
CHANGES IN DEFENCE EXPENDITURE

country	defence expenditure <i>per capita</i> (in dollars)		defence expenditure as a percentage of GNP			
	1969	1971	1966	1968	1970	1971
Israel	400	470	12.2	15.7	26.5	23.9
United States	393	378	8.5	9.3	7.8	7.3
USSR	164	(c)222	9.0?	10.0?	11.0?	(a)10-12
Sweden	138	145	4.2	3.9	3.7	3.7
Czechoslovakia	109	127	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.8
France	123	101	5.0	4.7	4.0	3.1
East Germany	116	123	3.3	5.7	5.9	5.9
United Kingdom	100	109	5.6	5.4	(b)4.9	4.7
West Germany	90	100	4.2	3.6	3.3	2.8
Australia	103	97	4.7	4.6	3.6	2.9
Singapore	—	73	—	4.9	5.8	6.3
Switzerland	66	72	2.6	2.4	2.1	1.9
Egypt	25	43	11.1	12.5	19.6	21.7
Spain	18	20	2.2	2.2	2.0	1.8
Burma	4	4	4.0	3.7	3.3	2.9
Indonesia	2	2	4.8	1.8	2.3	2.2

Notes: (a) Sir Alec Douglas-Home, speaking to the British Atlantic Committee in London, 12 December, 1972. (b) The explanation given by the IISS for the discrepancy between this figure and the 5.7 per cent given by the government to parliament (and used in the statement of the national executive to the 1972 Labour Party conference) is as follows: "We have used the GNP figure for the calendar year because that is made available through the IMF for all countries, whereas the British government uses the GNP for the financial year. The figure used for defence expenditure was the budget estimate plus £100m as the figure expected for salary increases. The government figure to produce the 5.7 per cent was the estimated out turn." (c) The best available figure is that for 1970 which is given here.

among those who wish the public to have as fair an idea as possible. When you try to assess Soviet defence expenditure, this margin is much increased because the Soviet Union practices a policy of secrecy and concealment in this matter, as in others. They publish neither current figures, nor target figures for the future. Most countries in the West publish both. Table IV shows the change over the last few years in the defence expenditure of certain countries, expressed in dollars *per capita*, and as a proportion of Gross National Product (GNP). It is abstracted from the last three years of *The military balance*, which is published yearly by the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS). (I would have preferred, on some grounds, to use the data of the Swedish International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) for this presentation. The SIPRI *Yearbooks* show greater economic sophistication than *The military balance*, but a lesser political sophistication in the choice of what to calculate and present. SIPRI only gives the total defence expenditure of each nation, together with some cumulative increases and decreases by groups and continents, over time. On the other hand, it gives them on an acceptable constant price basis, and according to well worked out exchange rate assumptions; but more important to politicians and (where there are any) to voters are the *per capita* expenditures, and the defence slices of GNP. To discover these, we have to turn to the source where the economic presentation is perhaps less sophisticated; for instance, IISS gives only market price comparisons, though the exchange rate basis becomes more explicit each year. Politicians in opposition, without research resources, must often have to face such difficulties).

The first thing to note from this table is that there are six countries in the world which pay more per head for defence than we do, and that Israel pays four times as much per head and America three times as much. In this abstract there are seven countries which spend a higher percentage of their GNP on defence than we do; (in the *military balance* table from which it is abstracted there are 19, many of them Arab countries). The second thing

to catch the eye is that the six top countries in the *per capita* league table have the following political alignments in order: western, western, eastern, neutral, eastern, eastern. The fact that every Swedish citizen pays a third as much again for his neutrality as we do for our membership of NATO is little known here. If a country's GNP goes up and its defence expenditure remains steady, its "defence slice" goes down. That is what happens in, for instance, France, whose GNP has been going up much faster than ours. Bearing all this in mind, the most important thing to be learned from this table is that defence expenditure expressed as a proportion of GNP has declined over the last five years in the US, Britain, Australia, France, West Germany, Sweden, and Switzerland, and increased in the USSR, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia.

Warsaw Pact increases

The increase in Soviet defence expenditure cannot very well be attributed to the increased cost of holding down the East European countries; to begin with some of them, and especially East Germany, have increased their own defence expenditure; moreover, you do not need submarines or inter-continental or even medium range rockets and bombers to hold down your occupied neighbours, you only need transport planes, machine guns and armoured personnel carriers. Some of the increase is certainly due to the increasing cost of the confrontation with China, that is, to the quarrel not with "capitalism" but with another sort of "communism." But such is the Russian nuclear superiority over China that there can be no question of the nuclear element in the increase being accounted for this way; nor do neighbours in a land mass develop deep sea navies against each other. Yet there is no doubt that, in recent years, there has been a considerable increase in the *proportion* of expenditure in the Soviet Union (and, indeed, in the Warsaw Pact countries in general) going on defence. There has also been a consequential increase in their military might. Moreover, there has also been an overall decrease in the proportion of public money

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imperialist countries, headed by the United States, to produce an instrument for actively countering the liberation trends that emerged in Europe after the great victory of the forces of peace and democracy over fascism. Using pseudo-defensive declarations as a cover, NATO has always had the preparation of war against the socialist countries as its main aim." Svyatoslav Koslov; *Novosti for Soviet News*, put out by the Soviet embassy in London, 16 May, 1972). Similar samples could be found any week; and Marshall Grechko's sabre rattling is now becoming unpleasantly continuous.

At the same time as the government of the Soviet Union and the Soviet foreign ministry have been making forthcoming noises about the European Security Conference, or noises at least which could be interpreted as forthcoming in western Europe, they were also seeking to enter into commercial arrangements with technologically advanced capitalist concerns in western Europe, in the US and in Japan. It is remarkable that the Soviet Union has been devoting an increasing proportion of its GNP to a strategic arms procurement substantially larger than that of the US, and at the same time seeking credits and know how from capitalist enterprises and governments in order to develop the lands Czarist Russia acquired while "capitalist" countries were acquiring the empires from which they have now, except for Portugal, withdrawn. The Soviet Union has this last year bought vast quantities of grain, particularly from the United States, thereby freeing resources for purposes to which it accords higher priority than farming. The inference is hard to escape, that the present Soviet government has decided that its first priority is indeed to "invest" in armaments. What return is expected?

