

## Chapter 6

# Hitler, Munich and the Second World War

By 1937 the Labour Party had accepted the need for rearmament in the face of the threat posed by Hitler and the growth of fascism in Europe, whereas the National government combined a policy of rearmament along with conciliation towards Hitler. Hitler's remilitarisation of the Rhineland in 1936, in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles, and his failure to meet Germany's reparations payments, had been met with little resistance or even criticism by the British government. By 1937 all the European powers were rearming, with only the United States holding back from the rapidly escalating arms race, as shown in Table 6.1. In simple numerical terms, aircraft production had risen in Germany from just 36 in 1932 to 5,606 in 1937, while in the UK it had risen from 445 aircraft in 1932 to only 2,153 in 1937.<sup>1</sup> Diplomacy became increasingly tense, and the League of Nations increasingly redundant.

The British government still went under the title of 'national', but consisted mostly of Conservatives, with only a handful of Liberal and National Labour ministers, notably Ramsay MacDonald until his retirement in May 1937. MacDonald's death in November of that year was scarcely acknowledged by the Labour Party, which had entered a period of relative unity in terms of its leadership and for whom the crisis of 1931 was now in the past. Stanley Baldwin retired from his post as Prime Minister in May 1937, and was replaced by the sixty-eight-year-old Neville Chamberlain, also a Conservative. Chamberlain was appalled at the prospect of war in Europe, and thought that the best way to avoid war was through concessions to Hitler and Mussolini. Overall, Chamberlain was 'Suspicious of the Soviet Union, disdainful of Roosevelt's "verbiage"', impatient at what he felt France's confused diplomacy of intransigence and passivity, and regarding the

Table 6.1 *Defence expenditure totals and as a percentage of national income, 1937*

<i>State</i>	<i>% of national income spent on defence</i>	<i>Defence expenditure \$000,000</i>
British empire	5.7	1,263
France	9.1	909
Germany	23.5	4,000
Italy	14.5	870
Japan	28.2	1,130
USA	1.5	992
USSR	26.4	5,026

*Source:* Figures taken from Quincy Wright, *A Study of War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2nd edn, 1965), appendix 12, table 60, p. 672.

League as totally ineffective, the prime minister embarked upon his own strategy to secure lasting peace by appeasement.<sup>2</sup> Not all the National government agreed with Chamberlain's policy, and in February 1938 Anthony Eden resigned as Foreign Secretary after repeated disagreements with the Prime Minister over his conciliation towards Germany. Winston Churchill led the parliamentary opposition to appeasement outside of the government, and his visceral criticisms of Britain's failure to rearm quickly enough or to stand up to Hitler sounded less erratic and more prescient as time went on. These criticisms were echoed, though in slightly more muted tones, by the Labour Party. Labour seemed relatively isolated at this time, making little headway either in electoral or policy-making terms. However, the irony is that despite its isolation from power, it was the Labour Party that finally brought about the downfall of the Chamberlain government in 1940, and it was Labour's exclusion from government that meant that it was the only party that was free from the taint of appeasement once war broke out.

### The Munich crisis

On 12 March 1938 Hitler marched his troops into Austria, annexing Austria to the German Reich, without arousing much protest from the British National government. In August Hitler threatened to send troops into Czechoslovakia to reclaim the German-speaking Sudetenland, which had been transferred to the Czechs as part of the

Versailles Treaty to act as a buffer zone against Germany. Negotiations with Hitler led to the signing of the Munich Agreement by Britain, Germany, Italy and France, which ceded the Sudetenland back to Germany on the condition that Hitler would not invade Czechoslovakia. The Soviet government had made known its willingness to combine with Britain and France to defend Czechoslovakia against German aggression, but the offer was ignored, and the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia were both excluded from the negotiations at Munich.<sup>3</sup> Hitler was surprised by the easy success of his territorial claim to the Sudetenland, having expected his armed diplomacy to provoke a confrontation from Britain and France. Neville Chamberlain returned from Munich on 30 September to a rapturous welcome from the British public, declaring that his policy of appeasement had guaranteed 'peace with honour' and 'peace for our time'. The agreement reached at Munich by Britain, Germany, France and Italy was that Czechoslovakia would start to evacuate the Sudetenland on 1 October, on which date German troops would begin to occupy these territories, and that this process would be completed by 10 October.<sup>4</sup>

The Labour Party was less sanguine about the agreement reached at Munich than the National government. During the Czech crisis the National Council of Labour had stated that 'The British Government must leave no doubt in the mind of the German Government that they will unite with the French and Soviet Governments to resist any attack on Czechoslovakia.'<sup>5</sup> This position, based on the assumption of collective action, continued throughout the crisis. However, the possible military consequences if collective action short of the use of force were to fail were not explained by the Labour Party. Its position was in contrast to the Conservative-dominated National government, which did not even share the assumption of co-operation with France and the Soviet Union. Labour did not support the terms of the Munich agreement, seeing it as 'a shameful betrayal of a peaceful and democratic people', and urged Chamberlain to discuss the agreement in Parliament before signing proposals 'which contemplate the dismemberment of a sovereign State at the dictation of the ruler of Germany'.<sup>6</sup> During the three-day debate in the House of Commons on the situation in Europe and the Munich Agreement, Attlee argued that 'The events of these last few days constitute one of the greatest defeats this country and France have ever sustained. There can be no doubt that it is a tremendous victory for Herr Hitler.' Munich, he said, left him with the same emotions he had at the evacuation of Gallipoli, a mixture of humiliation, relief, and foreboding. He continued:

We all feel relief that war has not come this time. Every one of us has been passing through days of anxiety; we cannot, however, feel that peace has been established but that we have nothing but an armistice in a state of war. We have been unable to go in for carefree rejoicing. We have felt that we are in the midst of a tragedy. We have felt humiliation. This has not been a victory for reason and humanity. It has been a victory for brute force.<sup>7</sup>

On 5 October the Chancellor of the Exchequer put forward a motion approving the government's foreign policy 'by which war was averted in the recent crisis and supports their efforts to secure a lasting peace'. Arthur Greenwood, the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, put forward an amendment to this motion, stating that Parliament, 'while profoundly relieved that war has been averted for the time being, cannot approve a policy which has led to the sacrifice of Czechoslovakia under threat of armed force and to the humiliation of our country and its exposure to grave dangers'. He called instead for support for collective security through the League of Nations, and for the government to initiate 'a world conference to consider the removal of economic and political grievances which imperil peace'.<sup>8</sup> The House of Commons then passed the motion of confidence in the government's foreign policy by 366 votes to 144, and the Labour amendment was rejected by 369 votes to 150.<sup>9</sup> Nineteen Conservatives abstained from voting, including Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, and Harold Macmillan.<sup>10</sup>

