

The Socialist Party of Great Britain

Conference Decisions and Party Poll Results (1959-1972)

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April 1973

Introduction

THIS DOCUMENT was called for by the 1972 Annual Conference and is a record of two kinds of policy-making Party decisions over the period 1959-1972, namely, instructed resolutions carried at Annual Conference and resolutions carried by Party Poll.

An instructed resolution is one that has been submitted to branches before Annual Conference for them to discuss and instruct their delegates how to vote on.

A Party Poll resolution is one submitted to an individual ballot of all Party members on a matter considered by the E.C., or a Conference, or a Delegate, or six or more branches, to be of sufficient importance to warrant such a poll. (A Party Poll must also be held after a Conference or Delegate Meeting has considered a charge of action 'detrimental to the interest of the Party' laid by the E.C. against a branch or member. One such Party Poll was in fact held during this period but is not recorded here).

These two kinds of decision are binding on the E.C., branches and the membership generally.

The resolutions in this document are divided into two parts:

I. Party Poll Results.

II. Instructed Resolutions Carried by Annual Conference.

The resolutions in both parts are numbered 1,2,3, etc, and those in part II further divided into broad sections (Organization, Education, Propaganda, Publicity, Socialist Standard, Other Journals, Pamphlets and Leaflets, Elections, and Policy), for ease of reference. The year they were carried is given in brackets after their wording together, in the case of Conference resolutions where this was done, with their number on the Final Agenda. Notes have been added after some of the resolutions, but purely for purposes of explanation. Various statements, drawn up during this period and endorsed by a specific Conference resolution, are included as Appendixes since they too represent Party policy by virtue of this endorsement.

Party Polls take precedence over Conference decisions as defined in Rule 26.

Other kinds of Party decision are not included in this document because, although they sometimes do have a bearing on Party policy, they cannot and do not make it:

Conference Floor Resolutions: These are resolutions proposed and carried by the delegates to a Conference without having been previously submitted to branches. They are not binding and have the force of a recommendation only.

Delegate Meeting Recommendations: The Annual Delegate Meeting is not a policy-making meeting so any resolutions proposed and carried by the delegates are only recommendatory.

Executive Committee Rulings: The E.C. cannot make Party policy but, on occasions between Conferences, it does have to interpret the meaning of the Party Rules, Conference resolutions and Party poll results. An E.C. Ruling is an E.C. decision, making an interpretation of this kind. Such decisions are binding till confirmed, or overturned, by a subsequent Conference or Party Poll. Resolutions 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78; and 84 confirm or overturn various E.C. Rulings made during this period.

Also not included in this document are Amendments to Rule, which are decided on by branches and Conference in the same way as instructed resolutions and are of course equally binding on the E.C., branches and the membership generally. However, some of the more important and controversial Amendments to Rule made during this period (such as to Rule 25 on placing surplus funds in a deposit account and to Rule 28 on who may sign Party candidates' nomination papers) were also the subject of Party Poll resolutions and so are indirectly recorded here.

Executive Committee, 1972.

Part I: Party Poll Results

1. Endorsement of the resolution carried at the 1960 Conference, "That this Conference holds membership of the Armed Forces or Police to be incompatible with membership of the Party". (1960) Yes 81 No: 64

(Note: This result was reversed the following year. See no. 2 below)

2. Endorsement of the resolution on the Armed Forces carried at the 1961 Conference (See Part II, Resolution 83, 1961) Yes 138 No 68
3. "Shall the Party open a deposit account for funds not currently required?"(1962) Yes 89 No 83
4. "Shall the Party place in a deposit account funds surplus to its immediate requirements?" (1967) Yes 121 No: 89
5. "Shall Rule 28, viz. 'Elections, national and local, shall be contested by the Party putting forward the full number of candidates in the particular ward, district or constituency' be rescinded and the Party revert to the pre-1968-Conference position on Rule 28?" (1968) Yes 108 No 107

(Note: the 1968 Conference amended Rule 28 by deleting the words 'There must be sufficient fully qualified members in the ward, district or constituency to fill in the candidates' nomination papers and in no circumstances may a candidate be supported on his nomination paper by a non-member'. This Party Poll, therefore, restored these words)

