

One - Man - One - Vote

**A Study of the General Election of
March 31, 1966; its aftermath and
implications for the future of Democracy**

*MEMORANDUM No. 2
from Geoffrey & Elizabeth Dobbs
Bodifyr, Bangor, Caernarvonshire*

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The British General Election of March 31 1966, which returned Mr. Harold Wilson and his Labour Party to power with a majority of nearly 100 was, at one and the same time, probably the most boring political event of the present century to date, and also one of the most interesting to the student of political developments.

According to a post-election Gallup poll, details of which were published in the London *Daily Telegraph* of April 4, 1966, this was *the fifth successive election in which the number of abstentions increased*. "From the replies of non-voters it appears that one-third deliberately abstained, 33 per cent. saying that they did not want to vote." This number was over twice as high as in 1964 when it was 15 per cent.; although even then the abstention of 5 per cent. of former Conservative voters sufficed to change the Government.

This time, we are told:

"The Conservative vote, just under 11½ million, has fallen by 560,000 to its lowest level for 21 years. The Liberal vote has fallen even more, by nearly 750,000."

"The fact that a low turnout goes with a high swing suggests Mr. Wilson's victory owes as much to Conservative abstentions as to Labour enthusiasm."

Nevertheless:

"Of all those interviewed who said they did not vote, nearly half, 48 per cent., answered 'Labour' to the question: 'Were you inclined towards any party?'"

Only 18 per cent. replied 'Conservative' and 11 per cent. 'Liberal'. Thus it would appear that a real shift of opinion, rather than apathy, was the cause of the drop in the Conservative vote.

After the 1964 election Gallup reported that 'abstentions cost the Labour party a large parliamentary majority.' The same is true again this time."

In fact, in 1966 Labour polled 900,000 fewer votes, and 4 per cent. less of the electorate than they did in 1951, when they lost the election. Indeed, the percentage figures throw an interesting light on the nature of 'ballot-box democracy'. In 1945 34.6 per cent. of the electorate installed Labour in power with an overwhelming majority, which was used to inaugurate the post-War social revolution. One remembers also that, at this election, the number of spoilt ballot papers was so large that, in some constituencies, the parties agreed to hide the existence of this protest vote by redistributing them among the parties in proportion to the votes cast. At the time, of course, the parties, which had then but recently been in coalition, were in collusion in withholding from the electorate any choice in matter of the introduction of a Welfare State based upon compulsory national and health insurance and an extension of compulsion in the field of education. However, in 1951, a Labour vote of 40.3 per cent. of the electorate (13,949,105 votes), the highest in the Party's history, was the means whereby

'ballot-box democracy' threw out the Labour Government, until 1964, when it was restored to power by the vote of about 1,700,000 fewer people, 34.0 per cent. of the electorate, the lowest since the War! So much for the egalitarian value of one-man-one-vote as a means of enabling every ordinary citizen to share equally in choosing his Government and its policies!

But to return to 1966—another feature of the election, as elucidated by the Gallup poll, was that: "People put leadership highest among election-winning factors." The contest had become very largely one between 'Leaders', or rather between their public 'images' and TV 'personalities' rather than between parties and policies, which were so similar as to provide little material for choice.

As the *Spectator* (March 11, 1966) explained in a leading article entitled *Who are the Radicals Now?* "Mr. Heath is manifestly a more radical figure than Mr. Wilson." This the writer regarded with undisguised approval, while admitting, however, that: "We are fundamentally a conservative, not a radical, nation." Judging by the examples given, 'radicalism', in this context, means anything which centralises power and deprives people of freedom of choice and action, except in the case of would-be immigrants, upon whom such restrictions would be 'most wrong-headed' and 'disgraceful'.

If the *Spectator* is right, this goes far to explain the shift of conservative electors to Labour, since Wilson, though he is no more a Conservative than is Heath, has deliberately cultivated a Baldwin-like, pipe-puffing, pseudo-Monarchist, pseudo-patriotic, 'Conservative' image, while Heath has equally deliberately presented a 'radical' image, and the 'Conservative' Party, in getting rid of Sir Alec Douglas-Home as Leader, on the grounds that he was too much a gentleman, too nice a fellow, and above all, that he possessed the ridiculous, out-of-date, jeerworthy, Victorian virtues of honesty and integrity, so utterly inappropriate to any politician in the mid-twentieth century, gave a clear warning that it is not interested in the votes of that minority of the electorate which it thinks may be still attracted by these qualities.

SOME PUBLIC COMMENT

But the most interesting and, indeed, notable feature of the 1966 Election and its preceding Campaign, was the unprecedented volume of comment, both public and private, to the effect that the Election was both a farce and a bore, that there was nothing to choose between the major policies of the parties, and that, in particular, the most urgent and important policies, which would have the most far-reaching effects, about which people felt most strongly, about which the country was most deeply divided, were not being put to the electorate at all. This was so powerful on this

occasion, that it actually forced its way into the mass media, the 'national' press, and the correspondence programmes on the radio and TV; but, as usual, it was more fully expressed in the provincial Dailies and in the local weekly papers, which have remained in much closer touch with the genuine opinions of the people.

Since a good proportion of what we have to say on this subject has already been publicly circulated in the form of correspondence from ourselves and others in the press, we take this opportunity of placing on record the substance of a few of the letters which appeared, on the days immediately preceding the Election, in our nearest regional Daily—the *Liverpool Daily Post*—and in our local weekly newspaper—the *North Wales Chronicle*.