Only a very few in the Labour Party disagreed with the party's position in rejecting the Munich Agreement, most notably George Lansbury, who had urged further conciliation with Hitler. Philip Noel-Baker rather cruelly pointed out at the 1941 Labour Conference that 'The road to war, and I say it with all veneration, was paved with Lansbury's good intentions.'<sup>11</sup> Lansbury had caused consternation on the left when he took independent diplomatic action by visiting Hitler on 19 April 1937 in an attempt to negotiate personally with the German leader. Lansbury found that 'The whole talk was as satisfactory as those with Blum and Roosevelt. Hitler treated the interview very seriously. I think he really wants peace.' Lansbury felt 'The discussion was quite a triumph.'<sup>12</sup> He reported that Hitler '*will not* go to war unless pushed into it by others'.<sup>13</sup> The German Social Democrats protested to the Labour Party that they had been 'amazed to learn' that Lansbury had 'undertaken an independent diplomatic action with Hitler. This step shows neither willingness to help the German opposition in their bitter struggle, nor understanding for their point of

view.’ They further argued that Lansbury’s meeting assisted the Nazis in their propagand, and gave the impression that Hitler was willing to come to an understanding.<sup>14</sup>

After the immediate Munich crisis had passed, the Labour leadership was slightly more cautious in its support for collective action against the German menace. In its November pamphlet, *The Full Facts of the Czech Crisis*, the Labour Party’s official line was that ‘war was not the alternative’ at the time of the Munich crisis.<sup>15</sup> However, still unhappy at the government’s policy of appeasement towards Hitler, Hugh Dalton for the PLP proposed a motion of no confidence in the government’s foreign policy on 19 December 1938. After a debate that went on until 11.00pm, the motion was defeated by 340 to 143 votes.<sup>16</sup> Rather confusingly, Labour continued to oppose conscription, while at the same time advocating action against Hitler. This exasperated the Conservative rebels, and occurred at a time when ‘public opinion had been coming round to the idea that Labour, not the Tories, were the patriots’.<sup>17</sup> Labour voted against the National Service Bill in April 1939, which provided for compulsory military training of all men aged twenty to twenty-one years, with the National Council of Labour announcing its ‘uncompromising opposition’ to conscription in April 1939.<sup>18</sup> Attlee later told his biographer that ‘the line he took against conscription in 1939 was a mistake’, and that the Labour Party did not realise ‘the ‘extent to which its stand on conscription would be misinterpreted’. Apart from the ‘various rational objections to conscription at the time’, the ‘real motive for resisting the idea was distrust of Chamberlain’, who had previously assured the Labour Party that conscription would not be introduced in return for its support for the government’s scheme for voluntary recruitment to the military.<sup>19</sup> Attlee had argued at the time that the Prime Minister was breaking the pledge he had given to the country that compulsory military service would not be introduced in peace-time; that this would add to ‘the already widespread distrust of the Prime Minister’; and that rather than strengthening the armed forces, he would be ‘sowing division in the ranks’ and undermining the national effort.<sup>20</sup> The party’s opposition to conscription was reaffirmed at the 1939 annual conference in May when a resolution proposed by the NEC was passed by 1,967,000 votes to 574,000.<sup>21</sup> In addition, this resolution, also released as a statement on *Labour and Defence*, called for the establishment of a Ministry of Supply, and urged the democratisation of the armed forces through reforms in conditions and in the appointment and promotion of officers.<sup>22</sup> At this conference the Labour Party also urged action to face

the fascist menace, arguing that the military guarantees made to Poland, Turkey, Greece and Rumania, should be extended to the Soviet Union, as 'Moscow is a custodian of peace.'<sup>23</sup> Whereas the Labour Party had criticised Britain's bilateral alliances for being partly responsible for the First World War, it was now calling for a strengthening of such alliances, particularly an Anglo-Soviet pact.<sup>24</sup> The Soviet Union was seen as a vital ally in any fight against fascism.

On 18 April the Soviet Foreign Minister, Maxim Litvinov, had proposed an Anglo-Soviet pact, but Chamberlain had only very reluctantly and belatedly opened negotiations. These culminated in a British mission to Moscow in the middle of August, by which time Litvinov had been replaced by Molotov. While these discussions were adjourned, the German Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop, arrived to discuss a rival German-Soviet pact. The signing of the non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and Germany was announced on 23 August 1939, signalling a realignment of Soviet foreign policy. The Nazi-Soviet pact not only provided Hitler with an assurance of non-interference from the Soviet Union, and a pledge that neither party would attack the other or aid any other country or coalition that did so, but it also divided Poland and the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia between Germany and the Soviet Union.

The Labour Party was shocked to find that the negotiations for the non-aggression pact had been 'proceeding secretly and concurrently' with the discussions between Britain, France and the Soviet Union on collective action against Germany.<sup>25</sup> This development destroyed not only Labour's foreign policy regarding German aggression, which was based on co-operation with France and the Soviet Union to deter Hitler, but also for some the faith that they had held in the Soviet Union. Coming after the purges and show trials of the 1930s, Stalin's willingness to collude with Hitler reinforced the view that Soviet communism had been corrupted. Walter Citrine told the TUC annual conference that the apologists for the Soviet Union have blinded themselves for years, while they 'have seen a dictatorship in Russia as severe and as cruel as anything that has happened in Germany'.<sup>26</sup> However, some on the left blamed the British and French governments' exclusion of the Soviet Union in the Munich discussions and their reluctance to enter into negotiations on multilateral treaties with the Soviets for this development to a greater or lesser extent. They argued that the Soviet Union feared that it would be 'double-crossed in the long-run' by Britain and France, and that it was merely remaining neutral in the same way that the USA had done during the early years of the First

World War.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, Stalin's rapprochement with Hitler gave the Labour Party greater opportunity to oppose requests from the British Communist Party for a united campaign and national front. This standpoint was reinforced when the Soviet Union invaded Poland's eastern territories on 17 September, and again when it invaded Finland on 30 November 1939. Dalton referred to this latter act as 'indefensible' in the House of Commons,<sup>28</sup> while the National Council of Labour issued a statement on 7 December declaring that the British labour movement 'views with profound horror and indignation' the Soviet government's 'unprovoked attack' upon Finland, and that 'Soviet Imperialism has thus revealed itself as using the same methods as the Nazi power against which the British Working-class is united in the War now raging.' In particular, the NEC said that British labour 'repudiate utterly' the claims of the Soviet government to be the 'leader of the World's Working-class Movement, guardian of the rights of peoples against their oppressors, interpreter of Socialist principles, and the custodian of International Peace'.<sup>29</sup> Following a request from the Finnish Labour Party, a delegation was sent to Finland, which reported back in March 1940 that the Finnish resistance could have continued the struggle against the Soviet forces for much longer had they received more assistance from Britain.<sup>30</sup> The Soviet invasions of Poland and Finland marked the 'severance of the umbilical cord of socialism' which had formerly connected the centre and the right of the Labour Party to the Soviet Union.<sup>31</sup> They also resulted in the utter isolation of those on the left who continued to express support for the Soviet Union.

