

‘Co-operation and Communism cannot work side by side’: organised consumers and the early Cold War in Britain

In early December 1949, the *Daily Mail* reported that Shirley Parrack, a 16-year-old student nurse, had been forced to quit the Hounslow Co-operative Girls’ Choir. Invited to take part in a mass choir organised by the British-Soviet Friendship Society, the Hounslow girls had practised for three weeks. ‘The songs were nice’, Shirley told the *Mail*’s reporter, ‘they were sort of military.’ When her engineer father eventually found out that the choir’s repertoire included songs such as ‘Stalin led the fight’, he insisted that his daughter immediately withdraw. The tone of the article was humorous, portraying Shirley as in need of parental guidance, but gullible rather than subversive; ‘the words did not mean much to me, and I did not know they were Communist songs’, Shirley explained apologetically. She went on to reassure the reporter that from now on she intended to concentrate on nursing and that she was ‘giving up singing as a bad job.’¹ A far more straight-faced account appeared in the *Co-operative News*, which explained that the Hounslow choir had sought permission to join in the British-Soviet celebrations, but had eventually been refused by the educational committee of the London Co-operative Society. Some individual members decided to ignore the prohibition, though the paper emphasised that they only attended rehearsals. Unfortunately, the *Co-operative News* did not interview Shirley or her father.²

This seemingly minor episode raises many of the key themes discussed in this article. It illustrates the point that the Cold War was a cultural as well as a military, political and economic phenomenon, despite recent attempts by some historians to narrow its meaning.³ A few years earlier, the participation of Shirley Parrack and her fellow co-operative singers in a pro-Soviet cultural event would have been uncontroversial; the changed context led to

their voices being silenced. Moreover, the anecdote underlines the importance of studying the impact of the Cold War from the perspective of organised labour. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the advance of communism in Eastern Europe as well as globally seemed to constitute a growing threat to Western democracies, anti-communism reached a highpoint in Britain, on the left as well as on the right. Research by Peter Weiler has suggested how deeply affected labour institutions were by anti-communism at this time, Cold War ideology promoted by government strengthening the position of right-wing trade union leaders and Labour politicians.⁴ Such views have often been contested, however, critics pointing out that anti-communism was rife among both labour leaders and the wider working-class long before World War Two, and that there was little need for government therefore to manipulate the labour movement to adopt an anti-Soviet stance.⁵ This article contributes to these debates, finding some support in the post-war history of the co-operative movement for Weiler's arguments. The evidence presented in this article deepens our understanding of how vital 'manufacturing consensus' was to various key individuals within both the Foreign Office, the Attlee government and the co-operative movement, who believed that organised working-class consumers as well as producers needed to be brought on side. The history of labour anti-communism may not perhaps be quite such a 'historiographical nonentity' as Jennifer Luff has recently suggested, but it deserves to be researched more extensively, certainly, and approaching the subject from the perspective of the co-operative movement adds an important new dimension.⁶

It was not surprising that cold warriors thought it worthwhile to focus attention on the co-operative movement. After all, as recent scholarship has amply demonstrated, this movement had been one of the central institutions of working-class life in Britain since the mid nineteenth century and it continued to be so in the 1940s.⁷ It had been responsible for

feeding between a quarter and a third of the population during the war. Without its efforts, the rationing scheme that played such an invaluable role on the home front might have failed, and the Attlee government needed to maintain the goodwill of ordinary consumers post-war to make austerity acceptable. The co-operative movement had enormous organisational and financial strength; there were 9.7 million members of more than a thousand retail societies in 1946, with an annual trade of over £402 million, and a federally controlled wholesale business worth £249 million a year. In order to give working-class consumers a voice in parliament, the movement had established a Co-operative Party in 1917, which won twenty-three seats in the 1945 general election.⁸ Beyond these brute facts, from its very beginning co-operative consumerism had generated a culture or way of life, with social and educational classes, separate associations such as the Women's Co-operative Guild (WCG) as well as youth groups, and an extensive weekly and monthly press, including a popular Sunday paper, *Reynolds's News*. At the end of the war, significant numbers of activists within the co-operative movement desired to use this powerhouse to drive radical economic and social transformation.

It would be misleading, however, to oversimplify the movement's stance on international relations and the advance of communism in the 1940s; this was a diverse organisation with a complex local and federal structure whose component parts frequently pulled in different directions. Radical views were often articulated by members of what were called the auxiliary bodies, notably the WCG and the Co-operative Party, while opinion that was more moderate tended to dominate the central educational body, the Co-operative Union, which organised the annual congress and ran the Co-operative College at Stanford Hall in Nottinghamshire. Most important, local societies that were often fiercely independent – resisting demands by modernisers for amalgamation on narrow economic

grounds, for instance – contained a plurality of voices. The Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society's affiliation to the Labour Party in 1922 was exceptional, as most societies preferred to back their own consumers' party, much to the annoyance of Labour leaders such as Herbert Morrison, and although a formal political relationship between Labour and the Co-operative Party was drawn up by the Cheltenham Agreement in 1927, tension and sometimes even hostility existed between them.⁹ Nevertheless, and despite such complexities, deep historical affinities between co-operation and communism as well as the particular historical conjuncture meant that it was possible to conflate the terms and the projects in 1945.¹⁰ This conflation was not nearly so easy six years later when the movement's statistician, J. A. Hough, dogmatically asserted that 'Co-operation and Communism cannot work side by side.'¹¹ This article explores the evolution of co-operative ideas during the early Cold War and contends that separating co-operation from communism made it harder to imagine a total or utopian alternative to capitalism: the ban on the Hounslow Co-operative Girls' Choir symbolised this loss of hope. Drawing particularly on a close reading of the co-operative press as well as other sources, the study is divided into three main parts. The first section discusses sympathy among co-operators for the achievements of the Soviet Union, which increased during the war against fascism. The article then moves on to consider the continuing dialogue between British co-operators and their counterparts in European communist states and how international tensions shaped co-operators' views. The final major section explores the hardening of attitude towards communism after Marshall Aid was declared in June 1947, and underlines the role played by figures such as A. V. Alexander and Jack Bailey who worked with the Information Research Department at the Foreign Office to spread anti-communism within the movement. The conclusion reflects, more speculatively, on what implications this shift may have had for the

medium and long-term decline of co-operation and the hegemony of capitalist consumerism post-war.