The correspondence column of the *Liverpool Post* on March 28 carried a headline VOTES FOR PEACE, over a letter from Cambridge which ended as follows:—

“The only gesture that is possible is to give a token vote for peace by going to the poll and inscribing the ballot paper with the reason for not voting for any of the candidates.”

Alongside it was one from a lady headed DUKE FOR PREMIER, beginning:—

“Sir,—What a pity the Duke of Edinburgh is not eligible for the Prime Ministership!”

On the following day, March 29, the headline and the first three letters were of such interest that we quote them in full:—

Liverpool Daily Post, Tuesday, March 29, 1966

PAYMENT BY RESULTS —FOR MINISTERS

Sir,—Party politicians offer solutions to remedy those ills of the national economy which have to a large degree resulted from their past attention.

One practical and so far untried remedy for economic recovery would be for Ministerial politicians to be paid according to results; as they are very public spirited people with a strong sympathetic bias towards the poorer members of society they would, no doubt, have great satisfaction in such a practical measure—most especially in times of national need and crisis.

S. V. LLOYD.

Allt Road,
Flint.

Electoral reform

Sir,—Many people today have come to doubt the efficiency of our electoral system, whereby all persons over the age of twenty-one with a few exceptions, are accorded the right to vote, irrespective of ability or capacity to comprehend the political implications involved.

Perhaps some of your readers, politicians, presiding officers, polling clerks, party canvassers and any others, may know of incidents which illustrate this lack of political capacity or 'votability'.

As I am compiling a dossier of such incidents I would be grateful indeed to learn of examples which illustrate this weakness in our voting system.

These either may be of a serious or humorous nature but I should like to emphasize that I am only interested in true examples.

Glenholm Avenue,
Newtownbreda,
Belfast, 8.

ERIC ROBINSON.

Why Secret?

Sir,—I read with interest Mr. Bridge's letter, and like him, I intend to withhold my vote at the forthcoming General Election, not only for the excellent reasons given by him, but also because of the impossibility under the present "secret ballot" of holding the electorate responsible for their choice of Government.

An open and published vote would make it possible to identify those voting for the successful party and to ensure that all costs of legislation be borne exclusively by them.

Lancaster Avenue,
Liverpool, 17.

W. S. THOMAS.

On Election Day, March 31, there were a dozen letters printed under the Heading of POLL POST, with Editorial regrets that it was possible to publish only a representative selection. Again, the first three are of more than passing interest:

Liverpool Daily Post, Thursday, March 31, 1966

POLL POST

So the earth is flat

Sir,—Confused by the various opinion polls, last night I dreamed I was canvassing with the question: "Do you believe the world is round?" With the following result:

No	50%
Yes	40%
Don't know	10%

I am now convinced against my better judgment that the world is flat.

Slapton,
Kingsbridge, Devon.

WILFRED DAVIES.

Disfranchised

Sir,—What's all this fuss about Africans not getting the vote?

We haven't one either because we don't want and won't vote for a sell-out to European politicians, economic war on Rhodesia, continued inflation, rising rates and taxes, capital gains tax on the inflation, fluoridation of our water, sabotage of our aircraft industry, of our schools and universities and of our hospitals.

As all Parties are agreed on these things (though they may disagree on how quickly to pursue them) there is no Party to vote for, no choice, and our one-man-one-vote alleged democracy is already leading us into the One-Party State, as it has done rather more rapidly in Africa.

Bodifyr,
Bangor.

C. G. DOBBS and
ELIZABETH S. DOBBS.

Nothing to choose

Sir,—After listening to the political broadcast I feel I must make some comment. We have had 13 years of Tory rule. We're no better off. Now a taste of Labour: the best that can be said of it is we're no worse off.

The first thing the new Parliament did was to give themselves a 60 per cent. increase. Agreed by all parties. Are M.P.s that important, when one thinks, are they? They must vote with the party or else they must do as the Whips say.

When they did have a free vote they abolished the death penalty which the country did not want.

Party politics—Wilson's wonderland, Heath's Heaven, and Grimond's Grotto: whichever gets in the working man will still have to do a lot more overtime to make the 40-hour week work.

W. WILLIAMS.

Chester Street,
Birkenhead.

Alongside this correspondence there was a cartoon, depicting a middle-aged father advising his son, evidently a first-time voter, on the art of voting. His remarks went as follows:—

“Tricky thing—voting, son. You listen to the lot—

“Now, those promising the most will probably do the opposite so—

“Consider if you'll be able to afford what the other side's schemes will cost after another couple of rises in the cost of living—

“Then make your choice—it's as easy as that!”

(Son left in complete confusion, with whirling head!)

It should be added that, in the middle of the front page of this same Election Day issue of the *Liverpool Post* was a headline:—

DON'T WASTE YOUR VOTE, with a reminder that:

“Democracy and the right to vote for a Government were not won easily.”

Curiously enough, this was the title of a leaflet issued twenty-one years ago, a reprint of an article in the weekly journal *The Social Crediter* of May 5, 1945, urging the electors not to waste their votes in the forthcoming first post-war election by voting for what they did not want, namely the compulsory and bureaucratic Welfare State upon which all the parties were agreed, but to *use* their vote to express their own will in the matter, if not for immediate effect, then at least as an example and a warning for future elections. After all, it was never the right to vote *for* a Government, or a policy, which made the difference between democracy and tyranny, it was the right to vote *against* either.