Soviet intentions and expectations

Russian intentions towards us are obscured by the mercurial opacity of Russian official language and by the incompatibility of the two main goals of Soviet foreign policy: détente and the "proletarian internationalism" which sanctioned the invasion and occupation of Czecho-

slovakia. This latter means they must continually paint us as bloody villains, and boast of the overwhelming might and exploits of the Soviet armed forces. Present proclamation is little guide. From what might the degree of Soviet hostility to this country be inferred? We may turn to the statements of Lenin and Stalin, and even to those of the small fry in the present ideological institutes of Moscow, about the class structure of the world and the relationship between the "capitalist" and "socialist" countries; but common sense suggests and experience confirms that those who wholeheartedly accept the communist analyses of the world, formulated with such brilliance between 1848 and 1924 (and so often faulted both then and later) are well balanced in the Soviet power structure by a Russian nationalist bureaucracy of a type which seems to have altered little in the last two centuries. One must look in a general way at the Russian-ness of the Soviet Union. To what extent is the Soviet government prepared to subject the non-Russian citizens of the Soviet Union, and the countries of eastern Europe, to the interests of the Russian people as they now conceive them? There is nowhere in the world now a government which more totally subjugates both its own people and the subject peoples of its empire than the Russian government, and there is nowhere in the world a nation which more totally subjugates the other nations in a military bloc of which it is the leader, than the Soviet Union.

Nor can we derive much comfort from the aims the Soviet leaders declare for their own people. Brezhnev's four hour speech to the twenty fourth congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1971 was contradictory about foreign affairs, combining sections about the inevitable victory of "socialism" over the decadent "capitalist" West with sections about the need for peaceful co-existence and collaboration. About home affairs, on the other hand, it was quite single minded. Soviet man exists to serve the production machine which is to be run by a centralised computer system; computers will also increasingly help the trade unions to enforce "state discipline." Nowhere was

there any suggestion that the purpose of human life could be higher, or even other, than producing more things, and thereby serving the state and the party. This is the true and only purpose of art and science. Like all major statements of unrelieved collectivist despotism, this epoch making speech was virtually unreadable, and that has stopped it becoming known in the West.

On 22 December, 1972, Leonid Brezhnev made another important speech in Moscow. In it he spoke of the rise of a Soviet identity and of Soviet nationality as something more real and more important than the identity and the nationality of the constituent republics of the union. The Soviet constitution, which at present allows the constituent republics to secede and become independent nations, would soon, he said, be revised. The proposed revision would be submitted to a referendum, and from the surrounding emphasis on *Soviet* identity, it is hard to imagine that this would be a series of republic by republic referenda; it seems more likely it would be a single, all union referendum. The Russians are, if only by a hair's breadth, still a majority of the Soviet people, but will probably cease to be so by about 1980.

What can be inferred from all this about Soviet attitudes to the West in general, and Great Britain in particular? It certainly cannot be inferred that because ruthless subjugation holds sway on their side of the iron curtain, the Russians are burning to cross it and ruthlessly to subjugate us. Those who hold that this is the case ignore many things, and two especially; first, that with every appearance of sincerity the Russian leaders say they are not, and second that a fair part of the ruthlessness in eastern Europe must be put down to fear of national defections which could bring western forces and western radio and TV nearer to the land frontiers of Russia. (The Soviet Union has carefully chosen a non-compatible TV system). On the other hand, however, those who claim firm evidence that the Soviet Union is a *status quo* power in Europe forget the equally firm evidence that western Europe is heavily armed.

We know Russia does not seek to dominate us; we know Russia has sought to dominate Egypt, Syria, Algeria and Cuba, and does succeed in dominating Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the other countries in the eastern bloc. We know also that "socialism with a human face" was seen as such a threat that its destruction was held worth the sacrifice of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks in 1968, and the solidarity of the major communist parties in Europe; the Italian and the French communist parties, in particular, bitterly opposed Russian policy at that time. A community in western Europe which is both socialist and libertarian cannot but seem a threat to today's Soviet leadership.

Russia remains hostile to this country. Its hostility lacks the quality of deep grained compulsive hatred, but is subject to ups and downs. Russian radio and press remains almost as stupid and inflammatory about us as in Stalin's day. We can infer from the pattern of its armaments that the Soviet government not only fears that the peoples of eastern Europe may rise against it (as of course they often have), but also that the governments of the West may attack it, or support the East Europeans in a rising, as they never have. It cannot be inferred that the Soviet Union intends to achieve a position where it would be capable of overwhelming the countries of the West, but we cannot fail to observe that the course it is pursuing in piling up thermo-nuclear megatonnage, in developing its navy, and so on, is not a course carefully devised to lead to trust and détente. The Soviet Union can also be seen pouring weapons, instructors, and even operational troops, into Syria, Egypt, Cuba, Somalia, India, Bangla Desh and, of course, Mongolia. These were the very arguments raised against US weapons acquisition and deployment in the 'fifties and 'sixties. Anyone who deplored US arms policy then is equally in logic and in conscience bound to deplore Soviet arms policy now. But many people have not, in fact, re-examined the matter since the days of the Cuba crisis, and anybody who played even a small part in bringing about the current climate of opinion must equally play a part in seeing it does not outlast the facts which bore it out.

3. movements within the western alliance

A quarter of a century ago NATO began, and from the beginning the United States has taken a leading part in it, not only (as was inevitable) in the airborne and missile borne strategic nuclear sector, but also (as was not inevitable) on the ground. For many years a static situation ensued. Britain and West Germany bickered about who should pay for the British troops on the Rhine. Denmark veered further and further towards the Icelandic position (Iceland, though a member of NATO, has no armed forces). Turkey and Greece continued to base themselves on brawn not brain and to maintain the traditional martial virtues. Then France dropped out of NATO (the organisation) though not out of the North Atlantic Treaty. The military significance of this is commonly exaggerated. The headquarters of NATO may have moved from Paris to Brussels, but it is hard to discover anything which the French armed forces would do differently if there was a war now, from what they would have done if there had been no change in 1966. Some expense was incurred and a political point was made.

The rough balance of "contribution" (and therefore of "influence") between the nations signatory to the North Atlantic Treaty was not much altered, and all the time the United States maintained its 7,000 nuclear warheads and its vast preponderance (over its allies) of aircraft. The sixth fleet kept the Russian navy out of the Mediterranean and American thermo-nuclear bombers flew about from Britain, Spain, Italy, Germany and Turkey. When there was an accident, as at Palomares, the statistics about how amazingly seldom there were accidents brought it home to people what an amazing lot of H-bomb flying was going on.

All that has now changed. The Soviet navy has come chasing after the American sixth fleet into the Mediterranean. Iceland is seeking to get rid of its American base. The megatonnage balance is reversed. The Americans have withdrawn 150,000 men from Europe, and only the most superficial of western European observers can expect that the remainder are going to stay at their present level for much longer. The failure in Vietnam is leading

the United States to draw in its horns, and the military preponderance of the United States within NATO in Europe is certain to be reduced. A continuing unilateral and unconditional reduction in the NATO forces in Europe has been unmistakably signalled by the most powerful country in the alliance, and this is an important fact which must be taken into account when British defence policy is being formulated; just as the facts of increasing Soviet might and the Sino-Russian conflict must be.

British and French nuclear capabilities

There has long been an error current, especially in the parties of the left in both Britain and France, about the deterrent, and therefore political, effects of their nuclear forces. It is true that they are very much smaller than the thermo-nuclear forces of the Soviet Union and the United States; indeed, measured by throw weight (deliverable megatonnage) the British force is perhaps 160 times smaller than the former and 50 times smaller than the latter. But small as our own thermo-nuclear forces may be in comparison with the two super powers, they are still as powerful as 2,000 Hiroshimas.