6. "Shall Rule 28 be amended to read, 'Elections, national and local, shall be contested by the Party putting forward the full number of candidates in the particular ward, district or constituency, and that people may sign the nomination paper subject to the scrutiny of the Branch and the Executive Committee?' (1969-70) Yes 116 No 95
7. "Shall the Executive Committee have the authority to fix the price of the Socialist Standard, subject to confirmation by Delegate meeting or Conference?" (1972) Yes 127 No: 30

Part II - Instructed Resolutions carried by Annual Conference

A. ORGANIZATION

1. "That this Conference instructs the EC to arrange for the 1964 Delegate Meeting to be held in the Provinces"(I, 1963).
2. "This Conference re-affirms that, in keeping with our democratic principles, members of the public have free access to our Constitution, Rules and records (with the exception of membership lists) as they have to all our meetings; and instructs the EC to act accordingly in future" (1965) .
3. "This Conference instructs the EC to set up a committee to investigate the present structure of the Party, with special reference to the London area, and report their recommendations to the Delegate Meeting" (1, 1966).
4. "That this Conference endorses the findings of the Special Committee on London branches, and urges those branches concerned to take the necessary steps to bring their names into line with GLC constituencies, and to amalgamate where this is practicable to better implement the work of the Party" (1967) .
5. "This Conference instructs the EC to include in the list of sub-committees the post of Assistant to the Central Organiser" (1968).
6. "This Conference calls on the EC to set up a committee to report to the 1969 Delegate Meeting with details of costs and probable advantages of employing a member full-time at Head Office" (I, 1969)
- 7 "No candidate in a ballot for membership to the EC or Party Officers may be a member of the ballot committee for the period of that ballot" (2, 1971) .
8. "This Conference instructs the EC to prepare and circulate a list of Conference Decisions and Party Poll Results for the period 1958-1972" (5, 1972).

B. EDUCATION

9. "That this Conference instructs the EC to investigate and report upon the possibility of weekend Summer Schools" (6, 1960).
10. "That this Conference welcomes the recent successful Speakers' Classes and urges the EC to make every effort to extend this type of class to include special sessions dealing with economics and political history" (11, 1964)
11. "This Conference instructs the EC to modernise and extend Head Office Library, including the Tape Library, and provide up-to-date equipment, and that Branches be supplied with a Head Office library list" (1965)

12. "This Conference instructs the EC to make every endeavour to create interest among members and Branches in the forthcoming series of educational classes" (1965)

13. "This Conference instructs the EC to set up an Education Committee as recommended by the last Delegate Meeting". (1968)

14. "This Conference is disturbed at the lack of educational facilities and instructs the EC to appoint an Education Officer" (1970)

C. PROPAGANDA

15. "That this Conference deplors the low level of propaganda in 1960, indoor and outdoor, and instructs the EC to better organise the running of meetings. To this effect, a branch should run Hyde Park on Sundays, instead of 'hit and miss' individuals" (8, 1961)

16. "That this Conference instructs the EC to make arrangements for regular visits by speakers from London to those Provincial branches who wish to hold outdoor meetings but have insufficient local speaking strength" (2, 1963)

17 "That this Conference instructs the EC to arrange a large indoor meeting in September to coincide with the publication of the 60th Anniversary Special Edition of the Socialist Standard" (6, 1964)

18. "This Conference instructs the EC to extend and enlarge every avenue of propaganda, particularly the holding of a series of well-prepared indoor meetings in London and the Provinces" (1965)

19. "That the EC be instructed to thoroughly investigate speaking strength throughout the Party with a view to expanding Provincial propaganda" (1965)

D. PUBLICITY

20. "That this Conference favours the use of vehicles for display parades (monthly) and instructs the EC to approach members who might help" (7, 1961)

21. "This Conference instructs the EC to investigate the possibility of improving the advertising of the Socialist Standard and Party Literature" (1965)

22. "As the main political parties and the BBC purport to practice and support democracy but do not, whilst the Socialist Party does, this Conference considers that, in our efforts to obtain wider expression of minority views, the soundest position from which to demand broadcasting time would be established and the maximum advantage gained, if the following points and demands formed the basis of our campaign:

1. Democratic practice requires that no political party be denied effective expression of its views to the electorate.
2. This entails equal access to the appropriate means of communication.
3. Agreements made by the broadcasting authorities and other political parties which discriminate against the minority parties either by their exclusion or the imposition on them of unequal time are undemocratic.
4. Brief interviews, short feature programmes or news items are in no way comparable to the formal presentation of a political policy by a member of the political party concerned.
5. The electors are being denied their right (according to liberal-democratic theory) of hearing minority political views.
6. The Socialist Party has never been allowed a Party Political Broadcast during a General Election.
7. Neither has it been allowed to present its policy to listeners and viewers between elections.

Therefore,

- A. The Socialist party demands that at election times its candidates be allowed equal time to any other candidates contesting the constituencies concerned.
- B. The Socialist Party demands that it shall be allowed expression of its views on appropriate occasions in the periods between elections.
- C. The Socialist Party demands the right of reply in the event of its policies or members' political activities being criticised.

"This Conference instructs the EC that all the foregoing points (1-7) and demands (A, B and C) shall be made the basis from which they shall argue with the appropriate authorities for wider expression of our views". (1968)

23. "That this Conference holds that in the best interests of the Party no further private advertisements by individual members using the name of the Party should be permitted until a thorough investigation into the implications for the reputation and effective democratic functioning of the Party has been made" (3, 1971)

24. "This Conference regrets that nothing has been done in regard to the National Sticker Campaign which was proposed and passed at last year's Annual Conference" (7, 1972). (Note: the resolution on a National Sticker Campaign passed at the 1971 Conference was a floor resolution).

E. Socialist Standard

25. "That this Conference considers that the function of the Socialist Standard is entirely the propagation of Socialist ideas; it should explain and comment on world events in the widest sense of the term, that is, what goes on around us. The main interest of the Socialist Standard must always be politics, economics and history". (3, 1959)

26. "That this Conference holds the view that the Socialist Standard now forms the most important channel of propaganda and that the Party must be prepared to spend more money on the production, distribution and advertising of the Socialist Standard, even if this involves a greater loss on each issue. As much money as can be afforded be allocated to advertise the Socialist Standard" (4, 1959)

27. "That this Conference holds that there should be a correspondence section in the Socialist Standard and therefore instructs the EC that

- (i) Letters should be edited with regard to length and interest;
- (ii) Letters from critics should, as now be answered in the same issue of the Socialist Standard;
- (iii) Appreciative and helpful letters, as well as critical ones should be published" (5, 1969)

28. "That the EC be instructed, to increase the Editorial Committee to six members along the lines suggested in Section 5 of the Socialist Standard Investigation Committee's report" (7, 1959) (See Appendix A for section 5 of the above-mentioned report).

29. "That this Conference asserts that any increase in the sales of the Socialist Standard will be due to the activity of members selling the Socialist Standard and the ideas contained therein, and the present policy of an improved Socialist Standard be continued and expanded" (4, 1961)

30. "That this Conference instructs the EC to publish a Special Edition of the Socialist Standard in September to mark its 60th Anniversary" (7, 1964)

31. "That this Conference calls for the overhauling of the Party Directory on the inside front page of the Socialist Standard" (6, 1966)

32. "That the price of the Socialist Standard be increased to 9d" (1968)

33. "That the price of the Socialist Standard be raised to 1/ (5p), the increase to commence with the June issue" (1970)

34. "In future more money to be spent on the Socialist Standard to try to increase sales" (12, 1971)

35. "This Conference deplores the attitude of the EC in not implementing the 1971 Annual Conference resolutions, e.g. more money spent on Socialist Standard and National Sticker Campaign".