I

British co-operators had frequently looked eastwards for inspiration. Economic, ideological and cultural links between British and Russian co-operators, for example, stretched back to before the First World War. In 1903, the Russian Central Union of Co-operative Societies, Tsentrosoyuz, was admitted to membership of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), an organisation established eight years before to build links and disseminate information among co-operators across national borders. British representatives at the ICA resisted calls for Tsentrosoyuz to be expelled from the ICA after the Russian Revolution of 1917 and they continued to do so even after Stalin had assumed power when the independence of co-operatives was seriously curtailed.¹² A trading relationship had been formalised between the two movements in 1923 with the establishment of a joint enterprise called the Russo-British Grain Export Company. This company imported grain to Britain, the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS) advancing around £1m to it by the early 1930s, and other deals were made for butter and timber.¹³ Such practical support helped fuel attacks on the movement that regularly featured in the local and national press, which intensified after the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. Claims that communists in Britain intended to use the material resources of local co-operative societies to help overthrow the state were hotly disputed.¹⁴ Nevertheless, eliding co-operation with communism became a staple theme of anti-co-operative discourse between the wars, the *Daily Express* taking a leading role in what became a vicious campaign, accusing co-operators of engaging in 'unpatriotic' trade with

'reds', condemning the movement's leaders for their 'adulation of the greatest slave State in the world's history', and urging ordinary members to boycott their local societies for selling 'Communist Russia's wares.'¹⁵

Most of this was hyperbole, but there was more than a grain of truth in such claims. The leftward tendency within sections of the co-operative movement in the 1930s encouraged sympathy for the USSR; consumption became increasingly politicised in Britain during this period because of the perceived threat from capitalist monopolies as well as the activity of private traders and the 'crusade' waged on their behalf by press barons like Beaverbrook.¹⁶ *Reynolds's News*, the national Sunday paper that was purchased by the co-operative movement in 1929, helped popularise the achievements of the USSR. One of the paper's chief reporters, Hamilton Fyfe, visited the country in the early 1930s and sent back glowing reports of a new civilisation in the making.¹⁷ Many in the movement were deeply impressed by the apparent successes of planning on such a huge scale, a fascination widely shared among the Labour left at the time.¹⁸ As the international situation grew more tense, the editor of *Reynolds's News*, Sydney Elliott – who had utopian ambitions for co-operation which he hoped would eventually supersede capitalism – tried, unsuccessfully, to get the movement to adopt a popular front strategy and collaborate openly with communists within the United Peace Alliance.¹⁹

Closer relations between Soviet communists and co-operators were admittedly poisoned by the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939, which was regarded by the non-communist left in general as a clear act of betrayal.²⁰ After Germany launched its offensive in the east in June 1941, however, popular attitudes soon changed and the Soviet Union was lauded during the war across wide sections of British society, not just the labour movement; the Red Flag was flown on many public buildings after the German surrender at Stalingrad in

February 1943.²¹ British co-operators were among the most ardent supporters and indeed the broad culture of the movement was deeply imbued by pro-Sovietism during the war and immediately afterwards, with differences between communism and co-operation being played down. The co-operative press foregrounded a heroic population struggling to defeat fascism after Hitler invaded in 1941, but also emphasised how national resilience was founded on a co-operative social and economic order. Lenin was portrayed as one of the 'pioneers of progress' by the publicity department of the CWS, for example, which likened his efforts to establish 'a just and equitable social system' to those of the 'founders of Co-operation' at home.²² This view was later supported by N. P. Sidorov, President of Tsentrosoyuz, who drew readers' attention to the essay 'On Co-operation' that Lenin had written shortly before his death.²³ The co-operative youth magazine *Our Circle* published a biographical article on Lenin by Cyril Bibby who was known as 'Red Squirrel' within the Woodcraft Folk, an independent organisation that had been closely allied to and financially dependent on the co-operative movement since its establishment in the mid 1920s. The article narrated 'the story of the greatest hero of them all, who led a great country into socialism and died knowing he had succeeded.'²⁴ Hebe Spaul, a freelance journalist who published books for the League of Nations Union between the wars and who regularly contributed to the magazine, reminded readers to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Russian Revolution in November 1942. Spaul also encouraged young co-operators to correspond with Russian children towards the end of the war through the Anglo-Soviet Youth Friendship Alliance, an organisation chaired by John Platts-Mills, who was elected Labour MP for Finsbury in 1945 and expelled from the party by the leadership three years later for signing the so-called Nenni telegram that lent support to Italian communists.²⁵ In November 1945, Platts-Mills led a delegation to the Soviet Union that included John Pollack,

a member of the Ayr co-operative youth club.²⁶ The Soviet Union was sometimes even portrayed as a workers' paradise in the movement's monthly arts magazine, *Millgate and Playgoer*, which published roseate articles on Soviet achievements by well-known Communist Party activists such as Maggie Jordan, Pat Sloan and Ernie Trory.²⁷

The suffering of the civilian population in the Soviet Union during the war was taken up most enthusiastically by branches of the WCG, which had over 87,000 members at the outbreak of hostilities. The Guild played a major part in the 'Help for Russia' appeal sponsored by the National Council of Labour from the autumn of 1941, holding teas and socials and organising whist drives and bazaars to raise money for food, clothing and medical supplies. Some guilds pooled their dividends for six months and donated the lump sum to the appeal. A special 'Ambulance for Russia' fund was organised by the guild, which quickly raised the £900 required and the vehicle was duly presented to Madame Maisky for the Soviet Red Cross and Crescent Fund at a ceremony in London.²⁸ Here the guild was building on a tradition of humanitarian support for left wing causes, demonstrated most notably during the Spanish Civil War when members had made great efforts on behalf of the Republican side.²⁹ During this earlier conflict as well as during the Second World War guild members had to reconcile such activities with their long-standing commitment to pacifism. However, some branches were willing to adopt a more flexible attitude and supported organisations that demanded increased military aid for Soviet allies. This approach received backing from prominent figures, including Clara Bamber, elected president of the WCG in 1945, who argued that co-operators needed to do whatever they could to supply arms to a country that had clearly demonstrated 'what a Socialist State can do, which is fighting for things she has created and owns.'³⁰ The improved position of female workers and co-operators in the Soviet Union was also discussed in detail in the women's pages of the

movement press and friendships nurtured with female activists, and this coverage increased towards the end of the war.³¹

Despite such expressions of sympathy, communists at home had often been met with hostility. Indeed, anti-communism ran deep in the co-operative movement, as it did in the trade union movement. Some communist women were undoubtedly very active in the Guild, despite the fact that the organisation had passed a 'non-political' rule in 1929 that was intended to make it impossible for members of other organisations and parties to hold office in the guild or serve as delegates. The rule was tightened again in 1936 with the clear intention of excluding communists. This issue drew heated criticism during the latter years of the war and was clearly not always enforced; the best recent historian of the guild overestimates its effectiveness.³² Many guildswomen wrote to the *Co-operative News* to contest this attempted proscription. Bertha Symonds from Birmingham, for instance, reminded readers that 'nowhere will you find such staunch co-operators as among the ranks of the Communists'; while Edith Yates from Manchester stressed that if they hoped to defeat Nazism they, 'must build up our guild by the inclusion of all shades of opinion of the left. Only by being united within our movement can we hope to achieve the Co-operative Commonwealth.' Not all correspondents were quite so tolerant, however, Mrs Randall, from Harrow, insisting that, 'The Communist angle on life is all wrong.'³³