Despite the setback of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact, the National Council of Labour upheld its support in August 1939 for 'the obligations undertaken by Britain in defence of the independence of Poland shall be honoured to the full'.<sup>32</sup> On 25 August the National Council of Labour issued a message to the German people, that 'We have no wish to destroy the German people. We have been, we still are, your friends.' However, if Hitler attacked Poland, Britain would stand firmly by its pledge to Poland, despite the German pact with Moscow. It said that if war came, then Britain and France would command the seas, cutting off the supply of raw materials and foodstuffs to Germany, thus lowering the standard of living in Germany even further.<sup>33</sup> On 1 September Germany invaded Poland. On 2 September the PLP and the party's NEC agreed that Arthur Greenwood, acting party leader owing to Attlee's absence due to ill-health, should inform the Prime Minister that they were 'prepared to support the fulfilling of the Treaty

with Poland'.<sup>34</sup> The party also voted in support of conscription by fifty-one to fifteen votes, a reversal of their earlier policy.<sup>35</sup> In the House of Commons that evening, there was as an 'eruption of revolt' at 'Chamberlain's apparent continued equivocation'.<sup>36</sup> When Arthur Greenwood rose to speak for the Labour Party, the anti-appeaser Conservative Leo Amery shouted 'Speak for England, Arthur!' Greenwood called on the government to end its vacillations 'at a time when Britain and all Britain stands for, and human civilization, are in peril', to honour its treaty obligations with Poland, and to declare 'It is either peace or war'.<sup>37</sup> The following morning at 9.00am, the British Ambassador in Berlin delivered an ultimatum to the German Foreign Minister, for Germany to withdraw its forces from Poland. This ultimatum expired at 11.00am, at which time Chamberlain announced in a broadcast to the nation that Britain was at war with Germany. In contrast to the outbreak of the First World War, the Labour Party, already appalled at the fascist triumphs in Spain as well as Austria and Czechoslovakia, whole-heartedly backed the use of force to counter German aggression. The TUC also supported the use of force, passing a declaration at the annual congress on 4 September in vivid language, stating that,

Under its leadership of its Nazi Dictators, Germany has destroyed the Peace and order of the World. By an appalling act of injustice and ill will it has once more broken faith with the civilised nations and has deliberately provoked armed conflict in Europe to further its aims of domination and conquest ... No concessions that Poland could have made would have saved her people from the dismemberment that befell the brave Czech nation. Nor would compliance with these demands have satisfied the insane ambition of Germany's rulers. It would not have saved the Peace of Europe ... The defeat of ruthless aggression is essential if liberty and order are to be re-established in the World. Congress, with a united and resolute nation, enters the struggle with a clear conscience and steadfast purpose.<sup>38</sup>

The Labour Party embraced the war because it thought that there was no chance of a peaceful settlement with Hitler. Indeed, it was 'astonished' that anybody could expect compromise with dictators, and stated that 'We declare once more that we can have no part, directly or indirectly, in a policy of accommodation, and that the necessary prelude to a just Peace is total victory.'<sup>39</sup> However, the party presented its position in terms of support of international working-class solidarity, the sanctity of international law, and the expression of international morality, and said that the party 'regards victory as the

only basis upon which the achievement of its ideals becomes possible'.<sup>40</sup> The party thus could present the war as compatible with earlier foreign policy statements. Attlee said at the 1940 annual conference that 'We have to preserve the hope of our movement. Whatever may be the conditions in capitalist democracies, there is always that hope, there is always that opportunity; but where Nazism reigns all hope is gone.'<sup>41</sup> In contrast, the ILP refused to support the government in its war against Germany. At its 1940 annual conference in March, it adopted a resolution describing the war as imperialist, and urged that it be brought to an end.<sup>42</sup> On 5 December 1940 the ILP tabled a motion in the House of Commons criticising the government for failing to organise a conference to negotiate peace. This gained only four votes, and was massively defeated.<sup>43</sup>

### The Labour Party and the Second World War

While Labour experienced a sense of relief once war had broken out, believing the use of force to be the only deterrent to Nazi aggression, some sought to apportion blame for the war to the Conservatives. The argument was that since the Labour Party was not responsible for governing Britain, they were not to blame for the war. *Guilty Men*, written anonymously by Michael Foot and the journalists Frank Owen and Peter Howard over a four-day period in June 1940, produced an excoriating criticism of the government's policy of appeasement and its failure to rearm and to prepare for war. In particular, it accused Chamberlain and his colleagues of sending men into battle 'without a chance', when they were unprepared and did not possess the necessary weapons and equipment.<sup>44</sup> Attlee said at the 1941 Labour Party conference that, 'If our policy had been followed, you would never have had this war.'<sup>45</sup> Bevin, on the other hand, took a more magnanimous viewpoint about responsibility for pre-war policy:

If anybody asks me who was responsible for the British policy leading up to the war, I will, as a Labour man myself, make a confession and say, 'All of us.' We refused absolutely to face the facts. When the issue came of arming or rearming millions of people in this country, people who have an inherent love of peace, we refused to face the real issue at a critical moment. But what is the good of blaming anybody?<sup>46</sup>

The party's NEC and the PLP had agreed not to join a coalition government headed by Chamberlain, despite several requests to do so,

because they distrusted him and lacked confidence in his leadership. This prevented Labour from being associated with Chamberlain's failures, while at the same time depriving the Chamberlain government of the wider legitimacy it would have gained from the support of the main opposition party. Furthermore, Labour managed to support the war, but not the government, without appearing to be undermining the war effort, which lent credence to the developing perspective that Britain needed a broader coalition government that included all the political parties.

Labour's statements on the long-term aims of the war in the first few months of hostilities were often slightly nebulous, as were those of the government. On 16 November Attlee called on Chamberlain for discussions on the peace aims of Britain and the Commonwealth, for 'there is a demand in this country for a closer definition of peace aims' and 'The people of this country want to know for what we are fighting', and 'just what kind of world it is that the Government in their minds are contemplating when we have brought this war to an end'.<sup>47</sup> The Labour Party laid out its long-term plans in a statement on *Labour's War Aims* in February 1940. This statement was far-reaching and outlined an ambitious view for the future of international relations, as well as dealing with specific issues such as French and German security. It demanded that any 'Peace Settlement shall establish a new Association or Commonwealth of States, the collective authority of which must transcend, over a proper sphere, the sovereign rights of separate States.' In addition, 'Labour will be no party to imperialist exploitation, whether capitalist or other. Labour, therefore, demands that Colonial peoples everywhere should move forward as speedily as possible, towards self-government.' For these policies to be successful, a 'new world order' based on socialism and democracy must be founded, for 'Lasting Peace depends on social justice within States, no less than on political justice between States.'<sup>48</sup> This statement demonstrates how the Labour Party embraced the war as an opportunity to create a better international system in the long term, rather than just as a short-term calamity that needed to be dealt with.