36. "This Conference feels that the format of the Socialist Standard is too formal, and should be made more attractive, i.e. the use of more colour, cartoons, photographs, shorter articles and larger print" (12, 1972)

37. "This Conference feels steps should be taken for the Socialist Standard to be distributed through the wholesale newspaper trade" (13, 1972)

38. "This Conference instructs the EC that a cut-out name and address insertion be included in our literature to be sent by enquirers to Head Office and that the subscription format at present displayed in the Socialist Standard be amended to read 'post and packing included'" (14, 1972)

F. OTHER JOURNALS

39. "That the Internal Party Journal be wound up" (3, 1962)

40. "That during 1968, and annually thereafter, an international journal, along the lines of the September 1967 supplement to the Socialist Standard, be published (1968)

41. "That the price of the Western Socialist be raised to 1/" (1968)

G. PAMPHLETS AND LEAFLETS

42. " That this Conference instructs the EC to ensure that literature is prepared making our opposition to war and the testing of nuclear, or any other kind of weapons abundantly clear, whilst at the same time giving carefully considered arguments (showing familiarity with contemporary anti-nuclear literature) why we do not support movements seeking adherents on the grounds of opposition to a particular kind of warfare" (8, 1959)

43. "That this Conference regrets the delay in the reissue of the pamphlet Socialism and instructs the EC to give priority to this pamphlet" (2, 1961)

44. "In view of the recommendation of the 1960 Conference that monies donated for the purposes of its work are best devoted to printing propaganda publications, this Conference instructs the EC to go ahead with all speed with the publications of pamphlets" (5, 1961)

45. "That this Conference instructs the EC that a new pamphlet on Russia be published; that meanwhile every effort be made to cover current events regarding Russia in the Socialist Standard" (4, 1962)

46. "That this Conference recommends that our standard pamphlets on Russia should deal briefly with the historical background of the revolution and the early theories of the Communist Party, but that the bulk of the pamphlet should deal with the development of Russia since 1945. This Conference recommends the EC to take all possible steps to have the pamphlet prepared within the next 18 months" (5, 1962)

47. "That this Conference instructs the EC to go ahead with all speed with the publication of the revised edition of the pamphlet on Russia" (8, 1964)

48. "That this Conference instructs the EC to go ahead with all speed with the publication of the revised edition of the pamphlet on the Racial Question" (9, 1964)

49. "That this Conference instructs the EC to arrange for a revision and reprint of the pamphlet on religion" (10, 1964)

50. "This Conference is in favour of the Party paying a member or members to do the necessary research and preparation to produce booklets and pamphlets" (1965)

51. "That the EC be instructed to explore the possibilities of employing a comrade as a full-time paid researchworker and writer, and that steps be taken to establish a fund reserved solely for the payment of this comrade" (1965)

52. "This Conference instructs the EC to extend the publication of new pamphlets" (1965)

53. "This Conference instructs the EC to prepare a new pamphlet or booklet on War" (1965)

54. "This Conference instructs the EC to prepare a new pamphlet or booklet on Automation and technology" (1965)
55. "This Conference instructs the EC to prepare a new pamphlet or booklet on 'The Urban Problem and How We Live Today', dealing expressly with congestion in housing and transport" (1965)
56. "This Conference instructs the EC to prepare a new pamphlet or booklet on 'A Socialist Analysis of History'" (1965)
57. "This Conference instructs the EC to investigate the possibility of producing the new Russia pamphlet in paperback form at a price of, say, 3/ or 3/6 to enable wider distribution and sale through bookshops, etc. who are unwilling to accept low-priced pamphlets" (1965)
58. "This Conference is most perturbed that no new pamphlets have appeared since last Conference and instructs the EC to take steps to ensure that at least the pamphlets on Russia, War and Race appear with all possible speed" (8, 1966)
59. "That this Conference is in favour of short, moderately-priced pamphlets and instructs the EC to investigate and give effect to this proposal as a matter of priority" (9, 1966)
60. "This Conference is disturbed that no new pamphlets have been published for over twelve months and instructs the EC to take all steps to ensure the publication of (i) Questions of the Day and (ii) Socialism and War before the summer propaganda season, and that the necessary sum of money be put on one side for this purpose" (3, 1969)
61. "That in the make-up of future Party pamphlets the EC give greater consideration to the requirements of trade distribution" (8, 1971)
62. "That this Conference is of the opinion that the Object and Declaration of Principles should appear on all Election Statements and also in the Socialist Standard and statements of Party policy" (15, 1971)
63. "That this Conference instructs the EC to enquire from our comrades in Austria and Germany as to the desirability of our publishing, or financing the publication of Russia 1917-67 in German in pamphlet form" (9, 1972)