It is both interesting and heartening to see these ideas spontaneously and widely coming to the fore again a generation later. All the letters reproduced above have the same familiar and whole-

some flavour of realistic common sense and responsibility which the pessimists allege to have been lost to the British people; and these, be it noted, were but a representative selection of a point of view more widely expressed than ever before. The sacred cow of irresponsible majority voting was both questioned and laughed at, the lack of choice between the parties fully recognised, and the idea of responsibility for results, on the part of both politician and elector, put forward in its place. Finally, it is indeed thrilling to see Mr. W. S. Thomas's letter, with its far-reaching and vital proposal that the secret ballot should be abolished in favour of an open and published vote, with taxation to be allotted in proportion to the cost of the programme voted for. This would, of course, revolutionize politics by introducing that element of responsibility which is now so conspicuously lacking and desperately needed. Since the recent death of Lord Sempill, who was in the Chair, there cannot now be many left alive of those who, on May 8 1947, assembled at Brown's Hotel in London to hear C. H. Douglas give his last address, in which he put forward this tremendously important proposal to the Constitutional Research Association. It seems now as if the time has come at last when the public mind is ready for it.

THE ELECTION IN NORTH WALES

On March 25, 1966 our local weekly newspaper, *The North Wales Chronicle*, brought out its Election issue, in which two inner pages were mainly devoted to short election manifestos by the thirteen candidates in the four North Wales constituencies. These made an interesting assemblage, of a kind to which we are so accustomed that its truly fantastic nature is rarely seen! But the impartial reader, scanning the whole on the charitable assumption that one statement is as true, or untrue, as another, is remorselessly driven to the conclusion that:

in view of the magnificent and abysmal past record of good, honest, sound, wildly inefficient and fraudulent lies and competence exhibited by all the parties, the only hope and certainty of economic salvation and ruin—indeed, the one glorious hope of dynamic national stagnation and progress towards totally unfair social justice for all but the other side, of restoration of this grand old country to its true place in the World as a third-rate provincial dictatorship—lies in casting a vote forthwith for the Lib-Lab-Tory Party;—unless, of course, as a Welshman, the reader should feel that the fierce competition of all the major parties to shower benefits upon Wales, and to rob the Welsh people with that special consideration for their traditional way of life so callously typical of the English, should drive him to vote for the Welsh Nationalists, but for whom none of this could have been achieved!

As the party Leaders had promised us, the election, in North Wales as elsewhere, was entirely focussed upon home affairs, and mainly upon 'economics'; that is to say, it was about abstract

figures, mostly contradictory and entirely uncheckable by the electors, alleged to represent foreign debt, exports and imports, productivity, and so on. The only fact in this field known by experience to the electors, is the fact that the £ continues, under whatever Government, to buy less and less. And although the cause, and the cure, of this built-in defect of the monetary system have been known since the 1920's, no party will do anything about it except blame the others, and the public, for this simple, mathematical consequence of the issue of the means of purchase as debt.

Even in this field of home affairs, there was careful avoidance by all the candidates of the many impositions which all the parties, in collusion, have inflicted upon an unwilling, and frequently a protesting public. For instance, the over 60 per cent. 'rise' for M.P.s which immediately preceded an attempt to impose an 'incomes policy' limited to a $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. annual increase for everyone else! The so-called Capital Gains tax on monetary inflation, the sabotage of our aircraft industry, and of many of our finest schools, the extension of freedom from fear of the hangman for murderers, and of fear of the murderer for everyone else; the united progress towards the goals of more freedom for abortion and buggery, and the clamping down of more restrictions, more compulsion, more taxation, more forms, more licences, upon the ordinary citizen!, including legalised kidnapping of children from their parents for non-school attendance, imposing a licence, with fee, for drawing water from one's own well, more and more Government pressure upon local Councils to force mass-medication via the water supply upon strongly objecting people, police powers to stop safe and sober drivers and make them undergo blood-alcohol tests, and so on.

Here and there, an occasional candidate may have concerned himself with one or other of these issues, but the electorate was given no chance at all of influencing the fate of the private citizen even in these intimate matters. It is quite clear that ballot-box democracy provides not the slightest safeguard against the imposition of a police State.

Even more extraordinary was the exclusion, from all but two out of the thirteen manifestos, of even the most oblique reference to the fact that all parties are prepared to surrender some of the powers of government with which the electors are supposed to have entrusted them, to European politicians or officials entirely beyond even the pretence of electoral control by the British electorate. If this can be done without consultation or consent of the electorate, the whole process of electing a Government becomes a pointless farce; and although the parties were in disagreement as to the economic conditions for this hand-over of the people to alien control, not one of them questioned the right of an elected Government to surrender the powers committed to it in this way. This amounts very nearly to a claim on the part of the Party Leaders,

as prospective rulers, to own the population as slaves to be bartered provided there is some gain in the transaction, for a similar partial control of the human cattle owned by the Top People in other countries.

Since it was the Conservative and Liberal Parties which were most 'enthusiastic' about this piece of arrogant and contemptible treason, and even had the impertinence to try to 'sell' it as an 'exciting' and 'progressive' prospect, while the Labour Party at least put on an act of being pro-British (as compared with Europeans) it is not surprising that, even in the face of the Labour record, some Conservatives as well as Liberals, felt it necessary to transfer their vote to Labour. As the *Spectator* pointed out, the Tory is now the more 'radical' party, which implies that it has abandoned its former function in our society, and is now merely a 'wing' of the revolutionary movement, and not even the 'right wing' at that, although its main function still appears to be the hamstringing, or prevention, of any effective defence against the advance of socialist dictatorship.

