

## ***BEYOND THE BOMB***

At last it is beginning to move. The frozen formations of the Cold War era are beginning to break up. The response of the electors at Rochdale (where both Labour and Liberal advocated British renunciation of the Bomb) and the rapidly-gathering success of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: these are signals of a new temper among the people.

All talk of sweeping socialist advances in the next few years is unrealistic unless it starts from this premise : *there is no way forward until the international deadlock is broken.*

For years both Right and Left have covertly regarded the Cold War as one of political and economic attrition which will end only when one of the two giants crack up. The Right has speculated upon revolt or collapse behind the 'Iron Curtain.' The Left has awaited the classical slump which would awaken old-style revolutionary responses among the Western working-class. The Trotskyists have hoped for a coincidence of both. All views led to a common conclusion : the British people must wait for something to happen, somewhere else, for some other nation to move first.

Now we are coming to understand that our destiny need not be left indefinitely in American or Russian (or Polish or Hungarian) hands. It is now our turn to move. Our turn because, paradoxically, the stalemate of the two giants has increased our room for manoeuvre. Our turn because, despite Alsatian dogs and Civil Service purges, the ravages of the Cold War have left our democratic processes relatively unclogged and the main fabric of our civil liberties intact; our radical tradition can still stir with unexpected vigour, where its American counterpart is scattered in disarray and is still re-grouping after the assault of McCarthyism; our labour movement is united, where the French movement lies temporarily disabled between the thorough-going treason of Mollet and the stagnant Stalinism of Thorez. Our turn because the world waits for someone to move, and - with an election in the offing - there is a chance for our people to intervene.

This mood, as it grows, will be exhilarating. For the first time for years, our people will feel that it is in their power to influence world events. But how is this to be done? Popular imagination has seized upon the gesture of renouncing the H-Bomb. To this, Mr. Bevan in the House of Commons on February 20th, has once again returned a frosty politician's answer. Delivering for a second time his metaphor of diplomatic nudity, he continued :

We could not possibly throw aside all our allies, all our obligations, all our friends, and negotiate with other nations without Great

Britain having any friends anywhere in the world. You cannot repudiate the possession of the H-Bomb and still shelter under our allies having the H-Bomb. The case I am putting is that we ought not to renounce the H-Bomb on high moral grounds because that contains implications going far beyond the bomb itself.

The argument is too thin. Is India without friends? Has Yugoslavia gained or lost influence by asserting a measure of independence of the two blocs? Which friends does Mr. Bevan wish to keep? The diplomatic corps of Washington and the Quay d'Orsay? Or the uncommitted Bandung powers in Asia, the labour movements of Western Europe, and the people of Eastern Europe who are thirsting for some initiative which will at one and the same time relax international tension and slacken the military and strategic pressures of Stalinism?

Who has proposed that Britain should renounce the H-Bomb, only to shelter behind American rocket bases? The fig-leaf which Mr. Bevan holds onto so desperately turns out to be - not the H-Bomb at all - but N.A.T.O. and the American alliance. And it is clear that in this respect opponents of the Bomb must answer Mr. Bevan's case. If Britain is to take the initiative in ending the deadlock - and if the campaign against the nuclear peril is to unite moral fervour with political realism - we must indeed go "far beyond the bomb itself." We must make a choice between N.A.T.O. and the unmapped policy of positive neutrality.

This issue gives pride of place to this problem. In an editorial article we discuss the bankruptcy of Western policy against the background of the Kennan broadcasts. Malcolm MacEwen submits the patched-up Communist orthodoxy of the 'Two Gamps' to criticism, while Konni Zilliacus puts forward a diplomatic blueprint for a future Labour Government. Rajagopalachari, one of India's most distinguished citizens, reminds us of the human meaning of co-existence. Finally, Michael Barratt-Brown, in an original analysis of the European Common Market proposals, discloses crucial issues of foreign economic policy which must influence diplomatic decisions.

We hope that this issue will be used to promote wide discussions. We have twelve months, and perhaps less, to work out a policy "beyond the bomb" and to press it forward. The Left has a particular responsibility. Social advance at home, and internal relaxation in the Communist countries, are both tied to this one problem. If we want the Polish compromise to broaden into democracy, if we want the embittered labour movements of Western Europe to find a new direction and unity, if we want to create the preconditions for further advance at home - then we must persuade Britain that it is time to "do it herself."