H. ELECTIONS

64. "That this Conference instructs the EC to set up a special sub-committee to examine the Party Rules relating to electoral activity with a view to considering changes that may be advisable in the light of current conditions, and the Party's experience. The report to be presented this year" (7, 1960)
65. "That this Conference instructs the EC to investigate the methods adopted by the Party in contesting elections" (8, 1960)
66. "That this Conference instructs the EC commence immediately investigations into the possibility of contesting one of the Nottingham divisions at the next election" (9, 1960)
67. "That, as it is essential that the establishment of Socialism be carried out by democratic methods, i.e. persuasion and secret ballot; as the democratic institutions already established by the working class will tend to be undermined if not used; as abstention from voting is basically an Anarchist attitude that tends to undermine established democratic institutions; the Socialist Party is opposed to the policy of abstention at elections where there is no Socialist candidate, and recommends that in this case Socialists co-ordinate their voting by writing 'SOCIALISM - SPGB' across their ballot paper" (1968)
68. "This Conference urges all branches, wherever possible, to adopt a prospective parliamentary candidate for the forthcoming General Election" (1970)

69. "This Conference, whilst recognising the desirability of contesting elections, urges the EC and branches to give greater consideration to the constituencies and areas to be contested and to the detailed programming of any campaign" (17, 1971)

70. "That the Party should contest at least one seat in every General Election, funds permitting" (19, 1972)

I. POLICY

(i) Declaration of Principles

71. "That this Conference agrees with the opinions expressed by the 1963 EC concerning changes in the Declaration of Principles proposed by the World Socialist Party of the United States and endorses their action in sending a letter containing those opinions to the W.S.P. towards the end of 1963" (3, 1964)

(ii) Violence

72. "That the EC be asked to prepare a reasoned statement on the Subject 'Socialism and Violence' for consideration by the 1965 Conference" (13, 1964)

73. "This Conference re-affirms the Party's attitude to violence, viz. that only a democratically-elected Socialist majority can introduce Socialism after the capture of the machinery of government; violence will only be used in the event of a recalcitrant minority attempting to forcibly overthrow Socialism" (1965) (Note: an amendment to delete all after 'viz' and insert 'as reiterated by the EC in its statement of 27 October, 1964' was defeated)

(iii) Reforms

74. "That this Conference affirms that the Party's attitude to reforms and reformism is as laid down in the 'W.B. of Upton Park' controversy of 1910. This Conference further affirms that the reply of the 1959 EC to Fulham Branch on this question is an unsatisfactory and misleading statement of the Party's case in that it implies that the Party is opposed to reforms as such, and therefore calls upon the EC to prepare a fresh statement on the issue" (1, 1960)

75. "That this Conference censures the 1959 EC for this reply to Fulham and Chelsea Branch on the reform question and accepts Comrade Lake's statement, in his circular to Branches, as the Party's case on reforms" (2, 1960). (see Appendix B for the wording of Comrade Lake's statement)

76. "That this Conference endorses the EC's 1969 Statement on Reforms" (18, 1971)

77. "That this Conference endorses the 1969 EC's reaffirmation of the Party's case on reformism" (19, 1971)

78. "That this Conference is satisfied that the statement on Reforms and Trade Unions issued by the EC in October 1969 accurately reaffirms the Party's policy" (20, 1971) (see Appendix D for the EC statement in question)

79. "That this Conference affirms that the Socialist Party of Great Britain has as its sole object the establishment of Socialism. It is a revolutionary party based on the class struggle. All reforms are put into operation on behalf of one section or another of the capitalists in their own interests, even though some may contain incidental advantage to the workers. The Socialist Party of Great Britain is opposed to the workers wasting time and energy in attempting to improve capitalism by means of reforms, thus obscuring the class struggle. Consequently, the Party cannot support any action aimed at gaining or maintaining a reform as such support would not only confuse the workers but it would overlook the fact that the Party's sole object is the establishment of Socialism. We must therefore confine ourselves directly to the furtherance of that object and not take any steps up the blind alley of reformism. This statement deals with reforms, not with the Party's attitude to the struggle of the workers on the industrial field" (20, 1972).