After a period of 'phoney war', when the British population had to adapt to wartime privations while waiting for the war to happen, and to prepare for air attacks which did not occur, hostilities intensified.<sup>49</sup> Hitler successfully invaded the neutral state of Norway in February 1940 despite the presence of a powerful Royal Navy fleet. By 16 April German forces controlled much of southern Norway, and despite initial successes, British and French troops abandoned their positions

in central Norway at the beginning of May. This military failure acted as a political catalyst in Britain, and during a dramatic and remarkable two-day Commons debate on the Norwegian campaign on 7 and 8 May, both Labour and a number of Conservatives called for Chamberlain to resign as Prime Minister. The Conservative Leo Amery, quoting Cromwell to Chamberlain, said 'You have sat too long here for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go.'<sup>50</sup> Attlee described Chamberlain's litany of failures over Czechoslovakia, Poland, and now Norway.<sup>51</sup> Lloyd George, in what was to be his last decisive intervention in the House of Commons, called on Chamberlain to 'sacrifice the seals of office' for he had been 'worsted' by Hitler in both peace and war, and 'there is nothing which can contribute more to victory in this war'.<sup>52</sup> On the recommendation of the Labour Party's NEC, the PLP agreed, though with some dissentients, to vote against the government's adjournment on the handling of the war.<sup>53</sup> This, in effect, meant a vote of censure on Chamberlain's leadership. Only 481 out of 615 MPs voted in the division of 8 May, giving a result of 281 votes to 200.<sup>54</sup> Forty-two Conservatives voted with Labour. While this still gave the National government a majority, it had been reduced to eighty-one, at a time when the government's formal majority was 220. Given the outcome of the division and the vehemence of the preceding debate, Chamberlain realised he could not sustain the confidence of Parliament. This was to be the only occasion in the twentieth century when a majority government was forced out of office by a vote in the House of Commons.<sup>55</sup>

On 9 May Attlee and Greenwood visited Chamberlain, and he 'begged' them to join a coalition government under his premiership, to which Attlee replied that this was impossible and that the mood of the country required a new leader.<sup>56</sup> Attlee later wrote with characteristic understatement that he found 'It was not a pleasant task to tell a Prime Minister that he ought to go, but I had no option but to tell him the truth'.<sup>57</sup> Chamberlain also asked whether Labour would join a coalition government led by someone other than himself, to which Attlee replied that he would have to consult the party. The party was duly consulted the following day, which was the first day of the Labour Party annual conference at Bournemouth, when the NEC decided unanimously that Labour would serve under a new prime minister. This decision also had the approval of the General Council of the TUC. Attlee and Greenwood returned to London immediately, where they were asked to meet with Churchill. Discussions had been going

on about the premiership between Chamberlain and Churchill and Lord Halifax, the two front-runners to succeed him, but Halifax had said that he felt that his position as a Peer, and thus a member of the House of Lords rather than the House of Commons, would make it very difficult for him to discharge the duties of Prime Minister.<sup>58</sup> This meant that the premiership went to Churchill. Churchill formed a coalition government on 10 May 1940, the day that Hitler invaded both Holland and Belgium. Labour had agreed to two seats out of five in the new War Cabinet, to be filled by Attlee and Greenwood, and one out of the three defence ministries, with A. V. Alexander replacing Churchill at the Admiralty. Attlee became Lord Privy Seal and Deputy Leader of the House of Commons, and Greenwood became Minister without Portfolio. Ernest Bevin, who had been elected MP for Wandsworth at a bye-election in 1940, became Minister of Labour and National Service on 3 October. Hugh Dalton headed the Ministry for Economic Warfare. Morrison became the Home Secretary. Stafford Cripps was appointed Ambassador to Moscow, which boosted his profile once the Soviet Union entered the war, and in March 1942 he headed a mission to India to secure its support for the war effort against Japan, and to reach agreement on its post-war constitutional settlement, in which he was unsuccessful.<sup>59</sup> In February 1942, Attlee was formally appointed as Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for domestic policy.

Little has been written about how the Labour ministers got on with Churchill. It has been suggested that at one point Attlee had said that Labour would not serve under Churchill.<sup>60</sup> Others cast doubt on whether this happened. Harris says that Attlee in fact preferred Churchill to Halifax, and 'did not feel that the Labour Party's long-standing distrust of Churchill, mainly because of his behaviour during the General Strike, was a bar to serving under him in a wartime coalition'.<sup>61</sup> Given that Labour did join a Churchill government, this interpretation of events seems the more likely. Churchill says that it was Chamberlain who implied that the Labour Party would not serve under him, though this possibility did not seem to worry Churchill, who says that he still would have formed the strongest government possible if this had been the case.<sup>62</sup> On the whole, Attlee defended the actions of the coalition government, and called for national unity and support from the labour movement. This did provoke some criticism from within the party; for instance, on the eve of the June 1941 conference, Nye Bevan accused the Labour leadership of insisting upon regarding itself as a junior partner in the government.<sup>63</sup> Overall,

however, this criticism was fairly muted. The issue that was to provoke the most criticism from within the Labour Party was over the opening of a Second Front.

On 22 June 1941, Hitler had invaded the Soviet Union, thus breaking the non-aggression pact. From this point onwards, the Soviet Union became an ally in the fight against Nazism, and Stalin called for the immediate opening of a second major front on the European mainland in order to divert pressure away from the Red Army, which was struggling in its fight against the invading German forces on Soviet territory. From this point onwards, a campaign was waged by the Soviet Today Society, a communist organisation, to lobby the British government to open a Second Front, and a series of 'spectacular' meetings were held all over the country.<sup>64</sup> Within the Labour Party, the Second Front campaign was led by Nye Bevan, who spoke on platforms with communist supporters, which was against Labour Party rules. However, Labour ministers within the coalition government 'were largely unsympathetic to left-wing demands for even more aid to Russia'.<sup>65</sup> During a debate in the House of Commons on the progress of the war, Labour back-benchers called for a Second Front and for Britain to provide maximum assistance to Russia, to which Attlee replied that 'There would be nothing more stupid ... than to make a futile and dangerous gesture for fear someone should think that you were not doing your best.' He went on that the government shared the public's concern that everything should be done to support Russia, and 'We shall give all we can to Russia, but, remember, it has to come out of our production, which is not yet adequate for all our own needs.'<sup>66</sup> To some extent the reluctance of Attlee and the other Labour ministers to get involved in the calls for a Second Front was because, publicly at least, they left strategic decisions to Churchill. Concern that the Soviet Union might try to extend its influence over Europe once Germany had been defeated may also have contributed to their reluctance to appease the calls for more assistance to Russia. Once the Soviet Union had entered the war on the side of the Allies, its popularity dramatically increased, which was also a cause for concern for the centre-right leadership of the Labour Party.