But if only two out of the thirteen North Wales candidates thought fit to mention the Common Market, not a single one referred in any way to the Rhodesian crisis or to the civil war now being waged by all the parties in collusion against the British people of Rhodesia, both those who are British by birth or origin and those Africans who adhere to the British way of life and ideas about responsible government. During the negotiations which precipitated Rhodesian independence Mr. Ian Smith was informed that any form of government which could be approved by 'Britain' would have to have the approval of *all* the people of Rhodesia. But in this country all the parties have been very careful to make sure that the British people, in whose name this bitter assault is being carried out, shall have no choice in the matter. If this is to be the model for the one-man-one-vote democracy which is to be imposed upon the people of Rhodesia by economic, and if necessary, military force, it is not surprising that many of them are prepared, if necessary, to resist it to the death! Meanwhile, in view of the politicians conspiracy to ignore or soft-pedal this issue in the election, so that they can claim that any vote cast for any party is a vote for this vicious policy, it is satisfactory that, on the front page of the very election issue in which these thirteen election manifestos appeared, without a single mention of Rhodesia among them, the letter which follows, with editorial comment alongside, appeared:—

North Wales Chronicle—25th March, 1966

PAGE ONE LETTER

C. G. Dobbs, Bodifyr, Bangor, writes: "From a democratic point of view this election is a hypocritical farce. None of the really important issues about which people have definite and strong opinions is being put to the electorate. Of these the two most

obvious, which will affect the whole future of this country, are the economic and propaganda war against Rhodesia, and the determination of all parties to negotiate Britain's economic and political union with our recent enemies, and present commercial competitors, in Europe.

"The fact that the Conservatives are less enthusiastic about the Rhodesian war than the Labourites, who are themselves less enthusiastic than the Tories about the European sell-out, while the Liberals are wildly enthusiastic about both disastrous policies, makes no difference to the fact that a vote for any of the parties is a vote for both these policies, and there is no way of voting against them. We have, in fact, almost achieved the one-man-one-vote-one-Party totalitarian State in which the traditional parties have degenerated into the Left, Right and Centre of the One-Party, whose policies differ only in essentials, and whose struggle is concerned merely with the question who shall have the power and the pickings."

Ritual Submission

"Under these circumstances a vote is merely an act of ritual submission to policies which the voter loathes, but dare not oppose. The result, in fact as the various political experts keep telling us, is merely a statistical record of the relative effectiveness of the party brain-washing machines. At the present election it seems to be generally conceded that the determining factors are going to be matters such as the timing, smartness in salesmanship and jibing at the other side, the chances of redistribution of voters in the constituencies, the psychological suggestion exercised by opinion polls and commentaries on them, and so on. The policies and personalities of the candidates are admitted to be very minor factors: yet it is these policies and their consequences for which the elector will be held responsible, and the Government of the future will claim a 'mandate'.

"Since it is not yet compulsory in this country to vote for what one detests, it becomes the duty of every elector who does not wish to support a racist war against white Rhodesians, or the surrender of the sovereignty of this country to anonymous European politicians, to boycott the election."

COMMENT

Not often does a letter to the Editor appear on Page One, as the letter in the adjoining column has done.

We give the letter prominence because we believe it expresses a point of view shared by a good many at this time. It is symptomatic of a school of thought which appears to be gaining ground rapidly—not least among the more intelligent sections of the enfranchised public of North Wales.

To a people grown heartily sick of the political propaganda machine, the soap-opera party political broadcasts, the conclaves of garrulous pundits, the never-never world of vote-catching promises cascading from the mass media, the notion of returning nonsense for nonsense by simply not voting has a certain attraction. ←

The Trap

Alas, it is all too easy to fall into the trap—to abdicate responsibility for what is going on in our constituency, our country, our world. Turning one's back on the mess will never help solve it.

Disapprove if you like. But, if you feel confronted only by two evils, choose the lesser.

At least you are making a positive contribution. Even though you may feel that most of the thinking for which you are voting is negative.

Democracy would die without our votes. So next Thursday—
GO OUT AND VOTE.

The following week, this reply to the editorial comment appeared in the correspondence column:

North Wales Chronicle—1st April, 1966

CORRESPONDENCE

What is Democracy?

Sir,—I thank you for giving my last letter front page prominence because as you put it, it expressed a point of view shared by a good many people at this time. I was even more pleased that in your comment you opened a discussion about the nature of democracy, a subject about which we all ought to do some very hard thinking.

Is one-man-one-vote necessarily the same thing as democracy; or can it be a step on the road to tyranny? In Africa recently it seems often to have led to one-party totalitarian rule, followed in many cases by military dictatorship. Indeed, at this time, Rhodesia is one of the few countries left in Africa where an African opposition is allowed some limited voting rights and as many as 15 seats in the legislature.

But is this tendency to proceed from majority voting to despotism limited to Africa? The German people of the 1930's, for instance, elected the Nazi Party by an ordinary, constitutional majority vote, and afterwards continue to support it with the usual 99 per cent. votes which are also always recorded for the single lists of party candidates in the Communist countries. What is more, they call this state of affairs a People's Democracy; and insist that it is towards this 'ideal' state of affairs that we in the West are 'progressing'!

