

Nov.

This tiresome session is at last over. It has been a headmill ever since the spill over began 27 Sep, and it has led to disagreement between Commons and Lords on the omission of shiprepairing from the Bill nationalising Shipbuilding Aircraft and Marine Engines. There have been plenty of other disagreements (Felixstowe Docks a private bill; we had a complete veto), Tied Cottages, Pay Beds, ^{Education} Race Relations & even Bail. They were all controversial bills and would probably not have passed the Lords had we voted them on their merits. Peter Cunningham and I discussed them all. We decided that we would amend them fairly generally the first time round and on the second time round select only two targets which we subsequently identified as Docks and Shiprepairing. The reasons we selected these were (1) that they were both issues on which the Labour movement was divided (2) that tied cottages and pay beds were subjects on which the Lords might be considered prejudiced (3) The Liberals were not with us on education (4) Race Relations our own party was split. In the event we got the Govt to remove two of the inessential but offensive provisions of the Bill. I would have liked to fight

on the Criminal clause but Willie Whitelaw did not wish me to.
Basil I settled with the Lord Chancellor, as I did the question of
appeal on the pay bed front to which Janet called my attention. We
the object of our ~~sons~~ ^{came by} decided that there ~~was~~ only one amendment on
each of the two selected bills (with consequential). On Docks we
decided that the amendment on wh: we wd fight was the five mile limit,
whi, in the event, we amended to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. On Shipbuilding &c
our selected amendment was to remove ship repairing wholly from the
Bill. I was for selecting one Bill only. Peter said (rightly as I now think)
that ~~the~~ we could not retain the confidence of our supporters with less
than two. Our object in the two selected was NOT to delay or prevent
the passing of the Bills, but to secure the amendments i.e. we thought
there was a reasonable chance that the Govt wd prefer the amended
Bill to no bill at all or to a delay occasioned by the necessity to use
the Parliament Act to get the whole Bill. There was an additional
advantage on Ship repairing. There had been a double attempt in
the Commons to impugn the Bill for hybridity, wh: wd: have killed it.
The first at the normal time ~~was~~ failed. The second succeeded, but
was overcome, first by suspending Commons standing order, and
second by removing the hybrid element before sending the Bill to
the Lords. By the time it had reached us a third attempt was
being prepared by the Ship repairing interests. They told me go to

existence in the summer, but, playing their cards close to their chest wd not disclose the grounds. By the time the Bill came for discussion in the autumn I was not prepared to cooperate unless the case was cast-iron. It wd, I thought have been unacceptable if the Lords killed the whole bill by sending it to the examiners and then the examiners found that the ground for sending it to them was bad. Since the only hybrid element related to ship repairing it seemed to me wrong ~~to~~ to jeopardise the employment situation & the viability of the concerns in aircraft and shipbuilding on ~~the same~~ grounds which related only to ship repairing. Since we were concentrating on one amendment, and that one on which there was a prospect of the Government clumping down without too much loss of face we also refused to support the Liberals in eliminating aircraft (this wd have made it inevitable that the Parliament Act wd be invoked). On second reading the hybridity point was argued by us as a supplementary reason for eliminating ship repairing and the Govt invited to answer it by a written answer. They did this and I was of the opinion that the answer left two arguable points on which the Govt were arguably, but not certainly, right. Colville, & Havers were of the contrary opinion. They thought the Bill almost certainly hybrid. But I persisted on two grounds (1) The case was not cast-iron (2) Our supporters wd insist on removing ship repairing

on the merits & this ex hypothesis wd: eliminate hybridity. The point reached the I.U.P. & the Shadow Cab: Peter & I stood firm and prevailed.

The next development was that the Commons accepted our Docks Bill am't owing to the defection of 2 Labour members (Walden & MacIntosh). In the short run this was a triumph for us, but it led to frantic bidding by the enthusiasts on all the other bills for a new fox to hunt. The favourites were ^{any} Industrial Democracy amendment (favoured by Heseltine) on Shipbuilding & Aircraft, and two amendments ^① (S.76 & S.8) and ^② clause 5 (wh was favoured by the Libs on Education). These were very strong winners and both reached the Shadow Cab & the IUP (where however the education amendments ^{alone} were strongly backed). Peter & I held the Shadow, but I had to speak strongly in the IUP both on technical legal grounds (the S.76 am't made no difference) and on broad political grounds.

In the event we stuck to ship repairing. To our disappointment the Govt cynically decided to abandon the Bill and invoke the Parliament Act even at the risk of uncertainty, unemployment, and possible bankruptcies in shipbuilding & aircraft. But we also lose the power to amend at all if we had given way all round. Then the matter rests at present.