Despite the acquiescence over the issue of the Second Front, at this point the leadership of the Labour Party still argued that it had a distinct foreign policy from that of the previous National government or a future Conservative government. In particular, this was over their vision of the post-war world, of a 'new world order' based on 'socialism and democracy'.<sup>67</sup> The NEC said that, 'The Labour Party reaffirms

its conviction that there is no road to enduring Peace save by the growing acceptance of Socialist principles. No peace, therefore, which does not aim at a Socialist reconstruction of international society can be accepted by the Labour Party as adequate.<sup>68</sup> Within the Labour Party, 'the war was considered to have accelerated important changes that would ultimately rebound to Labour's advantage', as increased planning and state intervention became accepted by the population.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, Attlee made a point of asserting that 'the Labour Party was not only supporting the government of the day in the cause of security and justice but was in the war to fight for its own existence and its own vision of what society should be'.<sup>70</sup> This applied not only to Britain, but also to the international arena, where Attlee said that 'the world that must emerge from this war must be a world attuned to our ideals'.<sup>71</sup> In particular, it was argued that the post-war settlement needed to include international economic planning, for the world was 'a single economic unit'. This needed to be combined with the establishment of an international organisation 'possessing many powers hitherto exercised by a competing anarchy of national sovereignties'.<sup>72</sup> The party focused on outlining Labour's policies for after the war, setting up a committee to study the problems of post-war reconstruction on 6 August 1941, and drawing up Labour's blueprint for the post-war international order. In the spring of 1942, the NEC issued an interim report on *The Old World and the New Society*, which was discussed in regional conferences. This declared that the revolutionary impact of the war meant that the 'old world' of 1939 was dead, and its ideas were 'already obsolete'. In terms of international relations, national sovereignty would have to be given up, with a new, much stronger version of the League of Nations forming a superstructure through which a new World Society could be formed, founded upon democratic Socialist ideas.<sup>73</sup> At the 1942 annual conference, the NEC's resolution on the international situation gave far greater emphasis to collaboration with the Soviet Union, both 'in victory and peace'.<sup>74</sup>

At the 1943 annual conference delegates called for a more specific statement of post-war aims. Consequently the NEC appointed Hugh Dalton to prepare one. Dalton, who had been instrumental in shifting Labour to support rearmament, was determined to impress his personal views on the statement. He saw to it that he was named to prepare each revision of the document, though he was forced to accept substantial additional sections written by Harold Laski and Noel-Baker.<sup>75</sup> This document, *The International Post-War Settlement*, argued that,

[W]e must begin, without delay, to build a World Order, in which all people unite to pursue their common interests. We are confident that the vital interests of all nations are the same. They all need Peace; they all need security and freedom; they all need a fair share in that abundance which science has put it into our power to create.

The document also emphasised the need for ‘the closest possible Anglo-American-Russian co-operation’. However, it moved away from traditional Labour Party policy in that it saw the basis of a future world organisation as being a continuation of the relationship between these three Great Powers, rather than some form of League of Nations. Pacifism had been proved to be ‘an unworkable basis of policy’. Instead, ‘Strength is essential to safety and, as we now know, there are terrible risks in being weak. It is better to have too much armed force than too little’. This was a rejection of Labour’s policy for much of the 1930s. Joint occupation of Germany was suggested as ‘a practical experiment in an international force’. It did sound a more traditional note with its argument that ‘The international political organisation must establish the binding force of international law’, its call for a World Court of International Justice, and its call for disarmament to be a major object of a future international political organisation. The document also called for new forms of international economic organisation, ‘new international institutions and agreements to plan relief and rehabilitation, to organise abundant world-wide food supplies, to regulate international trading and transport and monetary relationships’.<sup>76</sup> This document contained a clear and new vision of Labour’s foreign policy, and was actually very prescient in many of its propositions, reflecting an understanding of the need for a post-war international regime that provided for economic growth as well as control of military aggression. This held echoes of the American New Deal, though there does not seem to have been much contact between the Labour Party and the American Democrats at this point. For the Labour Party, these ideas came from a combination of its socialist faith in economic planning, transferred to the international arena, the liberal doctrine of free trade as a tool for preventing conflict, and its enduring belief in internationalism. The document on the *International Post-War Settlement* was approved at the 1944 annual conference by an overwhelming majority. However, when Attlee moved the resolution supporting this document he reassured the delegates at conference that the party still believed that the foundations of international peace could be strengthened through the spreading of socialist ideas and the application of socialist measures

in all parts of the world, along with the close association of socialist parties in all countries.<sup>77</sup>

One issue that the Labour Party failed to address in their policy statements on the nature of the post-war international settlement was that of decolonisation. At the 1942 annual conference a resolution was passed that called for the abolition of 'the status of Colony', and for all colonial states to be given independence.<sup>78</sup> This went further than previous Labour Party resolutions on colonial policy in that it proposed independence rather than self-governing Dominion status, and covered all of Britain's colonies. However, at the 1943 annual conference, the NEC then reverted to Labour's earlier policy position by stating that India should become a self-governing Dominion, and that the goal of the whole Commonwealth, in time, should be political self-government, while the 'Colonial Empire [should] now enter a period of unprecedented development and progress under the guidance of the Mother Country.'<sup>79</sup> Labour Party policy on colonial affairs at this point was underdeveloped and inconsistent. Indeed, the party's leadership had 'lapsed into near silence on colonial reform' since the fall of the second minority Labour government in 1931.<sup>80</sup> The Labour Party Advisory Committee on Imperial Questions had produced a number of reports, most notably its policy statement of 1933, and published a pamphlet in 1936 which focused on the fears of a rising inter-imperialist rivalry in Europe.<sup>81</sup> These had been largely ignored within the party. The lack of any coherent Labour Party policy on colonial affairs had begun to be addressed with the establishment in 1940 of the Fabian Colonial Bureau, but to a large extent this was subsumed during the war years by the focus on the post-war international system, rather than concern with ending British imperialism as such. However, the TUC had taken an increasing interest in colonial affairs, and had established its own Colonial Advisory Committee in 1937. Against a backdrop of repression following labour unrest in the West Indies, the TUC had lobbied the government to introduce legislation for the establishment of trade unions in the colonies, and to introduce reforms to improve working conditions and working-class living standards. The TUC also became increasingly involved in advising the Colonial Office on labour issues, and in setting up educational links with trade unionists in the colonies. Trade union leaders such as Citrine and Bevin saw the work of the TUC as largely supporting the work of the Colonial Office in terms of guiding colonial labour organisations away from militancy. Part of the aim was to prevent trade union movements in the colonies falling under the influence of communism, and to foster

non-political 'responsible' trade unionism that focused on bargaining over working conditions rather than agitating for national independence. After lobbying by the Labour Party and the TUC, the Colonial Office established a Colonial Labour Advisory Committee in 1942, which included representatives from the TUC, and the first British trade unionists were sent to work as advisors on labour relations to the local administrations in the colonies. In this way, the TUC became part of the institutional structures for the oversight of colonial trade union movements.<sup>82</sup>