II

Sympathy for the Soviet Union and communist experiments in other countries persisted well into the post-war period. Keeping open channels of communication took on greater significance following Winston Churchill's 'iron curtain' speech at Fulton, Missouri in March

1946. *Reynolds's News* journalist Gordon Schaffer toured the Soviet Union that year as part of a delegation from the British-Soviet Society. His reports, immediately collected and published in pamphlet form, were not entirely uncritical but decidedly well balanced compared to his wartime adulation of the Stalinist regime. What concerned him most was the way in which attitudes were hardening following Churchill's speech, which Schaffer commented had done 'more harm to our relations with Russia than any other single event since the war ended.'³⁴ Some local retail societies organised lectures to help counter the increasingly strident anti-Soviet pronouncements made by politicians. In Colchester in October 1946, for instance, Eugen Chossudowsky, the London Co-operative Society's adult education officer, gave a talk to members entitled, 'Russia is Determined to Avoid Another Holocaust.'³⁵ There was also an expectation that the co-operative sector was about to really come into its own in the Soviet Union, encouraged by the decision announced in late 1946 to relax state control of distribution and allow consumer and producer co-ops to trade in towns, which they had been prohibited to do since the mid 1930s.³⁶

The sustained interest shown by British co-operators for developments in the Soviet Union can be regarded as a continuation of the international citizenship that shaped civil society in Britain between the wars, which has been explored by Helen McCarthy in her study of the League of Nations Union.³⁷ However, unlike the League, British co-operators were concerned not only with how to avoid war but also with questions of planning and popular control of the economy. Here, recently established socialist states in central and Eastern Europe provided important models. To aid understanding, British co-operators arranged many deputations to these countries. Their reports invariably celebrated advances but also demonstrated open-mindedness towards state-supported forms of co-operative endeavour. Early in 1946, for example, co-operators made extensive tours of Poland and

Yugoslavia, where they witnessed how forms that had been crushed under the Nazi occupation were being rapidly rebuilt and extended. In Yugoslavia, they saw co-operative factories and health societies and were entertained by Marshall Tito, who praised the British movement for its pioneering role in the field of distribution. The deputation noted in its report that both the constitution and method of control of the societies they visited was 'not unlike that of the English societies.'³⁸ Discussing the rapid growth of the Polish movement – which claimed to have 3 million members in 1947, making it the third largest in the world – the editor of the *Co-operative News* admitted that state involvement meant that some British co-operators would question this achievement, though emphasised nevertheless that 'full allowance must be made for Polish history and conditions.'³⁹ Guildswomen were especially enthusiastic about co-operation in communist regimes, cheering Anna Kethly, deputy speaker of the Hungarian parliament, when on a visit to England in May 1946 she declared that 'a co-operative fever' had broken out in Hungary; and eagerly consuming reports of co-operative growth in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania as well as in Hungary, which they considered had brought about tremendous improvements in the lives of ordinary women.⁴⁰ On occasion, co-operative politicians defended these states in the House of Commons. Stanley Tiffany, Labour and Co-operative MP for Peterborough, for example, who visited co-operative movements in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Hungary in 1947 accompanied by the Labour and Co-operative MP for Ilford East, Mabel Ridealgh, maintaining against Conservative Party attacks on Yugoslavia in the House of Commons that the country was organised along democratic, co-operative lines.⁴¹

Heightened international tensions served to reinforce how imperative it was to maintain links across the continent, both for the future of their movement and for global security. British co-operators were, unsurprisingly, deeply concerned about the fate of a

divided Germany, the cockpit of the early Cold War.⁴² Glasgow-born Tom Taylor, who had joined the German Young Socialists and fought in the streets against the Nazis before Hitler seized power, pointed out that an ideological war had raged inside Germany since the Allied victory, with the British promoting a form of social democracy, while the Soviets sought the fusion of socialists and communists and the establishment of a single party state. In the centre of this contest was a co-operative movement undergoing rebirth after years of repression. Co-operatives straddled different zones and encountered different attitudes from the various occupying powers; the US was hostile towards their growth, France was indifferent, Britain lukewarm. From December 1945, they were established from above by the Soviet military administration in the belief that that would strengthen the communist cause, especially among women. Co-ops in the Russian zone had an enrolled membership of over one million by autumn 1946. Taylor was sanguine about the prospects of pre-Nazi societies in the British zone, but he was also optimistic about the situation in the east, pointing to the 'healthy revival of co-operatives that are closely allied to the State.'⁴³ Members of the WCG in particular regularly expressed similar hopes, as did Gordon Schaffer, one of the first western journalists allowed into Soviet-occupied territory in Germany in the spring of 1947.⁴⁴ Leaders of the British movement pressed successfully for the lifting of the prohibition against co-operatives in the British zone in the spring of 1946, which grew quickly thereafter to claim over one million members by late 1949.⁴⁵

Greece was the other flashpoint that most exercised co-operators. Fearing Soviet involvement where there was none, the British government had supported a right-wing monarchist regime in Greece from the autumn of 1944, then Churchill despatched troops after a civil war broke out in November, therefore legitimising a 'white terror' against pro-communist guerrillas who had been the backbone of resistance to the Nazi occupation.