And this is where we strongly disagree with them, do we not? As soon as there is only one policy, and that a wrong one, democracy does not die *without* our votes, it dies *with* them. For instance, even if there had been several Nazi Parties, each offering to exterminate the Jews by different means, some more merciful than others, would you say that it would have been the duty of citizens to go out and vote for the lesser evil? I am sure not!

Until recently I should have said that this was a far-fetched example, and that there was nothing in British politics in any way comparable to this extremity of evil. But now I am less sure. To take but one example: at the present time, all three parties are supporting a campaign of economic blockade and inflammatory propaganda, designed to force the most peaceful, prosperous and best governed country in Africa to become a police state; so that it may be jeered at and hated as a police state; and so that the African population may be driven to desperation and revolt and the bloody chaos, oppression and dictatorship which prevails in most of the rest of Africa be extended to Rhodesia, which can then be made a base for a general racist war in Southern Africa. All this, moreover, under the hypocritical cover of 'democracy' and 'anti-racism'; and all being done in my name, and your name, as British electors, and with our money, as British taxpayers.

I am quite certain that if this policy had been fairly put to the vote it would have been overwhelmingly rejected by the British electorate. Since it has not been, I think there will be a day of reckoning coming for those politicians who have supported it, and especially for those who know the facts and don't really believe in it.

Meanwhile, I feel strongly that democracy, so far as voting is concerned in it, consists in the right to reject a policy. Once this has gone we are in the grip of despotism however many votes we cast. Personally, in turning my back on this policy and refusing to vote for it in any form, I nevertheless know that I am doing something positive and democratic. I am asserting my will as an elector, in opposition to that of the party bosses, whom I refuse to relieve of any part of their responsibility for the disastrous consequences of their agreed policy.

I feel also that in giving fair publicity to this viewpoint, which is shared by many people with whom you do not necessarily agree, you as editor, are also carrying out an action which is quite vital to the continuance of democracy.

Yours etc.,
C. G. DOBBS

Bangor

THE NATURE OF DEMOCRACY

The conflict about Rhodesia, in its setting of the post-colonial world, epitomizes the conflict of ideas about the nature of democracy; and because it brings these ideas into the sphere of real events, it may, at least, help people to clarify them. Moreover, such a clarification is quite desperately urgent if the present confused thinking is not to lead to disaster.

The word 'democracy' has, of course, become almost meaningless through misuse—a mere political emoto-goodword of essential use in the promotion of any type of political regime whatever—just as 'fascism', which used to mean a particular form of Corporate State socialism, has now become a mere political emoto-badword. Indeed, the stage has long been reached at which the politically experienced, on hearing the words 'freedom' and 'democracy' bandied about, instinctively suspect that some power or freedom of choice is about to be filched from the ordinary people. Nevertheless, it is not well to surrender these good and essential words entirely to those who would rob the language of them, and by degrading their meaning destroy also the good idea which gives them their power.

We are concerned here, therefore, neither with the more crudely degraded meanings, nor even mainly with the accepted, or dictionary meanings of the word 'democracy', but rather with the best possible meaning of the word in human terms, that state of affairs for which people unconsciously long when they hear the word, and which makes it so powerful both for good and evil purposes.

The word 'democracy' coming, as it does, from the Greek, meaning power of the people, raises the question: What

power? To do what? The usual answer, as given in the dictionaries, is power to govern, or to control the government, either directly by popular assembly as in the ancient Greek city states, or by representative government elected by majority vote as in modern States which are far too large for popular assemblies. Moreover, it is well known that 'ballot-box democracy' can take many forms; Constitutional Monarchy with a two or three Party system, an elected executive President as in the U.S.A., with an electoral College, or government by referendum as in the French Fifth Republic, or by plebiscites on important matters, as in Switzerland. On the other side of the Iron Curtain we have People's Democracies (wielding People's people-power, no less!) in which, since the State is the People, and the Party is the State, and the Party bosses can say, with Louis XIV, 'L'Etat c'est moi!' democracy is achieved by the enthusiastic vote of the people for the single list of candidates provided.

The point here is that none of these are in themselves the thing which the people want when they hear the word 'democracy'. At the best they are only various *means* which it is believed, or claimed, or pretended may conduce to that end. It is true that all these various means have in common one thing, namely: one-man-one-vote; but it is clear also that this is itself merely a *means* which must stand or fall by its effectiveness in attaining the end desired, which is the power of the people.

What, then, is this power which the people want? Power to govern, to boss, or bully, or control others? There are, unfortunately, plenty of people who want such power, but they are neurotics, or psychopaths. Such people are indeed encouraged and exploited in the various forms of modern demagogic despotism, in which, indeed, it is claimed and taught that democracy is just this—the power of the people to become bosses and bullies over their fellow men. But this is not what the ordinary, sane, decent man or woman wants. What they want is the power to manage their own lives with the minimum interference, to choose or refuse what is put before them, and not to be 'managed' without their consent. What seems always to be forgotten is that 'the people' consists of *people*, that is, persons, real, live human beings, not statistical units which is what the ballot-box makes of them: and it is the power to be persons, to live their own lives, that they want. A democracy is any system of government which gives them this, and any system which does not is not a democracy. In biblical terms: "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid." That is the real democracy. And the substitution of means for ends has been wisely said to be the essence of evil!

Power tends to corrupt, as Lord Acton said, though it is not true, as he went on to say, that absolute power corrupts absolutely.