(iv) Morality

80. "That this Conference reaffirms the view that Socialism is a class issue, not a moral issue" (14, 1964).

(v) Russia.

81. This Conference recognises that the ruling class in state capitalist Russia stands in the same relationship to the means of production as does the ruling class in any other capitalist country, viz. it has a monopoly of those means of production and is therefore a capitalist class" (5, 1969).

(vi) Membership of the Armed Forces

82. "That this Conference holds membership of the Armed Forces or Police to be incompatible with membership of the Party (3, 1960) (Note: this was confirmed by a Party Poll - see Part I, No. 1 - but later rescinded by Resolution 83 below and a further Party Poll - see Part I, no. 2)

83. "This Conference reaffirms the decision (No.10) of the 1952 Conference, and the Party Poll of 1949 on the question of membership of the Party and the Armed Forces, as follows:

'This Conference reaffirms the decision of the 1933 Conference which was as follows:- This Conference endorses the Ruling given by the 29th EC on July 5th 1932 on this question, viz. that, as many workers are forced by economic pressures to join the Armed Forces, this EC rules that such employment shall not necessarily prevent workers from joining the Party. All Forms A shall receive consideration and each application shall be decided on its merits, and any member who voluntarily (i.e. other than conscripted) joins the Armed Forces (Army, navy and Air Force) shall be deemed to have acted in a manner detrimental to the interests of the Party"' (6, 1961)

(vii) Membership of Other Organisations

84. "That this Conference endorses the decisions of the 62nd EC taken at its 46th meeting on November 16th 1965 relating to the 'British Humanist Association' and the 'Rationalist Press Association Ltd.' Acting on these decisions, this Conference affirms that membership of either of these organisations and of the 'National Secular Society' is incompatible with membership of the Socialist Party of Great Britain" (12, 1966)

APPENDIX A: Section 5 of the Socialist Standard Investigating Committee's Report (1959)

The Editorial Committee

The present Editorial Committee made the following statement of what it considered to be its functions:

"In the first place we must ensure that the articles are in line with the Party case, which means careful editing as statements not in line with the Party case are frequent in the articles we receive.

"Secondly we need to ensure, as far as possible, accuracy of fact and quotations.

"Thirdly the avoidance of libel, a precaution which has become much more necessary owing to tightening and complexity of the libel laws as instanced by recent cases.

"Underlying the above functions the Editorial Committee is under precise instructions to secure that the 'Socialist Standard' appears regularly and to a specified time".

It was made clear to the Investigating Committee that there are various other tasks which fall upon the Editorial Committee and, while these are connected with its work, may not be considered as legitimately part of it. These include: co-ordinating writers, giving written explanations about edited or rejected articles, encouraging new writers, organising writers' classes, planning special issues, and maintaining liaison with other committees.

The Investigation Committee thought it desirable that some arrangement should be made whereby all the work connected with the 'Socialist Standard' was brought together. Simply to bring extra members into the Editorial Committee would, it was found, create difficulties in working, and the Committee therefore drew up the following proposals.

We suggest a committee of 6 members, with clearly understood functions. The aim is to have a Committee so composed as to take in all the aspects of the production of the 'Standard', while keeping its size as functional as possible.

Three of the members would be concerned with editorial matters: that is, the reading, selection and editing of articles. They would continue the work of the present Editorial Committee. In addition, however, one of the three editorial members would have the specific task of dealing with writers. He would, for example, be closely associated with writers' and other classes. He would also write to contributors about the contents and quality of their articles.

The fourth member of the Committee would be the "layout man", to whom reference has already been made. Fifth, a member concerned with advertising and the promotion of sales. This member would presumably, but not necessarily, come from the Central Literature Sales Committee, which now incorporates the Publicity Committee.

