

## **Defence diversification after Lucas**

*The Trade Union Congress agreed this policy in September 2017.*

Congress welcomes the ‘Lucas Plan’ 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference held in Birmingham in November 2016 and agrees that the Plan was an idea from which we can learn much today.

The Plan was a pioneering effort by workers at arms company Lucas Aerospace to retain jobs by proposing alternative, socially useful applications of the company’s technology and their own skills. Forty years afterwards, we are facing a convergence of crises – militarism and nuclear weapons, climate chaos, and the destruction of jobs by automation – which means that we have to start thinking about technology as political, as the Lucas Aerospace workers did.

However, in the four decades since the Plan was drawn up Britain’s manufacturing industry has shrunk from 25 per cent to 14 per cent of GDP, with the ‘defence’ industry now representing 10 per cent of all manufacturing. Britain cannot afford to lose any more manufacturing skills and capacity, and ‘defence’ workers are rightly concerned about the potential loss of jobs, for example if Trident replacement is cancelled.

In line with the outcomes of the Lucas Plan Conference, Congress therefore calls on trade unions and the TUC to lobby the Labour Party to establish before the next general election a ‘shadow’ Defence Diversification Agency, to work closely with the Shadow Department for Industry in developing an overall national industrial strategy including the possibility of conversion of ‘defence’ capacity. The first

task of this Agency would be to engage with plant representatives, trades unions representing workers in the ‘defence’ industry, and local authorities, to discuss their needs and capacities, and to listen to their ideas, so that practical plans can be drawn up for arms conversion while protecting skilled employment and pay levels. A key means for developing the national industrial strategy would be the National Investment Bank proposed by the Shadow Chancellor.

Congress also urges trades union councils, trade unions and the General Council of the TUC to assist the work of such a “shadow” agency if set up.

## ARCHITECT or BEE?

*The Human Price of Technology*

**Mike Cooley**



Introduction by  
**Frances O'Grady**

### **Architect or Bee? The Human Price of Technology**

By Mike Cooley, Foreword by Frances O'Grady

*'A bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of its cells; but what distinguishes the worst of architects from the best of bees is namely this. The architect will construct in his imagination that which he will ultimately erect in reality. At the end of every labour process, we get that which existed in the consciousness of the labourer at its commencement.'*

Karl Marx, Kapital

Mike Cooley's pioneering introduction to socially useful production and human-centred manufacturing systems, with a new foreword by the General Secretary of the TUC, herself an advocate of the lessons of the Lucas Plan for alternative production priorities. Years ahead of its time, *Architect or Bee?* is essential reading for all those seeking a democratic alternative to the politics of austerity.

Price: £10.99

194 pages | Paperback

ISBN: 978 0 85124 8493

## **Socially Useful Production**

*The Spokesman 133*

Price: £6.00 124 pages ISBN: 978 085124 8608

**Jeremy Corbyn MP** - Rebuilding politics, **Frances O'Grady et al** - Human face of labour, **Phil Asquith** - Lucas revisited, **Michael Ward** - London's alternative, **Adrian Smith** - Society and technology, **Tom Unterrainer** - Trade unions, **Adrian Smith et al** - Grassroots movements.

*The Spokesman* is the journal of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.



Grand Tour

Available from [www.spokesmanbooks.com](http://www.spokesmanbooks.com)