While they reassured the Labour Party of the continuation of the leadership's belief in international socialist solidarity, involvement in the wartime coalition was having a profound effect on Labour's leaders such as Attlee and Cripps. Their perspective was shifting away from their earlier support for a 'socialist' foreign policy, while the already more realist outlook of Bevin and Dalton was further consolidated. Bullock explains that 'By joining the coalition the Labour leaders had recognized that for them, as much as for Churchill and the Tories, there was an overriding national interest, a concept which many in the Labour Party had traditionally rejected, in theory at least, as incompatible with loyalty to internationalism and irreconcilable with the class war.'<sup>83</sup> This did not, however, mean that deciding on which strategy to pursue was unproblematic or without debate. There were huge arguments within the British coalition government, and between the British, the United States, the French and the Soviet Union, over strategy. Issues that were particularly contentious included whether to give priority to the Pacific War or to Europe; whether to pursue a Mediterranean strategy; and when to launch a Second Front. To a large extent, the Labour Party remained quiet on these issues, restricting their pronouncements on foreign policy to the outlining of their post-war aims, though the Second Front was a particular issue to many because of a sense of solidarity with the Soviet Union. At the wartime Labour Party annual conferences, the NEC put forward statements and reports outlining Labour's position on the war, which took the place of the usual resolutions on foreign and defence policy, thus limiting debate on the prosecution of the war.

However, behind the scenes, from 1943 onwards the Labour government ministers were actively involved in planning British post-war foreign policy. Attlee was particularly influential in discussions on the future of Germany and the post-war settlement. In 1943 Churchill made him chair of all the War Cabinet sub-committees dealing with British post-war international policy, namely the committee on

armistice terms, which was replaced by the committee on armistice terms and civil administration, and the committee on the post-war settlement, which also included Bevin. Regarding suggestions for a joint Allied occupation of Germany, Attlee advocated extensive social, political and economic changes within Germany in order to reorient it, rather than just limiting the size of its army or prohibiting the production of aircraft, as had happened following the First World War.<sup>84</sup> More generally, he also advocated a much closer relationship with the USA as part of the post-war settlement, arguing that Britain would be unable to meet all its possible European and imperial commitments without military support from the USA, particularly within the context of an expansionist Soviet Union.

During the last few months of the war, Attlee and the Labour ministers became increasingly involved in the development of the post-war international settlement. For Labour Party members, their expectations of change in both British foreign policy and in international relations intensified as victory, and the prospect of a general election, approached. Denis Healey, then on the left of the Labour Party, told the annual conference which was held in May 1945, just before the election, that,

The crucial principle of our own foreign policy should be to protect, assist, encourage and aid in every way the Socialist revolution wherever it appears ... If the Labour Movement in Europe finds it necessary to introduce a greater degree of police supervision and more immediate and drastic punishment for their opponents than we in this country would be prepared to tolerate, we must be prepared to understand their point of view.<sup>85</sup>

At this conference, Bevin tried to restrain such sentiments, by asking the party 'not to bury its head in the sand.' If Labour won the election,

You will have to form a Government which is at the centre of a great Empire and Commonwealth of Nations, which touches all parts of the world, and which will have to deal, through the diplomatic, commercial and labour machinery with every race and with every difficulty, and every-one of them has a different outlook upon life.<sup>86</sup>

However, the phrase that was remembered was Bevin's claim that 'Left understands Left,' subsequently taken to be a reference to the Soviet Union, though Bevin had actually been talking about the left in France. Attlee, who had recently returned from the difficult

negotiations of the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations, told the conference that 'I am afraid sometimes people think that if only we get the nations together they will accept our ideas' but that it was not so easy as this.<sup>87</sup> He was less sanguine than previously about the prospects for world peace and international organisation. Indeed, he and Bevin were far more moderate in their claims about a Labour government having a new approach to foreign policy than most of the rest of the Labour Party.

### The 1945 general election

Foreign policy was not at the forefront of the Labour Party's campaign, and people were far more interested in the parties' plans for repairing war-torn Britain than in their plans for British foreign policy. It was found that 'The issues with which the electors felt vitally concerned were domestic issues in the popular, non-political, sense of the term.' Foremost of these was housing. A poll taken by the British Institute of Public Opinion during the election campaign that asked 'what questions do you think will be the most discussed in the General Election?' found that 41 per cent of people answered housing, while only 5 per cent said international security.<sup>88</sup> One interesting aspect of the campaign was that Attlee and Bevin expressed hope that the agreement on foreign policy by the wartime coalition could be continued into peacetime. Bevin declared that 'The foreign policy being pursued at the moment was devised by the Coalition Government, not by the Tory members alone, but by a combined effort and is based upon collective security, a policy for which Labour has always stood. As long as that object is vigorously pursued, then Labour will find an opportunity of co-operating with all other parties.'<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, the 1945 Labour Party election manifesto, *Let Us Face the Future*, did not promise a socialist foreign policy. Rather, it stated that 'We must consolidate in peace the great war-time association of the British Commonwealth with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.'<sup>90</sup> This hardly differed from the Conservative Party's manifesto, which stated that 'Our alliance with Soviet Russia and our intimate friendship with the U.S.A. can be maintained only if we show that our candour is matched by our strength', and that, 'Our prevailing hope is that the foundations [of peace] will be laid on the indissoluble agreement of Great Britain, the United States and Soviet Russia.'<sup>91</sup> The only other Labour Party comment referring to the Soviet Union was, 'Let it not be forgotten

that in the years leading up to the war the Tories were so scared of Russia that they missed the chance to establish a partnership which might well have prevented the war.<sup>92</sup> The Labour Party, it was implied, could handle the Soviet Union, unlike the Conservatives.

This criticism did not commit the Labour Party to any 'socialist' foreign policy. While the Conservative manifesto gave greater emphasis to the British empire and to defence than the Labour one, the lack of comment by the Labour Party meant that it was left with greater freedom of action later on. In fact, Churchill himself had reassured the House of Commons, when he announced that Attlee would accompany him to the Potsdam conference in July, that he and Attlee 'have always in these last few years thought alike on the foreign situation and agreed together'. At the conference 'there will be an opportunity for it to be shown that, although Governments may change and parties may quarrel, yet on some of the main essentials of foreign affairs we stand together'.<sup>93</sup> That the Labour Party leadership was likely to take a strong line on the Soviet Union became clear at Potsdam. James Byrnes, the US Secretary of State, noted that 'Britain's stand on the issues before the (Potsdam) conference was not altered in the slightest, so far as we could discern, by the replacement of Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden by Mr. Attlee and Mr. Bevin. This continuity of Britain's foreign policy impressed me.' Byrnes also wrote that at the first meeting with Attlee and Bevin, Bevin's manner towards the Soviet demands for East Prussia 'was so aggressive that both the President and I wondered how we would get along with this new Foreign Minister'.<sup>94</sup>