The deterrent effect of a given nuclear force against a hypothetical attack from another does not depend upon its size relative to that other, still less upon its size relative to the nuclear might of one's allies. It depends on one thing only: the amount of death, disease and damage that would be caused by the number of warheads that got through. If the Soviet Union (we are here pursuing that pessimistic calculus which must realistically be pursued in this field) were to say to this country: "Do as I say or else I will obliterate you," and if this country were to say to the Soviet Union: "I will not, because if you do obliterate me I will still, in spite of your Anti-Ballistic Missile System (ABM), be able to launch from my Polaris submarines enough thermo-nuclear rockets utterly to destroy ten of your cities, thereby killing say 7 million people," then it is clear that the Soviet Union will not be as likely to utter the threat in the first place. That second strike

statement is one that can, in fact, be made by Britain; and a similar one, with smaller figures, can be made by France.

The conviction that the British and French nuclear forces are "useless," that is that they do not operate in this way, is mistaken. If a direct study of ranges, yields, on-station times and penetration capacity does not suffice to correct it, we now have it directly from the horse's mouth; from Russia itself. The interim Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement (SALA) of May 1972 laid down a ceiling for the number of submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) Russia and America might have. When it was signed, the Russians made a unilateral declaration that if Britain or France ever acquired any more SLBMs than they then had, Russia would regard itself as permitted to get more too, to match them. Needless to say the Americans stoutly and properly proclaimed that they did not accept this interpretation of the agreement. The important thing, however, is that anyone who has hitherto argued that the British or French nuclear forces were of no effect, that is that they were nugatory, must now note that those forces are held by the Russians to be an operative part of the strategic balance. In fact, they will amount to about 16 per cent of the total number of SLBMs owned by the West when the present French programme is complete.

The world strategic and political situation has changed greatly in the last ten years, and in an unpleasant way. The pendulum has swung too far. Then, we had the open minded and impulsive peasant, Khrushchev, in the Kremlin; now we have that grimmest and greyest of bureaucrats, Brezhnev. Then we had *One day in the life of Ivan Denisovitch* published and even publicly defended by Krushchev. Now we have Solzhenitsyn persecuted, vilified, and silenced in his own country; we are back to the old black Russia which treated Pushkin, Dostoyevsky, Herzen, Mandelstam and Pasternak in exactly the same way. (The importance of the way the Russian government treats Solzhenitsyn is that he is the finest Russian writer since Tolstoy and that he speaks to, and of, that wide humanity of spirit which is indeed

entitled to the resounding names of socialism and communism.) Then also we had "détente" as the only announced principle of Soviet European policy, and the invasion of Hungary went unjustified. Now "détente" is balanced or even negated by a "proletarian internationalism" which explicitly justifies Russia's right to invade and occupy other socialist countries whose internal policies displease it, and to compel the armies of its satellites to take part in the invasion. Then we had a great land power, an inferior rocket power, and a negligible naval power. Now we have a great land power, a superior rocket power and a naval power with global capabilities.

All these facts are unpleasant. To state them, and to insist that they should be faced, is not to recommend the adoption of a countervailing militarism in this country or in western Europe; but they are not compatible with the hunch, now rather widespread in Britain and America, that Russia is a *status quo* power which really rather loves us and, because of the dispute with China, will not do anything to damage our interests.

the need to agree to disarm

As long as there is poverty, ignorance, ill health and bad environment in this country, or indeed anywhere in the world, all socialists must for ever be on watch for safe opportunities of reducing defence expenditure. Defence does no good to anyone; it only prevents harm, and there are always people around who need good doing. We can ourselves affect the circumstances which make it safe or dangerous to disarm. We can, with deliberate and energetic policy, act upon the international weather; and that, because we find the burden of armaments heavy, is what we are bound to do.

4. general and comprehensive disarmament

Simplest to conceive, hardest to bring off, but most enduring if we do bring it off, we can ask the other side to disarm with us. This is so obvious and yet so infrequently considered. Since 1962 no British government has asked the other side to disarm. We have never, in that time, proposed any actual disarmament in the nuclear or conventional field, that is, in the real arms race, and I dare to assert that no perceptible disarmament will come about in the continued absence of an understanding of the principles of general and comprehensive disarmament. This does not mean that there will be no disarmament until everybody has agreed on general and comprehensive disarmament. Nor, of course, does "general and comprehensive" mean either sudden or total disarmament. "General" (as opposed to "regional" or "unilateral") means that the actions, if any, of all states are related in a single process. "Comprehensive" (as opposed to "nuclear" or "conventional" or "chemical" or "biological") means that all sorts of weapons will have to come in. There will be no disarmament which is not general; if Russia and America were to disarm very far, that would give rise to a Chinese superiority which they would consider intolerable, and so on down the line. There will be no disarmament which is not comprehensive; if nuclear weapons were to be reduced very far, that would expose a conventional instability, and *vice versa*. To say this is not to make the best the enemy of the good; it is to assert that the good can only be achieved if the best is held in mind. It has been true at any moment since western re-armament began in 1948 that it would have been better to agree on mutual disarmament than to engage in an arms race. It is still true today, in the changed situation of the 'seventies.

unilateral disarmament

Nevertheless, it is necessary to clear the mind about certain underlying pre-conceptions which colour the views of different people about disarmament. In particular, there is a need to distinguish between three contrasting world views which may and do underly the single and familiar policy of *unilateral* disarmament.

First, comes the outright pacifist position, which states: "I am personally wholly averse to all sorts of violence, even resistance to or retaliation for aggression, and I wish my government to share my aversion. All other countries ought to do the same, of course; but let us start with mine, and hope the thing will radiate out from me, through my country, until it reaches the whole world." This position is respectable, but it is not new and it is perhaps unlikely that it will now have a greater effect in the world than it has hitherto; namely nil. Sometimes it is coloured by a conviction that Britain is lazy and old, that it is time to opt out and that insularity in retirement is possible; Europe, Germany, Czechoslovakia are far away, the world may well not be one after all. What does it all matter? Let us use the money today, for something we know we want. Second, there is the position one may very broadly describe as: "my big brother will bash you." This would have Britain lay down its nuclear arms and reduce its forces in general without inviting the Soviet Union to do the same, and trusting that the Americans would protect us. This view is not so respectable, and might seem ignoble in general morality and impractical in day to day politics. Third, there is the conviction that the Russians are really quite harmless, and have nothing against us; and that it is simply a factual error, which we ought no longer to dignify with our assent, to form alliances and deploy armaments to offset their's. This view shades off into straight forward "fellow travelling," with the rider that if they do have something against us, then it is probably our fault.