After it came to power, the Labour government pursued a policy that attempted to bring about political consensus in a context in which consensus was impossible.⁴⁶ In practice, their policy differed little to that which had gone before, much to the disappointment of many Labour and co-operative supporters. In late April 1946, a delegation of three MPs sponsored by the League for Democracy in Greece – two of which were Labour and Co-operative members (Tiffany and Norman Dodds, MP for Dartford) – reported that the country was ‘rapidly becoming a fascist state’ in which all opposition was labelled ‘communist’ and ruthlessly suppressed.⁴⁷ They were accompanied by the League’s secretary, Diana Pym, who was a member of the Communist Party and local councillor from London. Her article on the women’s prison in Salonika that appeared in *Woman’s Outlook*, the WCG’s monthly magazine, made grim reading. Pym had seen dozens of women that had taken part in the resistance movement living in terrible conditions, mistreated and subjected to beatings when pregnant, serving long terms of imprisonment for their part in the fight against fascism. Many of them had a worse fate in store; about 250 prisoners a week from Salonika were exiled to barren islands such as Anafi, described as ‘Hell Islands...a living death.’⁴⁸ Once again, co-operative politicians pressed government, Tiffany denouncing British strategy in Greece in the Commons in October and indicting Labour for its failure to develop a specifically socialist foreign policy.⁴⁹ Facing acute domestic financial crisis, Attlee’s government eventually convinced the United States to take over financial and military responsibility for Greece in February 1947, though US diplomats needed little persuasion and had most likely been planning the move themselves.⁵⁰ Provoking the Truman Doctrine a month later that pledged the US to contain communist expansion in Greece and Turkey, this was a decisive moment in the drawing closer together of Washington and London and in the making of the early Cold War.⁵¹

The lesson of these events for many co-operative politicians, as for the left more generally, was that Britain needed to carve out an independent foreign policy, a 'middle way' between America and the Soviet Union. British participation as a 'third force' internationally was regarded as the necessary corollary of domestic efforts to construct a social democratic society, which would stand as a humane alternative to both cutthroat US capitalism and dictatorial Soviet communism. Labour's foreign policy was consequently criticised by delegates at the Co-operative Party annual conference in April 1946, who accused the Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, of bowing to American pressure and betraying working-class interests in Indonesia and Greece. Although a resolution directly condemning Bevin was withdrawn, another which urged the government to end its support for 'reactionary' regimes such as Greece and Spain under General Franco, where 'fascism had not yet been killed', was passed unanimously. Another resolution, emphasising how the maintenance of peace was dependent on good relations with the Soviet Union, and accusing growing anti-Soviet propaganda in the capitalist press of making that more difficult, was also carried.⁵² These controversies raged with renewed vigour at the Co-operative Party conference the year after, where according to press reports a resolution condemning British foreign policy as in thrall to the US caused tempers to flare, a Liverpool delegate remarking that 'as a result of Mr Bevin's policy trade unionists and co-operators in certain European countries were being bludgeoned.' Another delegate from Stockport warned conference 'not to be misled by MPs who wanted to set up the Bolshevik bogey. The Government should change the foreign policy. At present, 400 Labour MPs sat subdued during Parliamentary debates on foreign affairs, while cheers came from the Opposition.' Despite the intensity of feeling on this issue, the party executive came down strongly on the government side and the resolution was eventually lost, but only after a card vote and by a very narrow margin –

3,412,000 to 3,254,000. Jack Bailey the party secretary, and A. V. Alexander, Labour and Co-operative MP for Hillsborough and Minister of Defence in Attlee's government, were deeply disturbed by the stubborn refusal of many co-operators to accept passively the emerging monochrome orthodoxy.⁵³

As Tony Shaw has pointed out, *Reynolds's News* was deeply critical of American policy, which it argued was designed to tie other nations into global US economic hegemony, and urged a closer relationship with the Soviet Union long after papers owned by private interests had begun to adopt an anti-Soviet stance.⁵⁴ In its pages, the socialist intellectual G. D. H. Cole, whose centenary history of the co-operative movement was published in 1945, described the \$3.75 billion loan to Britain negotiated by J. M. Keynes from the US in the summer of 1946 as a way of 'buying our support for their policy of the "Open door for Capitalism" all over the world.'⁵⁵ Cole was particularly incensed by the fact that the British government was not allowed under its terms to engage in state trading with other countries. This tied the government's hands, Cole believed, forcing it to work within the rules of the capitalist market and prioritise profit, thereby making Labour an 'enforced partner in the restoration of world capitalism.'⁵⁶ Editorials in the paper were also sharply critical, readers being warned that America was controlled by 'unscrupulous and basically ignorant men', who believed that 'any form of communal enterprise which extends beyond the ownership of the local tramway system is Communism', and who desired 'to stop the development of Socialism and to open up the world as a vast colonial area for colonial capitalism.'⁵⁷ Leading co-operators like Bailey and Alexander were not only embarrassed that such views were supported by many co-operators, they determined to do something about them by mobilising more effectively the considerable anti-communist feeling within the movement.

III

As with the trade unions and the Labour Party, the position of anti-communists within the co-operative movement was strengthened significantly by the offer of US aid to Europe. The European Recovery Plan, announced in June 1947 by Secretary of State George Marshall, encouraged individuals to take sides in an increasingly polarised east-west conflict, served to split the 'hard' from the 'soft' left and thus divide the 'third force' movement.⁵⁸ The Marshall Plan as it came to be known was welcomed enthusiastically in the co-operative press. Dr F. W. Pick, lecturer in international relations at the Co-operative College, attacked critics who 'trot out the old Communist objections', praised Bevin for fleshing out Marshall's idea and urged co-operators to wholeheartedly support a scheme which he asserted embodied two of the 'Rochdale principles' – 'voluntarism and non-political trading.'⁵⁹ Pick's reading of the legacy of the Rochdale Pioneers was hardly neutral; the working-class radicals who established an early retail society in the town in 1844 did not formally lay out their principles, which were only codified by subsequent commentators and therefore malleable and open to interpretation.⁶⁰ Perhaps not coincidentally, Pick was invited by the Foreign Office to tour the British zone in Germany that autumn, where he addressed many co-operative meetings. On his return, Pick underlined the major contribution co-operatives could make to economic recovery in Germany, just so long as they conformed to the approved model and kept their distance from the state. The loss of consumer independence, Pick maintained, 'would lead to a State even more totalitarian than Hitler's. It would lead to a Communist set-up, which to my mind, would be as far removed from the democratic Western way of life as anything ever seen on this earth.'⁶¹

For sure, not all were as keen to throw in their lot entirely with the Atlanticist camp, one correspondent to the *Co-operative News* perceiving an ominous ulterior motive behind the offer, declaring that they did not 'want to be planned the American way.'⁶² But from late 1947 a steady stream of anti-communist articles and editorials appeared in the paper employing the conceptual and imaginative framework of the early Cold War. Frank Jones, a Co-operative Union employee, warned readers about the threat to Western Europe and the 'middle way' represented by 'totalitarianism' emanating from Moscow.⁶³ The Co-operative Union's decision to remove communists from its list of approved speakers was reported approvingly, while the editor denounced the policy of 'infiltration.'⁶⁴ *Reynolds's News*, however, while not rejecting the Marshall Plan outright, was initially suspicious, emphasising the need to make a new trade deal with the Soviet Union and protect the experiments in 'co-operative planning' that were underway in Eastern Europe.⁶⁵

