

EDITORIAL

Hand in hand with the bosses?

'OUR PROGRAMME', says the Campaign Document, 'is heavily dependent upon the achievement of our basic objectives: namely, a large and sustained increase in the nation's output and income and a matching decline in the numbers out of work. It is this that will make the resources available...'

On certain issues this is not true. Scrapping nuclear weapons, the House of Lords, and the SPG will save money. Repealing Tory anti-union laws, the immigration and nationality acts, and the Police Bill, will cost nothing.

But many central objectives do depend on an answer to the economic crisis. And the inadequacies of the Campaign Document on that score are likely to make many of its promises just promises.

Those inadequacies flow as much from the confusions of Labour conference policy as from the document's fudging of conference policy on issues like the nationalisation of the top 25 monopolies and incomes policy.

Michael Foot's introduction to the document denounces 'the readiness of the Conservative Party to act in a crisis to protect the interests of a small privileged class'. But it also insists: 'More than ever we must think of our country, the whole British community'. And it means just that: the document is an attempt to square the circle, with a policy that serves the interests both of the working class and of the 'small privileged class' that Thatcher serves.

If only the majority of the population, the working class, had a leadership so clear-headed and ruthlessly dedicated to its interests!

Instead Foot promises 'a Labour government working together with unions and managers to plan Britain's industrial development'.

The core idea is to bribe the capitalists into expanding production, and to hope that the working class will pick up beneficial side-effects. Increased public spending will give contractors more contracts. A National Investment Bank will dole out money to industry.

Now sometimes this sort of project works to some extent. Economists have long discussed when and how. But all the evidence — including, most recently, the experience of France — is that it doesn't work for modern capitalist states today.

The expansion is very limited. Instead the increased state spending mainly fuels inflation, increased trade deficits, and consequent monetary crises.

The document includes proposals for price controls and import controls. But again we can look at experience and see that these do not work. Capitalism depends on free movement of prices and international trade. Serious restrictions on these — outside the special circumstances of a war economy — stifle and cripple the system without replacing it.

However much money the state throws at the capitalists, there is no guarantee that they will expand production — or, if they do expand production, that they will not just pile

A closer look at the Labour Campaign Document **Watch these policies!**

MANY radical commitments are in the Campaign Document despite a probable majority against them on the National Executive Committee and the Shadow Cabinet. But the Sunday Times (April 3) reports that "Labour's right wing is preparing for a sharp battle with the left over the final shape of the party's general election manifesto".

The left needs to start campaigning on these policies now — and building pressure to make sure they aren't cut out of the manifesto.

Watch these policies:

- Repeal Tory legislation on industrial relations.
- Raise child benefits to £8.
- Provide more resources for the Health Service with an increase of at least 3% a year in real terms.
- Improve the personal social services, such as meals on wheels and home helps, with an increase of at least 4% a year in real terms.
- Freeze all rents for the first full year.

Trident

□ Cancel the Trident programme, refuse to deploy Cruise missiles and begin discussions for the removal of nuclear bases from Britain, which is to be completed within the lifetime of the Labour government.

□ We will not permit the siting of Cruise missiles in this country and will remove any that are already in place. The next Labour government will cancel the Trident programme. ... We will propose that Britain's Polaris force be included in the

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nuclear disarmament negotiations in which Britain must take part. We will, after consultation, carry through in the lifetime of the next parliament our non-nuclear defence policy.

□ Britain's withdrawal from the EEC to be completed well within the lifetime of the Labour government.

□ Return to public ownership the public assets and rights hived off by the Tories, with compensation of no more than that received when the assets were denationalised. We will establish a significant public stake in electronics, pharmaceuticals, health equipment and building materials; and also in other important sectors, as required in the national interest.

□ Strengthen the Sex Discrimination Act to include direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of family status, and shift the burden of proof from