The first view is most likely to be entertained by those who have a neo-imperialist conception of the rôle and identity of nations. They feel a strong sense of oneness with their country and reason thus: "I think it would be right, therefore we should do it." "We" is, in their minds, a noun of great weight, an entity which takes actions of great importance to other entities in the world, namely other nation states, which will then feel impelled to copy them. If they do not, no matter; at any rate "we" will have done what is right. We will have borne witness.

But statesmanship is largely self consciousness; they will guide ill who guide the destinies of the nation state without continually asking themselves and others "Who are we?" "What is the existential density of that first person plural pronoun, and what, therefore, the weight of its witness?"

"We" are one of five nuclear weapon states and one of about 30 states possessing intermediate military technology. Our political position can be further defined by listing the international organisations we belong to and those we do not, by looking at various league tables of an economic and demographic nature, and by a study of comparative constitutional and political morphology. After all this, which need not be meticulously done every day but the idea of which must on no day go unvisited in the mind, the statesman can *only* realise that he is *only* the temporary and partial guide of a social organism which is *only* one nation state among others.

This degree of awareness of nationhood, and of the relations between nations, though it is not complex or lofty, is more reliably attained by exercising power than by thinking about it. Why should this be so? Do those who have undergone the trauma of power compensate (if unconsciously) for the limits they have discovered it has, by implying that those limits lie wider than they do? Do some of those who have not, permit themselves illusions and the advocacy of extreme courses in the knowledge (if unconscious) that the illusions will not be shared nor the courses adopted by those in power? Perhaps the answer is simply that self knowledge can be deeper than knowledge of others, and that understanding of a function can be deepest when one is fulfilling it. The foreign or defence minister of a nation state will be acutely aware of the presence, the thoughts, the calculations and the power of other foreign and defence ministers. Let us suppose that somewhere, at some time, a foreign or defence minister is attracted by the idea of unilateral disarmament. It has its attractions after all, particularly financial ones. How will his mind work? He will wonder if

anybody else is thinking of it. Any ally? Any adversary? It might be worth having a talk about it. That would certainly be safer than if we did it alone; after all, why us? Why not one of the others? In any case, they will all be thinking the same thing, all these temporary and partial guides. At this point he will come, as all statesmen have always come and will always come (unless the nation states disappear before their armaments, which is absurd) to the conclusion that there is no alternative to their meeting together and proposing and discussing various arms reductions which they might make at the same time, and in a co-ordinated way which would be agreed by all.

Those who advocate unilateral disarmament by this country often do so because they believe that we have tried and failed to obtain multi-lateral disarmament, and that history shows unilateral disarmament induces the other side to follow suit. Neither of these things is true. We have not tried to obtain multi-lateral disarmament; indeed there is only one country in the world which has tried continuously, energetically and imaginatively over the years; Sweden. The recent British record in the field is undistinguished. The super powers discussed various plans in the 'fifties and Britain co-sponsored some. The diplomatic effort was sporadic and short sighted. The time of the Zorin/McCloy joint statement in 1961, which was the high water mark of agreement on disarmament since the second world war, was also the high water mark of British activity. Sir Alec Douglas-Home was, then too, foreign secretary, and for a moment it seemed that one of the nuclear powers was at last going to make disarmament a real cause, and seek to bring it about by real efforts, rather than distributing pacifiers for public opinion. Unfortunately it was only for a moment. When Labour came in in 1964, a minister for disarmament was appointed. He proclaimed that general and comprehensive disarmament was indeed the key to progress, and that Britain would soon make proposals to that end; but the proposals were never made, either by the Labour government, or by its successor, the present Conservative government.

5. what has been achieved?

What has been proposed and achieved in the last few years is a series of so called "collateral measures" which are not measures of disarmament at all, but are agreements not to do certain things which, for various reasons, the signatories do not want to do anyhow. The partial test ban treaty of 1963 was a fairly effective clean air measure. There has been more nuclear testing each year since it came into force than before, and it has in no way affected the arms race; but, since most of the testing has been underground, there has been less fall out. The treaties for the non-militarisation of the Antarctic and the non-nuclearisation of armed forces in Latin America consecrated a *status quo*, in each case, which nobody wanted to change. The agreement on not actually orbiting weapons of mass destruction was of the same nature; nobody wanted to do the precise thing forbidden by the treaty. The US considered ballistic and cruise missiles adequate, and the Soviet Union was content merely to hold orbiting weapons on the ground. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, which was the hardest to achieve and got the most press, had nothing to do with disarmament; it was intended by the Russians and Americans, whose project it was and who would discuss nothing else while it was being negotiated, to stop those who did not have nuclear weapons from getting them, and to allow those who had them to go on having them and to get more. It has not, in any case, been ratified by the most important have nots.

The treaty banning biological weapons (which Fred Mulley, one of Labour's ministers of disarmament, did in fact propose for Britain) outlaws a form of war which is by common consent far too dangerous for one's own side to be of any practical use. But the most purely ostensive of these "collateral measures," that which was most concerned with public relations rather than the actual reduction of arms, was the treaty banning the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the sea bed. Since nuclear missile firing submarines remain unbanned, this treaty is, in Professor Robert Neild's vivid phrase, like banning the bolting of aeroplanes to the ground.

The May 1972 SALT between the United States and the Soviet Union contains no disarmament; it lays down ceilings for some types, and some types only, of inter-continental missiles, ballistic missiles launched from nuclear powered submarines, and anti-ballistic missiles. As regards the ICBMs and SLBMs, these levels are roughly speaking what America has now, but some way ahead for the USSR.

what has not been achieved?

This, then, is what has been achieved in the last decade (much of it while Labour was in power in Great Britain); but it is essential that the Labour movement should know, fully and at all levels, what has *not* been achieved, or even proposed. The Labour government never proposed any nuclear or conventional disarmament whatever. There has been no discussion of nuclear or conventional disarmament, general or regional, anywhere in the world, by any group of governments, since Labour came in in 1964 or since it went out in 1970. It is quite mistaken to argue for unilateral disarmament on the ground that we have tried and failed to get multi-lateral disarmament. But might not measures of unilateral disarmament induce the Soviet Union to take corresponding measures, or at least measures having the same sort of effect? Is not example, in fact, a good way of getting things done? These questions are often asked, and are frequently accompanied by the answer that "history proves it." Unfortunately history proves, if anything, the opposite. After 1945, America and Britain disarmed unilaterally; but the Russians did not follow suit, and the Korean War, the Berlin blockade and the overthrow of the Czechoslovak government persuaded the West to re-arm again. During the 'fifties and 'sixties the British navy gradually withdrew from a position of complete strategic domination in the Indian Ocean, and it was not succeeded by the US navy. Not only did the Russians fail to take any action to balance this unconditional withdrawal, as the theory of unilateralism implies they should have; they started to send their navy into the Indian Ocean on a meaningful scale for

the first time since the 1890s. Both Eisenhower and Khrushchev restricted the construction of strategic missiles. Then Kennedy campaigned on the "missile gap" and when Robert Macnamara, whom he appointed secretary for defence, discovered it did not exist, the new president carried on as if it did. The next few years were the time of the biggest ever American strategic build up, from which so much has since flowed. This was in spite of Khrushchev's continued restraint. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that although from about 1966 to 1972 the United States, in fact, deployed no new strategic missiles (although she has "modernised") yet Russia has not followed suit. This has been the time of the biggest ever build up by the Soviet Union.