In contrast, those on the Labour left had been busy setting as much distance between a Conservative and a Labour foreign policy as possible. Laski argued that Attlee could not commit the Labour Party to support unconditionally any decisions made by Churchill at Potsdam: 'When we win this election, we want to be free in Socialist terms to make our policy for our own Socialist purposes.'<sup>95</sup> Therefore, the Labour Party could not be committed to any decisions made at Potsdam, which would not have been debated by the party NEC or the Parliamentary Labour Party, for 'Labour has a foreign policy which in many respects will not be continuous with that of a Tory-dominated Coalition. It has, in fact, a far sounder foreign policy.'<sup>96</sup> Of course, hardly anyone on the left actually expected Labour to win. Possibly, for many, it was the case that it was better to lay out a socialist foreign policy in principle, because they would not have to put one into practice. The general election of 5 July 1945, much to the party leaders' amazement, resulted in not only a Labour victory but also a Labour

landslide. Labour won 393 seats and 47.8 per cent of the vote. The Conservatives won 213 seats and 39.8 per cent of the vote. The Liberal vote collapsed to 9 per cent, and they gained a meagre twelve seats.<sup>97</sup> The Labour Party had been helped by the strength of the vote received from servicemen overseas, and from those in the electorate for whom this was their first chance to vote, the last election having been held in 1935. It was a 'very surprised' Clement Attlee who went to Buckingham Palace to form a government on 26 July 1945.<sup>98</sup> Bevin the trade union leader, who was expecting the post of Chancellor, was appointed as Foreign Secretary. Dalton the Labour Party intellectual, who had expected this post due to his interest and knowledge in foreign affairs, was appointed as Chancellor.<sup>99</sup> The next day Attlee and Bevin left for the Potsdam conference, the last major Allied conference of the war, replacing Churchill in the negotiations. At this conference an Allied Council of Foreign Ministers was established, consisting of representatives from Britain, the USA, the Soviet Union and France, to draft peace treaties with Germany and Japan.

Both at the time and subsequently, people have been surprised not only that Bevin was made Foreign Secretary, but also that he turned out to be so knowledgeable and adept at it. He was the illegitimate son of a farm-worker who left school at eleven.<sup>100</sup> He had joined the Marxist Social Democratic Federation, but subsequently developed a hatred of communists. He made a name for himself as a union activist, and was the driving force behind the formation of the Transport and General Workers Union in 1922, becoming its General Secretary. This was the largest union in Britain, and came to be remarkably powerful. Bevin's antipathy to communists was due in particular to what he saw as the 'attempt by the Communists to break up the Union that I built'.<sup>101</sup> He spent much of the 1920s and 1930s defending 'his' union against communists. Along with Walter Citrine, he took a leading role in moving the Labour movement to a position of supporting rearmament in the late 1930s. Therefore, he had had years of dealing with recalcitrant trade unionists, and in dealing with his overseas counterparts within the very active and buoyant international trade union movement. He was a forceful individual who did not suffer fools gladly, and anyone who opposed him was seen as a fool or as an enemy. Bevin was not only the first foreign secretary in a majority Labour government, but he is, to date, the longest-serving Labour foreign secretary.

The Second World War marked a decisive break with the past for the Labour Party, as 'The pessimistic mood of the post-1931 period,

coloured by talk of class struggle and division, was swept away in the crisis of national survival.<sup>102</sup> It pointed to the way that Labour governments in the future would approach foreign and defence policy. Labour had rejected appeasement as it did not think that there was any chance of a peaceful settlement with Hitler, thus ending its flirtation of the 1930s with pacifism, and its traditional rejection of the use of force. The war also seemed to vindicate the necessity of policies that Labour had been advocating, such as state planning. It produced a changed ideological climate that made socialism more acceptable, and ideas such as equity and social justice both at home and abroad more prevalent. Unlike the Conservatives, the Labour Party spent much of its time thinking about what would happen when victory was won, and the party's apparatus of committees focused on developing ideas about the future international order. Labour wanted nothing less than the radical restructuring of British society, and the radical restructuring of the international order that had brought about both the world wars. Their vision of a post-war international order was to be based on the acceptance of the idea of subordinating national sovereignty to world institutions and obligations, and on the need for international economic planning. Within the coalition government, Attlee had a significant input into the development of the post-war settlement, especially over Germany. The Labour government ministers were actively involved in planning British post-war foreign policy, whilst the Labour Party planned for their version of the post-war world, based on a complete overhaul of international relations. While Attlee had at first encouraged this perspective, by the end of the Second World War he was distancing himself from some of his earlier claims of a new world order based on socialism and democracy, and calling for the party to have rather more cautious ambitions for both the new world order and the future of British foreign policy. However, by then there was a distinct divergence between the expectations of the Labour Party membership and the expectations of the very top of the Labour Party leadership, and this was to become the main issue of contention for the Attlee government.

## Notes

- 1 Richard Overy, *The Air War, 1939–1945* (London: Europa, 1980) p. 21.
- 2 Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (London: Fontana Press, 1989), p. 437.

- 3 B. H. Liddell Hart, *History of the Second World War* (London: Book Club Associates, 1973), p. 9.
- 4 *Keesing's Contemporary Archive*, vol. 3, 1937–40 (London: Keesing's, 1940), p. 3247.
- 5 *Labour Party Annual Conference Report*, 1939 (hereafter *LPACR*), National Council of Labour statement, 8 September 1938, p. 14.
- 6 National Council of Labour statements of 19 and 20 September 1938, cited in *Keesing's Contemporary Archive*, vol. 3, p. 3234.
- 7 House of Commons Debates (hereafter *H.C. Deb.*), fifth series, vol. 339, cols 51–2, 3 October 1938.
- 8 *Ibid.*, col. 351, 5 October 1938.
- 9 *Ibid.*, cols 553–62, 6 October 1938.
- 10 On the opposition to the government's foreign policy from Conservative MPs, see Neville Thompson, *The Anti-Appeasers: Conservative Opposition to Appeasement in the 1930s* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).
- 11 *LPACR*, 1941, p. 142.
- 12 British Library of Political and Economic Science, London School of Economics (hereafter *BLPES*), George Lansbury papers, vol. 16, notes on George Lansbury's interview with Hitler, 19 April 1937.
- 13 *BLPES*, Lansbury papers, vol. 16, letter from Lansbury to Reginald Clifford Allen, 11 May 1937, italics in original.
- 14 Museum of Labour History, Manchester, Labour Party archive, LP/ID/INT/1/1, from the Leaders of the Social Democratic Party of Germany to the Labour Party International Department, April 1937.
- 15 Labour Party, *The Full Facts of the Czech Crisis* (London: Labour Party, 1938), p. 13.
- 16 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 342, cols 2503 and 2625–30, 19 December 1938.
- 17 Kenneth Harris, *Attlee* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982), p. 162.
- 18 *LPCAR*, 1939, p. 23.
- 19 Harris, *Attlee*, p. 162.
- 20 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 346, cols 1154–5, 26 April 1939.
- 21 *LPACR*, 1939, p. 289.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- 23 *Ibid.*, pp. 215 and 289.
- 24 *LPACR*, 1940, p. 6. On 27 June 1939, the National Council of Labour appointed Hugh Dalton, Herbert Morrison and Walter Citrine to consult with the Prime Minister on various international matters, including the negotiations on the proposed Anglo-Soviet Pact. See also Hugh Dalton, *The Fateful Years: Memoirs 1945–1960* (London: Mueller, 1962), pp. 246–57.
- 25 *LPACR*, 1940, p. 8.
- 26 *Trades Union Congress Annual Report* (hereafter *TUCAR*), 1939, p. 303.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 295.
- 28 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 355, col. 291, 30 November 1939.
- 29 NEC statement of 7 December 1939, in *LPACR*, 1940, p. 13.
- 30 *LPACR*, 1940, p. 14.