That would amount to saying that the ultimate power of the Universe is evil. Probably what he meant was that, in human affairs, power unchallenged or unchecked invariably leads to a monstrous corruption. And if ever there was an Age when this has been shown to be true it is this one.

Government consists in the use of power against other people who, for the most part, are unable to resist; and this power is always misused, sometimes more, sometimes less; but how much more or less makes all the difference to the people. Democracy is not an absolute but a relative thing.

Throughout most of human history the main power which has made governments has been the power to kill or injure or enslave which has been used in military conquest and occupation, or, within a nation in successful civil war or revolution. Such a use of power is, of course, the negation of democracy, and ensures that the rulers are self-selected for the ruthless use of power. The introduction of the hereditary principle does at least introduce a possibility of relatively good government, and of the development of an aristocracy, since the rulers are no longer selected for their own ability to bully, murder, lie or cheat their way to power, but merely for having had an ancestor who had done so. At the same time, a rigid hereditary system in which power is taken for granted develops its own sort of arrogance and misuse of power, and needs to be challenged and checked by powers outside itself, as well as revitalised by new blood. But there is great confusion in the idea that there is anything necessarily 'democratic' about rule by plebeians who have forced their way to the top (such as Hitler, for instance) or necessarily undemocratic about rule by hereditary aristocrats (such as, for instance, Sir Alec Douglas-Home). Either, of course, might be a tyrant, or might be inclined to leave the people in the enjoyment of their proper power to live their own lives (which is democracy); but of the two, the man who has not had to force his way to the top is the less likely to be the bully.

But of all the counter-balancing powers which moderate the tyranny of governments, religion, by which is meant the belief of rulers and ruled in a greater power than that of themselves or any other men, is the most effective; and of all the religions the Trinitarian religion, Christianity, has produced the most far-reaching effects upon the practice and the very structure of government. For this involves a belief in the tri-partite and balanced structure of the ultimate power of the Universe, which, over the centuries, resulted in the balanced structure of the British constitutional Government of Crown, Lords and Commons, now so dangerously unbalanced by the dominance of the Commons, or rather of the oligarchy which controls the Commons. This in turn is based upon the delusion that 'democracy' resides, not in the effective power of the people as individuals, but is a sort of magic

Answer to Nigel Jacobs on

inherent in the act of marking a ballot-paper, whether or not this gives any effective choice, or control over his own affairs, to the voter.

VOTING VICTORY OF THE BIG BATTALIONS

It is true enough that voting, as an alternative to civil war as a way of determining who should be the rulers, was an advance towards democracy, since it got rid of the violence, the troops trampling the crops, robbing the countryside and the people, billeted on the inhabitants, with the usual murders, rapes, sackings, lootings and so on. But it should be remembered that it was in this that the advance consisted, and it was not without its price; especially after the introduction of the secret ballot had abolished the element of responsible, personal, participation in the determination of public policy, in the act of voting, substituting an anonymous contribution to political logistics. For in a civil war though no doubt usually the gangster with the biggest gang of bullies usually won, there was always a chance that human qualities other than mere numbers might have the victory—courage and devotion, leadership, military skill and technical equipment, initiative and enterprise, and so on. Whereas the majority vote inexorably secures the conquest of the Big Battalions, and against this one quality of number no human qualities whatever, neither courage nor skill, love nor pity, strength nor rage, nor wisdom nor intelligence, are of the slightest avail. Abandon hope all ye that enter here—except in quantity alone, in the bigness of the mass, for nothing else matters! It is indeed strange that so many people should imagine that there is some *moral* virtue in a majority vote!

And this is all the more extraordinary now that the mass media, the press and radio and television, have provided the power-seekers with bloodless psychological weapons, more effective than the bows and the battle-axes, the swords and the spears with which they used to seek power, or the guns and the tanks and the bombs which they are still using in many parts of the world. Especially in this last election, in which it was openly acknowledged that it was largely a matter of the efficacy of the party propaganda machines in winning votes, and of the leaders in presenting the vote-catching 'image', which would determine who should rule the country, it is difficult to see how 'the power of the people' came into it. Moreover, this was not only realised by a great many of the potential voters, but openly acknowledged by the various commentators and academic pundits who have been filling the press and the air with their pontifications on the subject. In an article entitled: FOR THE PEOPLE, NOT BY THE PEOPLE (*Times*, 18 April, 1966) Mr. Richard Rose, Lecturer in Government at Manchester University, quotes various other professionals who stress the pitifully microbial part in influencing affairs played by the ordinary elector. For instance, an American economist, Mr.

Anthony Downs, has worked it out from a cost point of view that there are much better ways of spending one's time than bothering to cast a ballot which "represents less than 0.00001 per cent. of what is required to elect a government in Britain". Mr. Rose agrees with Mr. Joseph Schumpeter, an Austrian economist, who described our system as "government by competing 'Elites'." 'Elite', for the would-be elected, is a highly ironic use of the word, but let that pass! What seems to be agreed is that the electorate's choice "does not decide what policies a government follows but it does determine who is to choose them!"

If, however, all the 'élites' should happen to 'choose' the same major policies, and those should also happen, to an ever-increasing extent, to be policies directed against the electorate, or their friends and allies, such as, for instance, economic sanctions directed against British, or pro-British, people abroad, or "a tough budget to satisfy foreign bankers" (i.e. economic sanctions against the electorate itself), then the 'choice' available at the election may be compared with the freedom to choose whether to be kicked in the face by a fellow wearing a red, or a blue, or a yellow, rosette. In other words, it has become a vicious pretence that there is a valid choice, convenient only to the 'elect' and not at all to the victims.