Last, the Committee needs, to the widest extent that a member can be found to give them, the services of a secretary who would work as a member of the Committee. It is hardly possible to list the duties of this member. Simply, they would consist of helping the work of the Committee; ideally, they would include chasing up writers and in fact seeing to the smooth working of the whole machine.

The established method of appointing committees by the Executive Committee would not meet these special requirements. Our suggestion is that the EC make the direct appointment of either two or three editorial members who would be regarded as the nucleus of the Committee, and that those members immediately on appointment should seek the other members to make up the Committee. The proposed appointments would, of course, be taken to the EC, with whom the constitution of the Committee must always rest.

The additional members would not be regarded as "co-opted" but would be actual members of the Editorial Committee. The division of function would have to be clearly recognised, but at the same time it would not be exclusive; what it would mean is that each member would be primarily concerned with editing or layout, etc. The Committee should work on the principle that specialisation is necessary because of the continual pressure of time, but that when time permits there is advantage in consultation.

We suggest that the actual working would be something like this. At the end of the previous month there would be a general conference of committee members, writers, and all other interested members to consider and exchange ideas about the next issue of the "Standard". After this the Committee would meet as it found necessary, but it would be bound to meet in full about the fourteenth of the month for the putting-together of the issue. After this meeting, the members would probably work individually: the layout member concerned with the make-up of the issue as soon as proofs were available, the advertising and distributing member along the lines appropriate to him, and so on.

The Investigation Committee is concerned specially with the need for a part-time or even full-time paid worker on the "Standard"; this should be, in our view, the secretary to the Editorial Committee. At the end of the war circumstances enabled the Party to have the services at Head Office of a member who was a capable writer and also knew the working of the Executive Committee, and this is something needed today. The Party should look at this realistically, however, and see that it must be prepared to pay a wage to a capable member comparable with that which he would obtain elsewhere.

APPENDIX B -Comrade E. Lake's Letter of Criticism of the E.C. Reply to Fulham Branch on Reforms of 7 July 1959.

The reply to Fulham Branch accepted by the EC on July 7th '59 reverses the position held by the Party since the reply to W.B. of Upton Park.

The reason given for our opposition to reforms is: "Thus, in general reforms that are put into effect are aimed at hindering the movement towards Socialism by allaying dangerous discontent".

This may be true, but it is not our reason for opposing reforms. To say that some reforms will allay discontent implies that they will be of some benefit to the working class. The logic of this position is that we are opposed to any improvement in working class conditions because it will make the workers less receptive to our propaganda.

Even if this was correct, it's an impossible position for the Party to take up. But I don't agree with the reasoning. People are prompted to consider the case for Socialism by a variety of factors, and extreme poverty, if at all, plays a very small part.

There are other implications which we could not accept. The successful outcome of a strike would have a similar effect to that of a "beneficial reform" and on this line of reasoning we should welcome the workers' defeat in an industrial dispute.

Further, if we oppose reforms because they allay discontent, then we must accept the opposite and welcome measures that lower the standard of living or are of a repressive character, because they would arouse discontent.

The position as I understand it, previous to the reply to Fulham Branch is, that we are opposed to a reform programme and to all reformist organisations, but not opposed to reforms as such.

This attitude has served the Party well for many years and in my view is the most satisfactory one for the Party to maintain. To overthrow this position, the E.C. were out of order. This should only be done by a Conference or by a poll of the Party.

APPENDIX C: EC Letter to World Socialist Party of the United States re proposed amendments to their Declaration of Principles (1963)

Dear Comrades,

We have considered your amendments to the Declaration of Principles, agreed at your last Conference, and have the following comments to make. Before doing so, however, there are some aspects we would draw to your attention.

In the past you have already made some alterations in the wording of the D. of P. At the time we let them pass because although not necessarily agreeing with them, it was thought that they were not serious enough to make comment necessary. Your latest re-wording, however, are serious innovations and therefore we cannot let them pass without criticism. There is also the fact that these further alterations raise the question of where this tinkering with the wording is going to end.