- 31 Bill Jones, *The Russia Complex: the British Labour Party and the Soviet Union* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), p. 36.
- 32 *LPACR*, 1940, p. 8.
- 33 *LPACR*, 1940, 'Message to the German people', pp. 8–9.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- 35 Dalton, *The Fateful Years*, p. 265.
- 36 Roy Jenkins, *Churchill* (London: Pan Books, 2002), p. 552.
- 37 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 351, cols 280–3, 2 September 1939; Dalton, *The Fateful Years*, pp. 264–5.
- 38 *TUCAR*, 1939, pp. 337–8.
- 39 NEC statement, *LPACR*, 1941, p. 4.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 41 *LPACR*, 1940, p. 124.
- 42 *Keesing's Contemporary Archive*, vol. 3, p. 3987.
- 43 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 367, cols 695 and 756, 5 December 1940.
- 44 'Cato', *Guilty Men* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1940); Mervyn Jones, *Michael Foot* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1994), pp. 84–91.
- 45 *LPACR*, 1941, p. 133.
- 46 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 373, col. 1362, 29 July 1941.
- 47 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 353, col. 877, 16 November 1940.
- 48 *LPACR*, 1940, appendix 2, 'Labour, the War, and the Peace'.
- 49 See Angus Calder's excellent account of these in *The People's War: Britain 1939–45* (London: Pimlico edition, 1992), chs 1 and 2.
- 50 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 360, col. 1150, 7 May 1940.
- 51 *Ibid.*, col. 1094.
- 52 *Ibid.*, col. 1283.
- 53 Hugh Dalton, *The Political Diary of Hugh Dalton: 1918–40, 1945–60*, edited by Ben Pimlott (London: Jonathan Cape, 1986), p. 340.
- 54 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 360, cols 1361–6, 8 May 1940. Somewhat confusingly, the numbers given for the voting in this division vary widely according to different accounts of these events.
- 55 Jorgen Rasmussen, 'Party discipline in war-time: the downfall of the Chamberlain government', *Journal of Politics*, 32:2 (1970), 380.
- 56 Dalton, *Political Diary*, p. 344.
- 57 Clement Attlee, *As It Happened* (London: Odhams Press, 1956), p. 158.
- 58 Winston Churchill, *The Second World War, vol. 1: The Gathering Storm* (London: Cassell, 1948), p. 524.
- 59 See Peter Clarke, *The Cripps Version: The Life of Sir Stafford Cripps, 1889–1952* (London: Allen Lane/Penguin Press, 2002), parts 3 and 4.
- 60 John Barnes and David Nicholson, eds, *The Empire at Bay: The Leo Amery Diaries 1929–1945* (London: Hutchinson, 1988), p. 595.
- 61 Harris, *Attlee*, p. 174.
- 62 Churchill, *The Gathering Storm*, pp. 523–5.
- 63 Harris, *Attlee*, p. 188; Michael Foot, *Aneurin Bevan, A Biography: vol. I, 1897–1945* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1962), p. 331.
- 64 Foot, *Bevan*, p. 337.
- 65 Jones, *The Russia Complex*, p. 75. See ch. 5 for more details of the Second Front Campaign.
- 66 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 374, cols 151–2, 9 September 1941.

- 67 LPACR, 1940, appendix 2, 'Labour, the War, and the Peace'.
- 68 LPACR, 1941, p. 3.
- 69 Steven Fielding, Peter Thompson and Nick Tiratsoo, *England Arise! The Labour Party and Popular Politics in 1940s Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 79.
- 70 Harris, *Attlee*, p. 169.
- 71 LPACR, 1940, p. 125.
- 72 LPACR, 1941, p. 4.
- 73 G. D. H. Cole, *A History of the Labour Party from 1914* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1948), pp. 414–9.
- 74 LPACR, 1942, pp. 151–2.
- 75 Dalton, *The Fateful Years*, p. 423.
- 76 *The International Post-War Settlement*, in LPACR, 1944, pp. 4–9.
- 77 *Ibid.*, p. 132.
- 78 LPACR, 1942, pp. 154–5.
- 79 LPACR, 1943, p. 4.
- 80 Stephen Howe, *Anticolonialism in British Politics: The Left and the End of Empire, 1918–1964* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 52.
- 81 The Labour Party, *The Demand for Colonial Territories and Equality of Economic Opportunity* (London: Labour Party, 1936).
- 82 Peter Weiler, *British Labour and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 27. For a less critical perspectives on this, see Marjorie Nicholson, *The TUC Overseas: The Roots of Policy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986), chs 6–7.
- 83 Alan Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin, vol. 3: Foreign Secretary, 1945–1951* (London: Heinemann, 1983), p. 64.
- 84 Trevor Burridge, *British Labour and Hitler's War* (London: André Deutsch, 1976), ch. 8.
- 85 LPACR, 1945, p. 114.
- 86 *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- 87 *Ibid.*, pp. 107 and 119.
- 88 Ronald Buchanan McCallum and Alison Readman, *The British General Election of 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947; reprinted London: Frank Cass, 1964), p. 150, citing British Institute of Public Opinion poll.
- 89 *The Times*, 23 June 1946.
- 90 Labour Party 1945 election manifesto, 'Let us face the future', in F. W. S. Craig, ed. and comp., *British General Election Manifestos 1900–1974* (London: Macmillan, rev. and enlarged edn, 1975), p. 104.
- 91 Party 1945 election manifesto, in *ibid.*, pp. 87 and 88.
- 92 Labour Party 1945 election manifesto, in *ibid.*, p. 104.
- 93 *H.C. Deb.*, vol. 411, col. 1788, 14 June 1945.
- 94 James Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly* (London: William Heinemann, 1947), p. 79.
- 95 *The Times*, 20 June 1945.
- 96 Kingsley Martin, *Harold Laski (1893–1950): A Biographical Memoir* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1953), p. 170.
- 97 Butler and Butler, *British Political Facts*, p. 226.
- 98 Attlee, *As It Happened*, p. 148.

- 99 For an explanation of this, see Dalton, *The Fateful Years*, pp. 468, 472 and 474–5.
- 100 The most detailed and most illuminating source on Bevin is Alan Bullock's remarkable three volumes of his life: Alan Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin*, vols. 1–3 (London: Heinemann, 1960, 1967, 1983).
- 101 *LPACR*, 1946, p. 167.
- 102 Stephen Brooke, *Labour's War: The Labour Party during the Second World War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 271.