After all it is the policy, i.e., the direction of action—what a government *does*—which affects the people. Only when we know what is to be done and that we want it done, can an effective choice be made of who is to do it. It was Mr. Enoch Powell who, in 1964, pointed out to a constituent that he could suggest no way, either by voting or by not voting, by which government policy in the future could be influenced by the elector. He was referring to fluoridation of the domestic water supply, a policy officially supported by all three parties and a matter which directly affects, and in the case of children is intended to affect, the bodies of people in their own homes, and to which many people are notoriously known to object. If, then, the possession of one-man-one-vote cannot influence in any way whatever the future policy of a government in relation actually to invading the homes of the people and dosing them with a chemical against their declared objection (and the whole point of the operation, as against voluntary methods, is its compulsory nature) it is clear that the right to exercise 0.00001 per cent. of a choice in deciding **who** is to carry out this policy is quite irrelevant to democracy, in any sense in which power can be said to reside in the people.

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE DEMOCRACY

Interestingly enough, there is a typically sneering note in the *Spectator* of March 4, 1966 (and how much journalism is one continuous sneer, nowadays!) which draws attention to the *Voter's Veto*, organised by "that extraordinary fringe lobby, the anti-fluoridationists" in an attempt to use their votes to some effect in

this matter. There is, in fact, an exciting history of success behind this device of the *Voter's Veto*, which has been effective in stopping fluoridation in several places, and in Andover actually assisted in replacing a party-dominated town council with independents committed to stopping fluoridation. This is one of the very few advances in both the theory and practice of democracy which has emerged in this century, and it is worthy of far more study than it has so far been accorded. But the idea of pinning the vote to one single issue can be effective only when and where such a single issue is completely dominant over all others in the public mind. And this is only likely to happen in local affairs. It is also only likely to happen in relation to a negative—something the people are united in *not* wanting, for the variety of mankind is such that the desires of different men, as expressed in practical terms, are seldom likely to be the same; but all can agree in rejecting something which offends against human nature. This is the basis of the understanding of the fact that, in so far as mass devices such as elections are concerned, democracy is necessarily negative—the power to reject a policy, just as, on the more personal scale, the power to contract out, e.g., from a particular employment, makes the difference between freedom and slavery.

Unfortunately, so far as 'negative democracy' on the national scale is concerned, the 'elect' have been careful to see that there are far too many impositions which are detested by the people for the electors to unite in effectively vetoing any one of them. Thus, at the 1966 election, some young people tried to 'veto' the war in Vietnam, others, sanctions against Rhodesia, others entry into the Common Market, others the sabotage of the aircraft industry or the railways, or some other enterprise in which they were concerned, others the abolition of the death penalty for murder, others fluoridation, others random breath-tests for motorists, and so on; so that, in effect, no one 'veto' could be effective, and by cancelling each other out, their collective effect was probably less than that of a simple boycott of the election, with a public declaration of its reasons.

Nevertheless, as Mr. W. S. Thomas's letter in the *Liverpool Post* showed, it should not be beyond the wit of man to devise means whereby personal responsibility could be introduced into the act of voting, and also to those who put forward policies to the electorate, and, indeed, an outline of such proposals has already been put forward. *Positive* choices can be made only if the proposals are definite (with costs declared, as in any ordinary business transaction) and the results of the choice are personally experienced. Such a change would indeed revolutionise society, and make it literally democratic. The people cannot exercise power without responsibility, but to allow them responsibility is the last thing which would be tolerated by those who talk most about 'democracy'. Meanwhile, though the vote is useless, there is one form of negative

democracy which people, so far, have not been prevented from using except in the totalitarian States, and that is the power to reject the government's policies, as experienced by the ordinary people, by emigrating.

Now this 'voting with the feet' is the poles apart from mere irresponsible ballot casting. It is, in fact, the ultimate form of the responsible vote, a choice of national policies, the consequences of which return to the 'voter', which is presumably the reason why the more extreme tyrannies cannot permit such a vote to be cast against them, since its use on any large scale would destroy the nation and their power with it. It is clear that throughout history, for the most part, emigration has represented a negative vote, based upon bitter experience of the country which is being abandoned, rather than a positive vote for that Eldorado which the emigrant has chosen, which, in most cases, is likely to be an ideal picture based upon hearsay or advertising.

Nevertheless, people do not lightly or irresponsibly 'vote with their lives' by abandoning their homes in this way, and a great stream of the younger, more energetic, more enterprising, and less servile and docile people pouring out of a country as they are pouring out of Britain to-day, is a clear sign of oppressive government and of the suppression of democracy to a degree intolerable to these people. Such a haemorrhage enfeebles the nation and increases the dominance of its rulers; but what alternative is there if the political system allows of no means of influencing government policy or of protecting oneself from interference except the extreme measure of contracting out of the country altogether? The right to contract out, or to reject proposals which are put before one, is the basis of all freedom; and this is still to some extent recognised in the economic field, though being subjected to political pressure. But unless the next step towards democracy can be taken, unless means can be found or devised, whether through the electoral system or otherwise, which are less drastic than emigration, or armed rebellion, or economic sabotage, whereby the ordinary citizen can effectively reject, or contract out of, oppressive government policies, then we are heading for crisis and disaster and the dreary grip of the totalitarian State, however well it may be camouflaged.