Attitudes hardened substantially in early 1948, A. V. Alexander, the most prominent co-operative politician taking the lead. Alexander defended the communist 'purge' in the Civil Service at the Co-operative Party conference in April, reassuring delegates about its fairness and deploying predictable tropes: 'Comrades', he intoned, 'I would like you to compare that procedure with that of any state in Eastern Europe...The Communist Party aimed to destroy Parliament itself from within. That was the basis on which they had infiltrated.'⁶⁶ A month later, at the Co-operative Congress at Edinburgh, Alexander denounced 'infiltration' again and accused *Reynolds's News* of pro-communist bias, a charge firmly refuted by the editor, William Richardson, as well as by hundreds of readers who wrote to the paper.⁶⁷ Two years earlier, at the 1946 Congress, Alexander's defence of Labour's foreign policy and his recommendation for a reappraisal of relations with the Soviet Union had been greeted with 'stony silence.'⁶⁸ Now, more confident of success, he

made determined efforts to ensure that his warning reached the widest audience possible; Alexander's accusations were broadcast by the BBC and reported in detail by the capitalist press, which routinely conflated 'co-operation' and 'communism' as it had done in the interwar period, and disseminated stories of alleged 'infiltration' within the movement.⁶⁹ Pressure to squeeze out dissenting voices from the co-operative press mounted thereafter, though *Reynolds's* continued to maintain independence for a while the tone was now resigned rather than angry. The editor described the polarisation of global politics and economics as a tragedy from the perspective of British socialism – 'for the revolution that is taking place in Eastern Europe is one that is in line with our own traditions and aspirations' – but now accepted the division as inevitable.⁷⁰

Jack Bailey, a close friend of Alexander's, went on the offensive against communists, using his monthly newsletter as Co-operative Party secretary to warn activists of the dangers of takeover. In July 1948, he sent a circular to all branches advising them not to elect communists as officers or delegates. Indeed the constitution of the Co-operative Party had been amended at a conference at Llandudno the year before, allowing the expulsion of members whose loyalty was doubted. Communist Party secretary Harry Pollitt wrote to Bailey publically, suggesting that co-operators focus on their 'capitalist enemies' and pointing out that communists had been active within trade unions and co-operative societies for years – the idea of a wave of Soviet-inspired 'infiltration' was therefore a complete mirage.⁷¹ Bailey expressed his views at length in a pamphlet entitled *The Zig Zag 'Left'*, which was warmly praised in the movement press. Quoting selectively from Lenin's *'Left Wing' Communism: An Infantile Disorder*, Bailey conjured up a lurid image of local societies riddled with communists who worshipped the Soviet Union and fantasised about the overthrow of the capitalist state.⁷²

Anti-communism was used as a stick to beat their opponents by centre and right-wing trade union and Labour Party leaders at this time and this was also the case within the co-operative movement. Left-wing co-operators hoped at the end of the war to move economy and society in a socialist direction. The election of a Labour Government committed to greater social ownership and state intervention strengthened belief in the possibility of a 'Co-operative Commonwealth.' Leaders like Alexander and Bailey could still pay lip service to the latter on occasion, but their aspirations were far from utopian; they regarded the movement as an invaluable institution that had improved the lives of millions of ordinary people, certainly, but they foresaw no world changing future for it. The Cold War extinguished any residual utopianism they may have had. We can see this in their eager adoption of the concept of 'totalitarianism' – which elided fascism and communism – as well as their rigid distinction between voluntary and statist forms of co-operation. The former was approved by Bailey and others for being democratic, morally improving and characteristic of the freedom-loving West, while the latter was seen as autocratic, degenerate and imposed on servile populations in the East by dictatorial regimes. Like Pick, Bailey reworked the Rochdale Pioneers' legacy to better fit the Cold War climate, hypostatising the voluntary nature of co-operation long before Marshall Aid was announced.⁷³ Such views were not merely imposed by national leaders like Alexander and Bailey either; they can be found, for instance, in the writings of South Wales co-operator William Hazell, who considered George Orwell's late work a prescient warning.⁷⁴

In this context, the voices of those who sought to reconfigure the relationship between state and voluntary methods of economic and social transformation were drowned out. G. D. H. Cole did what he could to keep the conversation going but was increasingly patronised by co-operative leaders who portrayed him as an out of touch theorist. Cole

urged co-operators to work in partnership with the state in order to take over a greater share of distribution, for example, and although he recognised that many of the northern societies in particular were resistant to the idea of more state intervention, cautioned that the voluntary principle ought not to be turned into a fetish.⁷⁵ The problem was that co-operators' hostility towards state control had deep roots and the threat from statism was not only external; anti-communism within the co-operative movement at this time was bound up with debates over the model of social ownership preferred by the Attlee government, namely nationalisation. These debates generated friction and provided greater opportunities for those who wished to draw a clear line between voluntarism and statism as well as West and East. Nationalisation and the proliferation of bureaucratic boards of management this policy entailed was regarded with much suspicion by co-operators, as marginalising working-class consumers. Adopting Cold War terminology, the Walsall co-operator Fred Abbotts prophesied that 'the multiplication of state boards would lead to a totalitarian and not a socialist State.'⁷⁶ Others like Frank Bruckshaw forged links between international and domestic issues, arguing that Stalin's disregard for co-operatives was mirrored in this country by the attitude of some members of the Labour government.⁷⁷ Plans by Labour to nationalise industrial insurance in 1949 made matters worse, and although mutualisation was eventually agreed as a compromise, relations were badly damaged.⁷⁸

The British state encouraged anti-communism within the co-operative movement. It did this by means of the Information Research Department (IRD), the secret body established in January 1948 as a department of the Foreign Office to spread anti-communist propaganda at home and abroad. Since the IRD's operations were first brought to light during the 1980s, it has attracted a good deal of attention.⁷⁹ Although an extensive anti-

subversive apparatus can be traced back to the 1920s – undermining myths about Britain being a liberal ‘peaceable kingdom’ within which civil liberties were always paramount – the early post-war years represented a crucial phase in the making of a modern security regime.⁸⁰ The IRD played an important role in shaping an anti-communist worldview among leading figures in the TUC and the Labour Party such as Vic Feather, Denis Healey and Morgan Phillips, though much work still remains to be done on the impact it had on the wider labour movement.⁸¹ Existing studies have overlooked the IRD’s influence on the co-operative movement, which were probably quite extensive even if effects are difficult to gauge precisely. In the Cabinet memoranda that proposed the setting up of a special department, Christopher Mayhew, Bevin’s parliamentary under-secretary, suggested that the new organisation should coordinate the BBC’s overseas service, build links with foreign trade unionists, and ‘maintain a close, confidential liaison with the Labour Party, Trade Union Congress and Co-operative movement on international propaganda questions, and be prepared to assist them in every way to propagate “Third Force” ideas at International conferences and through all their international contacts.’⁸² Alongside this international dimension, the IRD also pursued a domestic agenda, feeding material to contacts working for many newspapers including the trade union-sponsored paper, the *Daily Herald*. Mayhew and his colleagues would have surely taken the co-operative press seriously, after all *Reynolds’s News* alone had a weekly circulation of about 750,000 at this time. As Minister of Defence, A. V. Alexander knew about the IRD from the beginning; he had been present at the Cabinet meeting in early December 1947 at which Mayhew’s proposal was tabled. Alexander also chaired early meetings of a senior ministerial group, the Committee on Subversive Activities, and pushed hard for the vetting of both Civil Service and industrial workers, the latter against considerable opposition.⁸³ After a personal request, Mayhew