Early in 1969, the Russian government was proposing that the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), agreed upon the previous summer but aborted by the invasion of Czechoslovakia, should soon start. When a popular and congressional campaign developed in the United States to prevent any deployment of American ABM, the Russians should, according to unilateralist theory, have begun to dismantle the ABM they had already deployed, or, at least, should have run to meet the Americans in the desired SALT talks when President Nixon proposed they should indeed start in August of that year. Instead, what they did was to make propaganda against the American ABM, without ever mentioning their own, and omit to answer Richard Nixon. It was only *after* congress had, by one vote, approved funds for an American ABM deployment, that the Soviet government agreed to the talks they had earlier been so keen on. Equally, in the SALT, the Soviet Union for a long time wished to see submarines and submarine launched ballistic missiles excluded from the agreement. Only in April 1972, that is to say one month after the 1973 American defence appropriations showed a big rise in proposed expenditure on a new submarine system (Trident), did the Russians agree to a limit on SLBMs. They never did agree to limit mobile land based ICBMs or cruise missiles, on neither of which is American work advanced.

These are just examples. There is, indeed, every reason to think the Russian government would rather see western arms control measures effected by western unilateralists, than be required to give away anything themselves. Such a policy, whether it be intentional or not, does not contribute to détente, only to destabilising fears and uncertainties.

possible consequences

Those in the Labour Party who favour unilateral disarmament tend to avoid envisaging their proposal in the alliance context; they concentrate on the abandonment of British nuclear weapons as such, and the reduction of British defence expenditure as such. Each of these plans points the way to conscription, while together they point to a short cut there.

"We must give up our nuclear weapons because we need the money." All right; but shall we then continue to run down the level of our conventional armed forces while West Germany and France hold steady at levels far higher than ours? Can we expect our allies to put up with that double cop-out? If not, can we, without conscription, ever increase our conventional forces to compensate for the abolition of our nuclear force, and to make conventional defence in Europe more credible? Britain, unarmed Iceland and mighty Luxembourg are the only European NATO countries which do not have conscription at the moment, and it seems a well proven fact that there are only two ways armed forces can compete for men with industry: by paying the same or better, or by conscription.

The other way of falling into the conscription trap is by calling for economies in the running of our conventional forces themselves. The greatest economy that could be obtained would be in the military salary; but a volunteer army demands high pay and good conditions. Reduce them and you need conscription, just like the French, West Germans, Italians, Russians, Poles and so on, to say nothing of the neutral Swedes and Swiss. Hermann Bondi, in a brilliant lecture, as

described how in a country with volunteer forces, like Britain, about two thirds of defence spending goes on pay, housing, children's education, family benefits and the provision of health services, while in one with conscript forces like Russia it is "perhaps not more than one third." (*Journal of the Royal United Services Institution*, June 1972; p 10. Professor Bondi is chief scientific adviser at the ministry of defence.) Canada, with volunteer forces, spends only 13 per cent of its defence vote on arms and equipment. This subject dominated the commons defence debate of August, 1972.

Unilateral nuclear disarmament by this country would, of course, have an effect not only on the calculations of the Russian government, but also on those of the West German and French governments, and on the political situation inside those countries. It would be a great gift to the nationalist wing of West German politics. The melting away of alliance support from the Anglo-Saxons, as it could and would be presented by some easily identifiable factions in West German politics, could only lead to the demand for a Franco-German nuclear force. This demand has not yet seriously been made in either country; it is a spectre which so far only haunts the Labour Party. But nothing is likely to bring it about as quickly as unilateral British nuclear disarmament added to the existing unilateral American withdrawals.

The form it would most likely take would be West German financial and technical help in the French nuclear weapons programme. It may be argued that Franz Josef Strauss has often proclaimed his determination that West Germany shall never have its own national nuclear force. Indeed: nor would she. It may be argued that the Non-Proliferation Treaty says countries without nuclear weapons may not get them, and countries with nuclear weapons may not help them to get them. Indeed: but it does not say countries without them may not help countries with them to get more and bigger and better and faster. It may be argued that this is a loophole in the text of the Non-Proliferation Treaty; if such a Franco-

German force were not against the letter of the treaty, it would certainly be against the spirit, and certainly Russia would protest. Probably not, since that is one of the things that the Egyptian delegate foresaw during the negotiation of this treaty when he pointed out the loophole, and when Russia, along with America, refused to do anything about it. The political pieces of this development are lying about ready to be jigsawed together. The Non-Proliferation Treaty will not prevent it, and only one thing will cause it; a strong sense of being abandoned by friends more powerful than oneself in the face of an enemy yet more powerful still.

summary

Multi-lateral disarmament has not been sought; unilateral disarmament does not call forth its like, it would tend towards the re-introduction of conscription, and it would activate pressure for a Franco-German nuclear force. The fact is that disarmament is one of those fields where, if you are to achieve anything, you have to think of everything, and everybody. Indeed, the air is thick with conferences and proposals for conferences. It often is, but this is no matter. Nor does it matter very much if they fail. Lack of progress after an unsuccessful conference is no worse than lack of progress after total inactivity. At least understanding will have been gained, and acquaintance.

6. the security conference and mutual reductions

The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe which the West has at last agreed to is very much to be welcomed, and there is now great hope that the East may agree to parallel negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR). One may doubt whether the first will achieve much; the Russians want it to declare all European frontiers immutable for ever. With Ireland in the front of our minds, we cannot agree to that; what we can agree is that change must be peaceful. For the rest, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe must not be a mere pink ribbon round a normal bundle of bilateral arrangements for the exchange of symphony orchestras and the guarantee of commercial credits from us to them.

When culture is mentioned, we must remember that it is only another word for freedom. We must remember also the old pecking order of a tyranny against the arts: music is dangerous; painting and sculpture are very dangerous; the spoken or written word, like the gun, is so dangerous that it is reserved to the state.

In the negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) which might follow the opening of the security conference later this year, two possible risks confront us, and both might arise from our own modesty. The first is that we might feel that any pattern of arms reductions, except one manifestly to our own disadvantage, would be rejected by Russia. We might even go to the ignoble length of suggesting a pattern of reductions which we knew to be our own disadvantage simply to get some agreement and to reap the presumed political advantages. We should not do this, but should instead propose to the Russians a pattern or patterns of reductions which we judge to be neither to their nor to our advantage, but to be just, and to be conducive to stability. If, which is very possible, they then assert that we have got it wrong and that what we have suggested is to our advantage and to their disadvantage, we should examine that assertion with them, clarify, bargain, and keep up the search for a just agreement.