The present wording of our D. of P. is a fundamental statement of our outlook, the foundation on which our Party is based. It is as accurate and up-to-date now as when our Party was founded, and has been the basis and guide to our attitude to all questions ever since. Implied in these Principles is the criticism of all the manifestations of Capitalism, which has shown no fundamental change since 1904, and the language is just as fresh, vigorous and applicable as it was originally. On the basis of these Principles members have joined the Party; leaflets, pamphlets, and articles in our journal are published to give more detailed and extensive applications of their implications. Whilst it is not your intention to make any fundamental alterations, your previous re-wording was the thin end of a wedge; your latest is a thicker end.

Now to come to your latest re-wording:

In Principle 4, you have deleted "without distinction of race or sex". Had this phrase never been included it might not have mattered. By taking it out now, in spite of what goes before, you imply to readers that you have had second thoughts on the subject of race and sex equality. Further, it is still necessary to stress our attitude because of the persisting ideas about the inferiority of races and women. The use of the expression "race" is still scientifically accurate as modern anthropologists recognise that there are racial differences of various kinds between sections of mankind; e.g. mongoloid, negroid, caucasoid.

In Principle 7 you have replaced "hostile" by "opposed", and in Principle 8, "wage war against", by "expose". As the objections you have to both these phrases are based on the view that they imply violence, we are taking them together.

As all other political parties are opposed to each other - Liberal, Labour, Conservative, Republican, Democrat, etc. - and oppose the doings of each other, this places you in the position of just another opposition party. We are not just opposed to all other political parties, nor do we just expose them; we are bitterly opposed, hostile to them; out to fight them on all fronts. To say that this implies violence to anyone is quite mistaken. What about "War on Hunger", "War on Disease", etc. etc. and the phrase "Conservative candidates will be fighting on a fresh battleground in the next election"? Nobody dreams of suggesting that these phrases imply violent action. Are we to assume that henceforth

such phrases as "class war", "class struggle", "field of battle", "fight for the capture of political machinery", and similar phrases, will be banished from your literature, on the ground that these phrases imply violence? We would call your attention, for instance, to the editorial reply to a question on page 21 of the No.1/1965 "WS". The opening sentence is "This critic enters the field of battle ill-equipped"!

The substitution of "expose" for "wage war against" is also very feeble, and takes the punch completely out of the paragraph. All parties, institutions and individuals go in for exposing each other. The courts are full of libel cases arising out of rivals of one kind and another "exposing" each other. We are out to wage war against all other political parties, to defeat them and abolish the basis on which they rest.

In submitting the above criticisms to you we are giving the views of the present Executive Committee. We shall, of course, put before the next Conference your proposals and a copy of our letter to you.

APPENDIX D -Executive Committee Policy Statement on Reforms (October 1969)

That this Executive Committee re-affirms the Party attitude on reforms and trade union action in the statement of 1911 which was re-endorsed by Conference in 1948: the 'Socialist Standard' article of September 1932, which was endorsed by Conference 1935 and the statement of 1960 which was drawn up by the EC at the request of Conference 1960. The principles set out in these statements are:-

1. That if a particular measure before Parliament (or Local Council) contained some advantage to the working-class and the socialist movement a minority of Socialist M.P.s or Councillors would be instructed to vote for it or not in the light of all the circumstances, and that, only on the basis of the complete measure not on the basis of a general statement of intent.
2. That we do not advocate reforms.
3. That with regard to reform proposals advocated by other parties and groups we explain how capitalism gives rise to the evils the reforms are designed to remedy, analyse their probable effects, favourable and unfavourable, and show from experience how reforms advocated with the best intentions by reformers are emasculated in their passage through Parliament and in their subsequent administrative application and for that reason we do not commit ourselves on reformist demands which are mere statements of intent not actually embodied in specific legislative measures.
4. That we are in agreement with working-class action on the industrial field when based on a clear recognition of the position of the workers under capitalism and the class struggle necessarily resulting therefrom and we oppose all activities of Unions in support of capitalism or tending to side-track workers from the only path that can lead to their emancipation.

Furthermore, the EC holds that while declaring our sympathy with the exploited in their resistance to the exploiters it is essential, in order to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding, and in the light of the Party's attitude of not advocating reforms that we should avoid using the word 'support' in relation to actions of reformist parties, groups and individuals.

(43rd Meeting, 28th October).