sent Alexander anti-communist material produced by the IRD in the summer of 1948, confiding to him that, 'If you can help us out in your speeches we would be most grateful', and suggesting that appropriate text written by Alexander could be disseminated abroad through the BBC.⁸⁴ No one was better placed to forge links with sympathetic individuals in the Co-operative Party and the Co-operative Union than Alexander. Moreover, his standing in the wider movement could not have been greater; lauded as a war hero by Churchill, he had risen to the highest government office ever achieved by any co-operator.

The IRD kept an eye on the movement, particularly auxiliary bodies like the WCG that was believed to harbour communist sympathisers.⁸⁵ More important, however, was its subtle propaganda initiatives. The IRD insinuated an anti-communist perspective into speeches of other ministers besides Alexander and produced an impressive output of what purported to be independently written books and newspaper articles. Mayhew believed that a positive line should be spun about the material and political advantages of a 'third force' standing between Soviet communism and US capitalism; that people in social democratic Western states like Britain should be represented as affluent and free, while impoverished consumers in the East lagged behind in chains. He soon had to bow to pressure from the Foreign Office to play down flag waving for social democracy.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, this was the argument Mayhew developed in the pages of *Wheatsheaf*, the CWS monthly magazine, in autumn 1948. In a long interview in the paper Mayhew described IRD efforts (without mentioning the organisation of course), to spread the word overseas about 'our achievements and way of life' as leading exemplar of 'the Middle Way – the social democratic way...an island of sanity, of individual freedom and increasing social justice.'⁸⁷

At an early stage, IRD recruited a research officer employed by the Co-operative Union, J. A. Hough, to help propagate its message. Hough was an unremarkable figure with a solid reputation as a statistician of co-operation; his study of the movement that was awarded a prize at the 1948 Congress of the ICA in Prague ignored completely the politics and culture of co-operation.⁸⁸ Hough's concern was 'efficiency' and he had absolutely no interest in the utopian side of the movement, which made him a perfect contact for IRD. By early 1950 he had written eight articles on co-operation for the organisation, which were placed in numerous foreign newspapers and periodicals in Asia and South America as well as Europe.⁸⁹ A more substantial work financed by IRD appeared a year later in the 'Background Books' series published by Batchworth Press.⁹⁰ In *Co-operatives – True or False?* Hough drew stark contrasts between 'collectivism' and 'voluntarism', individual servility and freedom. The vitality of co-operatives in the West that were built on the latter principle was compared to moribund and inauthentic forms in the East, which were in the iron grip of the state. Hough admitted that communism 'superficially...looks to be of the same family as co-operation' and that there was a case sometimes for what he called 'public co-operation' in democratic states, but the preference should always be to work without state aid. In addition, true co-operatives simply could not exist in the Soviet Union, which was based on antithetical principles: 'Co-operation and Communism cannot work side by side, and Communism thus seeks to destroy voluntary co-operation.' Communism inevitably turned co-operatives into instruments of the 'totalitarian state', Hough concluded, and he pointed to the fate of Eastern European countries in support.⁹¹

Events in the late 1940s served to strengthen further the position of those most critical of Soviet intentions. The USSR's refusal of Marshall Aid in July 1947, the subsequent formation of the Cominform in October, the communist takeover in Czechoslovakia in

February 1948 and the suspicious death of foreign minister Jan Masaryk, followed by the Berlin blockade from June that year seemed to prove beyond doubt that there was no alternative but to side with the US. Even Labour politicians that had hitherto been prominent in the 'Third Force' movement abandoned their hostility to Atlanticism, Michael Foot ruefully remarking after the Czech coup that, 'A bridge between the East and the West has been shattered.'⁹² Such conflicts also played out within the ICA, an organisation within which British representatives drawn mainly from the Co-operative Union enjoyed considerable power. Although Tsentrosoyuz was never expelled, co-operative movements in other communist states were debarred from membership and the influence of Soviet delegates and their allies eroded, especially after the ICA Congress in Prague in September 1948 at which tempers flared. The secretary of the Co-operative Union, Robert Southern, who attended the congress, came out strongly against communist co-operators on his return to Britain.⁹³

Despite this shift, the views of those who tried to stand against the tide continued to be published in the movement press for a considerable time. The editor of the *Co-operative News* noted in early 1948 that he had received a plethora of letters contesting the discourse of 'infiltration' and the increasingly anti-Soviet stance adopted by the paper. One correspondent from Liverpool, Egerton Stafford, warned co-operators against colluding in 'a witch-hunt that will ultimately play into the hands of the most reactionary and fascist elements in the country.'⁹⁴ Another from Nelson, Seth Sagar – a foundation member of the Communist Party 'and proud of it', who had served on the board of management of his local society since 1936 and was active in the Co-operative Party – wanted to know whether he was one of those supposed to have 'infiltrated' the movement.⁹⁵ Furthermore, some local societies continued to provide a platform for oppositional views. The 'fellow-traveller' and

Labour MP Konni Zilliacus, for example, who believed that co-operatives in Yugoslavia heralded a 'new kind of Communism' and who was expelled from the Labour Party in 1949 for his criticism of Labour's foreign policy, denounced American imperialism in a lecture to co-operators in Swansea.⁹⁶ Communist sympathisers and party members therefore continued to be active at a local level; cold warriors in the co-operative movement found it more difficult to completely lock out communists than did their counterparts in the Labour Party, which was subject to tighter managerial control.⁹⁷ The Co-operative Party tried to clamp down in some places, in Hornsey north London, for instance, where a branch was disbanded, and in Newcastle, where a member was suspended on suspicion of being a communist.⁹⁸ But controlling local societies proved difficult. Jack Webb, for instance, 'a pleasant and serene man' according to the *Western Daily Press*, was elected President of the Bristol Society in 1945, then re-elected in 1946 and again in 1948. An employee of the CWS, Webb had joined the Communist Party in 1931 and stood for the party in Bristol South-East against Stafford Cripps, Labour's Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the 1950 general election. The national capitalist press attacked Webb and encouraged Bristol co-operators to oust him from office, and so too did the *Co-operative News*. Communists undoubtedly met with stiff opposition in Bristol. Early in 1948, they had been banned from using the society's meeting halls (though not its stores), causing bitter dispute. However, Webb was popular locally and attempts to unseat him were unsuccessful, in the short run at least.⁹⁹