The second danger springs indirectly from the nearness of Russia and the farness of America. If Russian and American forces in the two Germanies were to withdraw to their respective homelands, that would be 600 miles overland for Russia and 4,000 miles overseas for America. What then about those of us living in the middle? If there is anything wrong in the pattern of withdrawals, in the balance between numbers and different types of arms and so on, if there is anything wrong with the geo-technical mix, then it is the European members of NATO who will be endangered, and not the North American members. US withdrawals, if they put anything at risk, will put us at risk first and them only later. So much is familiar argument.

Now supposing it came to be accepted that the geographical discrepancy between Soviet and American withdrawals was an insuperable difficulty: how can anyone decide whether one unit withdrawn x miles overland is equivalent to two, four, or eight units withdrawn six times x miles overseas? The principle that distance may entitle one to greater numbers has now been accepted by the Russians in the Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement, which entitles them to more "modern" submarines than the Americans. If we ever have to admit that we are baffled by the application of this principle on land, as we may, then we must turn to the idea of disbandment instead of withdrawal, that is, to disarmament itself.

disbandment not just withdrawal

A unit which is disbanded and returned to civilian life, its swords beaten into ploughshares, in nearby Russia may, as far as we are concerned, be taken to be equivalent to one undergoing the same process in faraway America. If that were accepted one would then need to know whether the Russians were keeping their part of the agreement. (That is also true of withdrawals). One could not simply trust the Russian government to keep its word; so what could one do? The Russian people have the misfortune to live under a government which suppresses informa-

ion. Their misfortune is also ours, since this is a form of government which cannot be trusted by its neighbours; the suppression of information and mistrust are two sides of the same coin. We could not ourselves keep an eye on the Russians, they will not let us in; we would have to rely upon the Americans, who could do it from overhead by satellite, by means now legitimated in the SALA. It is an awkward situation and one we should face well in advance. Only the Americans will know what the risk is, but it is we who shall run it. If it has not already been done, an incoming Labour government should, along with the other European countries, put squarely to the Americans the need for permanent, institutionalised sharing of intelligence on Soviet observance of whatever MBFR agreement may be reached, and of the SAL Agreements.

The question as to which countries should take part in the MBFR negotiations is likely to prove a difficult one. There must be no attempt to confine the negotiations to a very small number of countries. This would merely tend to prolong the shambles with which the *pourparlers* for these negotiations have opened in Vienna. If it is simply arranged that some troops of both sides shall leave Germany, there are plenty of countries which will worry about them turning up on their frontiers instead and complicating their lives. These countries include not only Greece, Turkey and Norway, but also, and with equal force, Sweden, Yugoslavia and Roumania.

China is also intimately concerned with where the Russian troops go. The Russians already have a million men under arms facing China. This appears to have been achieved over the last few years without any reduction in the numbers facing western Europe; but if the numbers facing western Europe are reduced then, unless they are disbanded, they will go somewhere, and the Chinese frontier is a very likely destination. The Chinese strongly urge us not to trust the Russians to keep their side of the bargain in any European MBFR arrangement. If the West were to believe that MBFR must depend on trust (which of course it need not,

it can depend on verification) then this would be advice not to reduce arms in Europe, since the Russian arms would come to the Chinese frontier. It is no doubt for related reasons that China favours the extension and the further integration of the EEC.

world disarmament conference

At this point the argument returns to general and comprehensive disarmament and certainly the MBFR negotiations will, in due course, have to report to a reconstructed disarmament conference at Geneva with China present, or even to a world disarmament conference. All aspects of disarmament hang together. There is no reason why we should forget (there is every reason why we should remember) that the SALT talks, which came to their first and well worthwhile batch of agreements in 1972, took place because the Geneva disarmament conference said so. Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), firmly insisted on during the negotiations by the non-aligned, binds the signatories, including of course the super powers, to negotiate on "the cessation of the nuclear arms race," on "nuclear disarmament" and on "general and complete disarmament." They have, at least, made a beginning. It is now time for them formally to report their progress to Geneva, to the committee of the conference on disarmament. Or, indeed, why not to the UN general assembly itself? In 1972 that body resolved to invite the super powers to keep it informed of their progress in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. The British government (along with the super powers, Greece, Bokassa's Central African Republic, Portugal, and a few others) abstained on that resolution. This action, small in itself, and without effect, is nonetheless emblematic of the pusillanimous alliance bureaucracy which governs present British policy in this field.

The NPT is not yet accepted by most of the countries most able to "proliferate." Only the next stage of SALT, or the next stage but one, when the super powers act-

ually do some disarmament (presumably of land based missiles and non-nuclear submarines carrying nuclear missiles) can hope to bring it into force. Britain, as a depository state of the NPT and neither a super power nor a non-nuclear power, should insist on a formal report back from SALT to Geneva or to the UN general assembly. Indeed, we should go further and propose continuing arrangements for the international community as a whole to verify that the arms race is in fact coming under control. The Russo-American decision to hold the present round of SALT in Geneva rather than in Helsinki and Vienna is a token step in the right direction, and it is a pity that the MBFR talks are to be isolated, by Soviet insistence, in Vienna. This is a universal interest and not just a super power one, and its achievement depends on a certain level of general confidence; and that in turn requires knowledge.

Too often in the past the United States and Soviet Union have faced the Geneva conference expecting fulsome congratulation for some agreement or other and, if they have seldom got it, even for the SALA, it is because as co-chairmen they have too often presented a bland face of impervious collusion. For instance: the Moscow Strategic Arms Limitation Agreements set up a Soviet/American standing consultative commission to watch over their execution, and the principal evidence that would be presented to it would presumably be photographs taken from observation satellites. This commission could be invited to submit periodical progress reports to the Geneva conference. If ever it is joined by comparable commissions in other parts of the world (for instance for the monitoring of MBFR), they could do the same. The means of surveillance upon which it relies will certainly include systems which would also be of use to the environment surveillance network agreed upon in 1972 by the UN conference in Stockholm, the network called "Earthwatch." All things are one.

Britain is going to be in on the act from now onwards, whether we like it or not. The Russians have given us notice of it, in the unilateral statement about the British

and French second strike submarine forces. That extremely important Russian statement has gone virtually undiscussed in a British press which, in common with other British institutions, has sunk back into insular pre-occupations. (It is not noticed even in the account of the effects of the SALA on pages 83 to 86 of *The military balance 1972-3*.) The Russians are claiming that the British and French nuclear forces are, in effect, part of the American nuclear force and that agreements with the United States are to be held to be binding upon us, although we have not participated in the negotiations which led to them. Britain and France have, in fact, been made the arbiters of the future of the SALA. Alternatively, our future is in the hands of the Russians. The former is the case if Britain and France get more Polaris type submarines and the Russians get more to match, and the Americans claim the Russians have broken the Moscow agreements. The latter is the case if Britain or France, believing they ought to have more Polaris type submarines, refrain from getting them because, with or without US or Soviet pressure, they decide that the Moscow agreements are more important. In either case, the fact that we were not in on the first round of SALT looks unfortunate. The Soviet Union have unilaterally claimed to limit western European weapons without consultation and without any limitation on those Russian strategic weapons, of which there are many hundreds, which, while they can reach, and indeed are aimed at, us, yet cannot reach the Americans.