IV

It remains to consider some of the wider implications of the foregoing study of the travails of the organised consumer in Britain during the early Cold War. Specifically, it is useful to think about the ways in which this story connects to the longer-term vitality of a co-operative approach to consumption, and what this implies for social and economic developments more broadly post-war. It would be misleading to argue that the majority of co-operators were utopian socialists or proto-communists whose desires were thwarted by the manoeuvrings of men like Alexander and Bailey. The vast majority of members were not communists as Stanley Baldwin well understood during the inter-war period; anti-communism as well as pro-communism went back a very long way in the co-operative movement, as it did in the trade unions and the Labour Party.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, wartime experience had blurred the boundaries between co-operation and communism and had strengthened popular belief in the power of organised consumers to radically transform the social and economic system. The way in which the Cold War was handled by some influential co-operators, then, served to narrow the ambition of the largest democratic movement of consumers in modern British history.

A few general points can be made, which relate to the issue of the movement's long-term relative decline and the development of consumer culture more generally. First, it might be suggested that the stance adopted eventually by the movement in the early Cold War made it easier for capitalist consumerism to win out in the medium and long term. Much has been written about how American consumer capitalism came to represent the good life in Europe after the war. In one of the most ambitious and stimulating accounts, Victoria de Grazia has uncovered some of the complex ways in which new ideas and technologies of consumption emanating from the US were implanted on the continent in the wake of Marshall Aid, which smoothed the way for American style consumer culture in

Western Europe, albeit not immediately nor straightforwardly.¹⁰¹ There was no simple or one way process of 'Americanisation' as forms and practices such as the self-service supermarket and cutting edge advertising were adapted to national conditions.¹⁰² Despite such qualifications, however, the influence of the Cold War on consumer culture seems clear; the advertising industry, for example, forged connections between Western capitalism and material progress by means of events such as the International Advertising Convention held in London in 1951. Under the strap line, 'The Task of Advertising in a Free World', the convention promoted an image of the good life characterised specifically by Western consumerism, with the US playing a leading role.¹⁰³

This literature has tended to ignore organised consumers, a particularly damaging omission in the British context. It was not accidental surely that the economic and cultural entrepreneurs that de Grazia writes so informatively about and who laboured to bring American retailing techniques to Europe, chose to focus their major efforts on Italy rather than Britain.¹⁰⁴ For not only had Britain avoided the total disruption of retailing and distribution that occurred throughout much of mainland Europe, it also had a dynamic co-operative movement that was deeply embedded in the social and economic life of the nation. The relative stability of the country and the strength of its labour movement institutions posed particular challenges for American political and business elites that sought to mould Western Europe in the image of US capitalism after World War Two. According to Charles Maier, capitalist stabilisation on the continent after the war was facilitated by a new 'politics of productivity' that made producers more compliant, shored up disparities of wealth and power and consigned communists and other radical critics of the new order to the margins. For sure, there was a pay-off in terms of higher living standards and more things; 'Justifying inequality, in turn, required satisfying criteria of

economic importance: figuratively and literally delivering the goods.¹⁰⁵ In Britain, the co-operative movement, with its democratic structure, 'fair shares' ethic and – for some at least – utopian ambitions, represented an obstacle to this project because it demonstrated that goods could be represented and delivered according to different criteria. The conflicts within the co-operative movement generated by the early Cold War, which have been explored in this article and which prompted the redefinition of co-operation and communism as incompatible polar opposites, helped to undermine this obstacle and disempower organised consumers.

One might have expected the co-operative movement, embodying as it did an ethic of restraint and collective provision, to have put up resistance to aspects of American consumerism that signified a rather different approach, particularly self-service and supermarket shopping, but it was in fact in the vanguard of such developments in Britain after the war. The Attlee government encouraged grocers to convert their premises to self-service in the hope that the resulting efficiencies would help ease labour shortage, but it was the co-operative movement that was quickest to respond, operating 66% of self-service outlets in 1953, rather than multiple retailers such as Sainsbury's or Tesco, which did not really start to catch up until the end of the decade.¹⁰⁶ Some of those individuals within the movement who were most keen to look to the West politically were among the most ardent advocates of 'modern' shopping. Eager converts, for instance, included J. A. Hough, who was a member of the team that toured the US in 1952 to study retailing methods, a trip organised by the Anglo-American Council on Productivity and funded through the Marshall Plan.¹⁰⁷ This is not to suggest that co-operators should have boycotted self-service or supermarket shopping and pursued instead a puritan agenda. But it is significant perhaps

that certain individuals who cared little or nothing about the movement's wider ambitions became enthusiastic cheerleaders for these new forms.

Finally, we might consider the probable impact on the membership of the conflicts discussed in this article that resulted, if not in a 'purge' exactly, then in a new orientation. Internal friction during the early Cold War undoubtedly had negative effects. A few members were ousted. Some were alienated and quit in disgust. Others chose to cling on, including Gordon Schaffer who played an active political role in the London Co-operative Society and continued to shop at its stores, unlike his wife Rosie who 'would not go near the Co-op' after the board of the Co-operative Press sacked him in 1953 for his pro-communist sympathies.¹⁰⁸ Communists and others who believed that co-operation might constitute a total alternative to capitalism continued to support the movement, then, but were marginalised. The early Cold War imposed a particular grid of understanding and a network of loyalties, making it appear that American shopping methods and the Atlantic Alliance went hand in hand. In this context, the notion of a 'Co-operative Commonwealth', which was elaborated fully before 1914 and then politicised explicitly between the wars when the movement was attacked by political and business elites, eventually withered. Writing about the history of the Attlee government, E. P. Thompson employed metaphors of pathological stasis to capture the changed reality; the Cold War, he wrote, caused an 'acute spiritual and political malaise...freezing up the currents of voluntary activism', leading the country 'into a waste land of the spirit.'¹⁰⁹ The post-war history of the co-operative movement accords with this gloomy interpretation. Participation in the movement dropped off precipitately in the 1950s and it never recovered. Membership of the WCG and the youth sections, for example, suffered sharp falls as women and young people turned away from what had a generation before been a vibrant culture of co-operation.¹¹⁰ As dissent was squeezed out, periodicals

that were expressions of that culture such as *Our Circle*, *Millgate and Playgoer* and *Woman's Outlook*, were drained of what was now regarded as subversive content, becoming in the process poor reflections of commercial publications aimed at different constituencies of consumers. Academic studies of the problem of 'apathy' in the movement conducted in the mid 1950s found that participation rates in local societies were desperately low, with only 0.5% of members attending meetings.¹¹¹ While simplistic narratives of decline deserve to be questioned, the alienation of significant numbers of activists must have weakened the movement considerably.¹¹² Conversely, the vitality of the co-operative movement in post-war Italy might partly be explained by the fact that Italian co-operators and communists remained quite close bedfellows.¹¹³

The so-called apathy of modern consumers has routinely been regarded by scholars as a necessary corollary of 'affluence' and therefore unavoidable. This article has argued for an alternative perspective; although more work needs to be done, it may be that the political passivity as well as the individuation or atomisation of post-war consumers was hardwired into early Cold War politics. There was little room in the dominant model for the collective control of consumption by organised consumers, notwithstanding rhetoric about the importance of 'democracy.' Critics such as Anne Deighton who argue that there was no need for government agencies to manufacture anti-communism as it was already rife among the British people, including among labour institutions, have a point, certainly; there was a good deal of anti-communism in the co-operative movement as we have seen, and it was loudly expressed when conditions grew more favourable from 1948 onwards. It might also be the case that 'a fairly sustained public consensus' about the Cold War had emerged by the late 1940s.¹¹⁴ However, there was nothing inevitable about this consensus, which

required that co-operation and communism be regarded as fundamentally opposed, despite undeniable affinities between them.

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- 50 Robert Frazier, 'Did Britain Start the Cold War? Bevin and the Truman Doctrine', *Historical Journal*, 27, (1984), 715-727.
- 51 Anderson, *The United States, Great Britain, and the Cold War*, 150-1; Robert Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership: Britain and America, 1944-1947* (New York, 1981); Peter Weiler, 'British Labour and the Cold War: The Foreign Policy of the Labour Governments, 1945-1951', *Journal of British Studies*, 26, (1987), 54-82.
- 52 *Co-operative News*, 27 April 1946, 3. For criticism of government policy towards Franco's Spain from the WCG see 18 May 1946, 12.
- 53 *Ibid.*, 12 April 1947, 3; *Reynolds's News*, 6 April 1947, 5.

- 54 Tony Shaw, 'The British popular press and the early Cold War', *History*, 83, (1998), 74-6. Press attitudes were not straightforward. Shaw notes that Lord Beaverbrook's *Daily Express* also kept its distance from the US, while the trade union paper, the *Daily Herald*, capitulated to Atlanticism under Percy Cudlipp's editorship. (77-81).
- 55 See Robert Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes: Fighting for Britain, 1937-1946* (London, 2002).
- 56 *Reynolds's News*, 21 July 1946, 4. Cole argued that Britain ought to retain the right to make its own trade agreements with the Dominions, the colonies, and the Soviet Union. See 28 July 1946, 2; 1 December 1946, 4; 8 December 1946, 4; 15 December 1946, 4.
- 57 *Ibid.*, 16 March 1947, 4.
- 58 Jonathan Schneer, 'Hopes Deferred or Shattered: The British Labour Left and the Third Force Movement, 1945-49', *Journal of Modern History*, 56, (1984), 219-21; Weiler, 'British Labour and the Cold War', 72; Jones, *The Russia Complex*, 163.
- 59 *Co-operative News*, 26 July 1947, 10, 14; 6 September 1947, 2.
- 60 As Arnold Bonner noted in his textbook; 'nearly every writer who has attempted to state the[ir] principles [of the Pioneers] has given a different list.' *British Co-operation. The History, Principles, and Organisation of the British Co-operative Movement* (Manchester, 1961), p. 48. The seven principles eventually adopted by the ICA Congress in 1937 did not include voluntarism. See also G. D. H. Cole, *A Century of Co-operation* (Manchester, 1945), 63-74.
- 61 *Co-operative News*, 11 October 1947, 2, 14; 18 October 1947, 2.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 2 August 1947, 10.

- 63 Ibid., 13 December 1947, 9, 14. For the concept of ‘totalitarianism’ see Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: problems and perspectives of interpretation* (London, 1985), 18-41.
- 64 *Co-operative News*, 6 December 1947, 8; 31 July 1948, 1; 25 December 1948, 1.
- 65 *Reynolds’s News*, 15 June 1947, 4; 27 July 1947, 1; 3 August 1947, 4; 10 August 1947, 2; 7 December 1947, 4; 14 December 1947, 4.
- 66 *Co-operative News*, 3 April 1948, 7; Peter Hennessy and Gail Brownfield, ‘Britain’s Cold War Security Purge: The Origins of Positive Vetting’, *Historical Journal*, 25, (1982), 965–974; Weiler, *British Labour and the Cold War*, 220, 228.
- 67 *Reynolds’s News*, 23 May 1948, 4; 30 May 1948, 3
- 68 John Tilley, *Churchill’s Favourite Socialist. A Life of A. V. Alexander* (Manchester, 1995), 71.
- 69 *Co-operative News*, 15 May 1948, 1; *Daily Mail*, 30 March 1948, 3; 2 July 1948, 3; 6 October 1948, 3; 31 December 1948, 1; 25 March 1950, 2; *Daily Mirror*, 25 June 1948, 1; 2 July 1948, 8; 15 October 1948, 5.
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- 71 *Co-operative News*, 10 July 1948, 1, 8.
- 72 Jack Bailey, *The Zig Zag “Left.” An exposure of Communist tactics* (Manchester, 1948), 14, 17, 21-4; *Co-operative News*, 8 January 1949, 1; *Reynolds’s News*, 2 January 1949, 4.
- 73 *Co-operative News*, 26 January 1946, 13. Bailey developed this mythologized view in his textbook, *The British Co-operative Movement* (London, 1955).
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- 77 *Co-operative News*, 8 February 1947, 9, 14. Bruckshaw was reviewing Noah Barou's, *Co-operation in the Soviet Union* (London, 1946).
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- 79 Lyn Smith, 'Covert British Propaganda: The Information Research Department, 1947-77', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 9, (1980), 67-83; David Leigh, *The Frontiers of Secrecy: Closed Government in Britain* (London, 1980); Paul Lashmar and James Oliver, *Britain's Secret Propaganda War* (Stroud, 1998); Hugh Wilford, *The CIA, the British Left and the Cold War: Calling the Tune?* (London, 2003); Defty, *Britain, America and Anti-Communist Propaganda*.
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