This bilateral negotiation is to continue, and the Russians have said that in the second round of SALT they want to talk about submarine bases abroad. The Americans have a submarine base in this country; that is an interest of ours. The Russians have been preparing port facilities for submarines in Cuba; that is an interest of Cuba's. Moreover, we ourselves still have a naval base in the Far East. Either there is talk about naval bases abroad in general, which must include this country, or there will be more of these dangerous bilateral agreements, like the last Moscow agreements, which will affect the interests of countries not represented

and purport to control them. The same is true about discussion of "forward based systems"; that is, American and Soviet nuclear weapons in Europe. The Soviet Union is reported to wish to discuss the American systems in the second round of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, and not to discuss its own 600 intermediate and medium range ballistic missiles, which threaten us but not the United States. We cannot any longer afford to have our fate settled above our heads, and we must be in on these talks. So must other interested countries. That again points at least to a SALT report to the Geneva conference and a reconstituted Geneva to take account of this new situation.

In short, and on all counts, what is needed now, and what is the proper policy for a new Labour government, is a return to serious multi-lateral negotiations on general, comprehensive and gradual disarmament. This does not mean calling off the attempt to achieve Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Europe in parallel with the European Conference on Security and Co-operation; it means dovetailing these exercises, and SALT II, into a renewed and improved Geneva negotiation so that everybody should know what is happening, and so that courses can be adopted which are not condemned in advance to the fruitlessness which comes of compartmentalisation.

This suggests nothing less than a world disarmament conference, and to be sure the prospects of that do not seem particularly good at the moment; but that is what it is bound to come to in the long run. A world conference will only succeed if it is meticulously and forcefully organised. If the UN conference on the human environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, was useful and probably seminal, this was partly because it was correctly timed for action (it took place at the crest of a universal wave of public interest and concern) and partly because it was correctly manned for action. The Canadian secretary general, Maurice Strong, personally went five or six times round the world filling in pitfalls as they appeared. It can usefully be compared with the preparation of what was to have been the 1973 UN

conference on the law of the sea. This has been left, not to one forceful organiser, but to a leaderless UN committee which lurches from inaction to confusion and back, so that it is hard to foresee any useful outcome. The United Nations disarmament conference, if and when it happens, must be like the former.

Arms reductions and progressive disarmament are to be desired not only because, properly devised, they would increase the world's security, but also because of the economic resources they would liberate for better ends. To pursue them unilaterally and unconditionally is a conceptual mistake about the unity of the world. To pursue them multi-laterally ("general") can enable us to obtain the domestic economic advantages and to enter, as the reductions come about, a world which is intrinsically less perilous. There is no hope of achieving measures of disarmament, however, by picking on this sector and that, in isolation one from another; it can only be achieved by an integrated plan for general, comprehensive and gradual disarmament, into which SALT II and MBFR are dovetailed. This does not mean that one can hope to see armaments reach a very low level very quickly, only that one cannot start without having an end in view.

points of detail

There may be peaceful nuclear explosions underground some time soon; as oil runs short, mankind may find it worth overcoming the colossal difficulties in order to release oil from shales. They may even be used to dig canals or turn rivers. But the Non Proliferation Treaty tends to discriminate in favour of the nuclear powers (or rather of those nuclear powers with underground testing programmes) in two ways. First, they may, under article V, use nuclear explosions for "peaceful applications" of their own without going through any "international procedures." Second, they may also provide nuclear explosions to non-nuclear weapons states either through "international procedures," or bilaterally. A non-nuclear weapons state without a friendly nuclear weapons

state will *have* to go through the monitoring and controlling procedure of an international body which has not yet even been devised, let alone set up, despite the clear undertaking in article V of the treaty that "negotiations on this subject shall commence as soon as possible after the treaty comes into force." There is no rhyme or reason in this, and Britain, as a depository power both of the Partial Test Ban Treaty, which would need amending to legitimate such explosions, and of the NPT, should work for the removal of the discrimination and the international monitoring of all peaceful nuclear explosions.

When he visited Moscow in 1972, President Richard Nixon signed not only the SALA, but some less important ones as well. One of these was an agreement on avoiding "incidents on and over the sea." The Soviet practice of buzzing aircraft carriers has been particularly risky. But the US is not the only country which has aircraft carriers, and this is a case where the Soviet Union appears to have adopted a helpful and friendly attitude to the medium powers. In a recent interview the commander in chief of the Soviet navy invited any country which wanted, to become a party to this agreement. We should accept that Russian invitation with alacrity. The matter has been raised by Labour in both houses of parliament, and it is hard to see what is stopping the government.

In September 1971, the United States and the Soviet Union signed an agreement to "reduce the risk of the outbreak" of war. One of its main provisions was that when either was testing a missile by firing it in the direction of the other, they should give advance warning. Obvious. Yes; but why only them? Are we too, and all the countries of the world, not in range of Russian missiles? Why should our anxiety in logic and in equality be any less than America's? We should work for the multilateralisation of that little agreement too.

7. main planks of Labour's policy

The next Labour government should concentrate upon a major rationalisation of the present international negotiating structures, which have grown up piecemeal and have little sense. The world is now so unified that a right structure will itself be strongly conducive to right results. The international negotiating structure should be reformed in several ways. The success or failure of the various arms control measures of the 'sixties is nowhere monitored, and should be. What is the situation about orbiting weapons of mass destruction? What preparations are being made for the review conference of the Non Proliferation Treaty? As a depository power of that treaty, we should examine the implications of article III; it gives the International Atomic Energy Agency powers which seem to be much wider than current practice permits. We should also propose the establishment of machinery for the international monitoring of the progress in nuclear disarmament between the super powers which article VI of the treaty demands. The Soviet/American standing consultative commission on the SALA is there, and it really ought to report to the world.

British initiative

This last is a proposal of more importance than meets the eye; it amounts to a challenge to the super powers. It would be a demand for responsibility towards the world at large, and a new acceptance of responsibility if the super powers met the demand made upon them. Of course, they might not accept. In that case Britain should, together with a group of like minded powers, including some at a like stage of military and technological development, and on behalf of all the signatories of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, propose and develop an independent, multi-lateral inspection system. Japan has announced it will orbit an inspection satellite in 1975. Michel Debré, when French defence minister, raised the possibility of France building such a system. Inspection satellites are legitimated in the SALA, and what is legitimate for one country is legitimate for all. A satellite system and a system of electronic surveillance, finan-

cially and operationally shared among several countries, and with its results fully and immediately published to all, would both increase world confidence and put extra pressure upon the super powers to get on with disarmament.

Then the Geneva conference itself must be reformed to make it competent for a more important rôle. The monolithic super power co-chairmanship routine should be scrapped, and the chairmanship should rotate among the members. China should be pressingly invited to join. The conference should be able to summon expert witnesses and question them in public. The second round of the SALT should be broadened to include all nuclear weapons powers. No power or group of powers can claim to settle the actions of other countries by means of agreements to which the latter were not party and this, impermissibly, has now happened.

It is time to seek a complete test ban. Britain, again as a depository power of the Partial Test Ban Treaty, should take the initiative in this. We should base it once more on the concept of international monitoring, and should propose an international system analogous to that suggested for disarmament itself. Neither of the super powers wants a complete test ban, but they cloak their desire to go on testing under conflicting allegations about the present capacity of seismology to detect from a distance illegal explosions underground if there were a total ban. This country, once again with other like minded countries, and especially with Sweden, Canada, and Japan, which are well advanced in this field, should forthwith set up, as part of the "Earthwatch" environmental surveillance system proposed by the Stockholm UN conference, the computerised network our delegate in Geneva has already described. It should report not only to the Geneva conference, but also to the new United Nations council on environment problems. The whole world would then know who was exploding what, and when, and where. The system would also demonstrate the limits of current technology in detection and identification; all this acting as a perceptible political goad upon the super powers.

A revived and for the first time comprehensive disarmament policy cannot ignore the fact that the UN general assembly has called for a world disarmament conference. A natural alarm at the unwieldiness of such a conference, which is felt especially strongly by diplomats and bureaucrats, must not put us off. All depends on the preparation and there are models before us now of how to prepare and how not to prepare world conferences. The relationship of a world conference with the Geneva disarmament conference is important. The former, obviously, would have to be a one shot affair, though it might conceivably come together again after say five or ten years. The Geneva conference would equally obviously have to continue until mankind is satisfied the job is done, which may be quite a time. But the world conference could lay down some general guidelines for the continuing Geneva conference, and it could approve the relationships the latter might enter into with other bodies along the way, such as the Soviet/American standing commission, the two suggested international surveillance systems and the European MBFR negotiating body.

There is a chance that the negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) in Europe will start this year. It would be wrong to make that beginning depend upon the achievement of a more general rationalisation; we should press on with MBFR, admitting more countries rather than less, and covering a wider area, rather than a narrower. At a certain point, impossible to judge in advance, it will probably be necessary to transfer it, or at least to relate it, to the reformed Geneva conference. The actual pattern of reductions this country ought to propose can, in practice, only be the fruit of intense, though not necessarily prolonged, study and preparation within the government machine. The Labour Party should not become committed to any specific pattern before that can be done (whether under a Conservative or a Labour administration is, of course, immaterial). It will mean a substantial upgrading of the present modest policy research unit in the foreign office, and perhaps an increased rôle for the disarmament advisory panel,

which is supposed to advise the foreign office minister responsible for disarmament, but is in practice no more than a dignified formality.

Three principles must govern the proposals. First, the disarmament must be done; second, it must, by monitoring, be seen to be done; and third, it must decrease no country's security while it is being done. These principles have in effect, and perhaps in form too, been agreed among the nations of the world for the last ten years. Then, nobody but the military establishments knew the facts of the arms race. Now, thanks largely to SIPRI in Stockholm and the older IISS in London, and to the competition between them, anybody can know the facts who takes the trouble to read, and there is thus greater hope of an informed public opinion driving governments to action.

Having developed such a policy the next Labour government should return, with the vigour the last one so conspicuously lacked, to that general, comprehensive, and gradual disarmament which, however arduous it will be to attain, can alone bring us the increased security and economic relief we so badly need.

fabian society the author

The Fabian Society exists to further socialist education and research. It is affiliated to the Labour Party, both nationally and locally, and embraces all shades of Socialist opinion within its ranks—left, right and centre.

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the first time since the 1890s. Both Eisenhower and Khrushchev restricted the construction of strategic missiles. Then Kennedy campaigned on the "missile gap" and when Robert Macnamara, whom he appointed secretary for defence, discovered it did not exist, the new president carried on as if it did. The next few years were the time of the biggest ever American strategic build up, from which so much has since flowed. This was in spite of Khrushchev's continued restraint. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that although from about 1966 to 1972 the United States, in fact, deployed no new strategic missiles (although she has "modernised") yet Russia has not followed suit. This has been the time of the biggest ever build up by the Soviet Union.

Early in 1969, the Russian government was proposing that the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), agreed upon the previous summer but aborted by the invasion of Czechoslovakia, should soon start. When a popular and congressional campaign developed in the United States to prevent any deployment of American ABM, the Russians should, according to unilateralist theory, have begun to dismantle the ABM they had already deployed, or, at least, should have run to meet the Americans in the desired SALT talks when President Nixon proposed they should indeed start in August of that year. Instead, what they did was to make propaganda against the American ABM, without ever mentioning their own, and omit to answer Richard Nixon. It was only *after* congress had, by one vote, approved funds for an American ABM deployment, that the Soviet government agreed to the talks they had earlier been so keen on. Equally, in the SALT, the Soviet Union for a long time wished to see submarines and submarine launched ballistic missiles excluded from the agreement. Only in April 1972, that is to say one month after the 1973 American defence appropriations showed a big rise in proposed expenditure on a new submarine system (Trident), did the Russians agree to a limit on SLBMs. They never did agree to limit mobile land based ICBMs or cruise missiles, on neither of which is American work advanced.

These are just examples. There is, indeed, every reason to think the Russian government would rather see western arms control measures effected by western unilateralists, than be required to give away anything themselves. Such a policy, whether it be intentional or not, does not contribute to détente, only to destabilising fears and uncertainties.

possible consequences

Those in the Labour Party who favour unilateral disarmament tend to avoid envisaging their proposal in the alliance context; they concentrate on the abandonment of British nuclear weapons as such, and the reduction of British defence expenditure as such. Each of these planks points the way to conscription, while together they point to a short cut there.

"We must give up our nuclear weapons because we need the money." All right; but shall we then continue to run down the level of our conventional armed forces while West Germany and France hold steady at levels far higher than ours? Can we expect our allies to put up with that double cop-out? If not, can we, without conscription, ever increase our conventional forces to compensate for the abolition of our nuclear force, and to make conventional defence in Europe more credible? Britain, unarmed Iceland, and mighty Luxembourg are the only European NATO countries which do not have conscription at the moment, and it seems a well proven fact that there are only two ways armed forces can compete for men with industry: by paying the same or better, or by conscription.

The other way of falling into the conscription trap is by calling for economies in the running of our conventional forces themselves. The greatest economy that could be obtained would be in the military salary; but a volunteer army demands high pay and good conditions. Reduce them and you need conscription, just like the French, West Germans, Italians, Russians, Poles and so on, to say nothing of the neutral Swedes and Swiss. Hermann Bondi, in a brilliant lecture, has