THE SLAVE-VOTE

What is quite certain, and is now being widely realised, is that the universal, secret, and therefore irresponsible, ballot for competing 'élites' armed with the weapons of the mass media, is leading us straight towards this disaster, and that proposals such as proportional representation of the party votes, or lowering of the voting age to 18, would only hasten it. In the original Greek democracies men were chosen for public office by lot, not by competing for votes and power, and were held responsible, on pain of death, for results; and only free and responsible citizens might vote on matters

of policy. Slaves had no vote, because slaves would have been free to vote only as their master wished, which would merely have given multiple voting powers to slave-owners. The secret ballot was introduced in order to evade less complete pressures such as those of landlords, employers or unions, but in doing so it deprived the act of voting of responsibility, and laid the voter open to more powerful influences, the powers of manipulated information and propaganda, acting direct upon the mind and the emotions in the privacy of his own home.

After all, to get his multiple vote, the slave-owner would have had to exert his influence over his slaves only at election times, and although the modern 'competing élites' do not exactly claim the electorate as chattels, their open contempt, combined with pandering to popular prejudices, is not so far away from this. As we have seen, it is now acknowledged that the result of an election is mainly determined by the relative efficacy of the party propaganda machines, including timing and tactics and the temporary establishment of the Party Leader as a 'father figure'.

The younger the electorate, of course, the more easily they are cheated with misinformation, their emotions spuriously aroused, and they are made to pass 'under the influence' for the necessary brief period, culminating in Election Day. The same applies to unsophisticated or relatively primitive peoples, especially when separated from their tribal or other traditional background and forced to cope with urban or industrial conditions. Hence the popularity of these relatively easily 'captured' audiences to provide multiple votes on a vast scale for those who are adept at controlling public opinion by the use of the mass media.

According to *The Times* of April 14, 1966, many of the inhabitants of the island of New Hanover, off New Guinea, have refused to vote in local elections because President Lyndon Johnson's name is not on the ballot paper. Over 500 have gone to gaol for non-payment of taxes, because they are saving up to buy Lyndon Johnson as their ruler, and have already sent a down-payment on him to a missionary bishop. This remarkable cult is attributed to the visit of an American survey team, who no doubt 'sold' their country and their President to the islanders more or less as of habit. So far no one has suggested that 'democracy' demands a referendum, and if L.B.J. wins, the transfer of the island from Australia to the U.S.A. After all, the father-figure might just as well have been Chairman Mao, Uncle Joe Stalin, or for that matter Napoleon!

Nor are such bizarre results limited to primitive peoples; as witness the celebrated panic in the U.S.A. occasioned by the radio-induced belief that Martians were invading the Earth. But if such results can be produced unintentionally, what can we expect from the deliberate use by adepts of the techniques of mass-suggestion

and manipulation of the emotions? What does not seem to be realised is that collective suggestion can reach a level of semi-hypnosis in which the victims really are the temporary mental 'slaves' of the manipulator, and that a multitude of people, all being subjected to the same suggestions at the same time, do not have to assemble all in one place to become a mental mob. Provided that they meet each other constantly in everyday life, the mass suggestion soon gains, through reiteration, such momentum that it becomes irresistible, so that even those who are personally immune to it are swept along through fear of the appalling power of mob psychology.

Such influences are at work upon us every day in moderate form, in such matters as advertising, fashions in clothes and behaviour, and even more in current moral and political thought. The modern phrase: "with it" is a sign of mass-influence at work, but when, in addition, the more violent emotions are played upon, such as fear, hatred, or wild enthusiasm, then it is that uncontrollable mass-forces may be let loose. Anyone who heard Hitler broadcasting before the War could recognise this hypnotic power at work, and that no appeal of wisdom or reason could compete with crude emotion in this field of mass-psychology. But once race-hatred and an aggressive racial nationalism had been added to the emotive drive to dominate which was already inherent in socialism, then a demon of racist national socialism was let loose upon the world which stalks now almost unchallenged, masquerading as the opponent of Nazism of which, in fact, it is but an altered and more widespread form, with the non-white and especially the black-skinned people as the not-to-be-criticised race, and the non-pigmented southern Africans substituted for the Jews as the objects of race-hatred and hysterically urged genocide.

It is not, of course, that these white Africans have not misused power and been corrupted by it. The same may be said of powerful Jews, and of all other power-groups. But it is absurd to suggest, looking broadly at the World today, that white arrogance, and white colonialist oppression of the other races, are the great, aggressive, growing, expanding forces which are threatening world peace. On the contrary, in so far as they survive in the southern tip of Africa, it is as a defensive reaction against a far more threatening and aggressive force. Even so, racial hatred and violence, whether black against white or vice versa, are not spontaneous growths on the scale at which they exist to-day, but the products of the deliberate and ruthless use of the mass-media by those powers which are contending for world supremacy.

RHODESIA AND THE RACIST LEFT

Which brings us, in conclusion, back to the fantastic and unprecedented situation with regard to Rhodesia, which is

denounced by the mass media of almost the whole world, and which in April 1966 was condemned by the Security Council, at the instance of the Wilson regime in Britain, in addition to general economic sanctions, to a naval oil blockade under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, which deals only with threats to world peace.

Not that anyone even pretends to believe that Rhodesia threatens any of her neighbours with military invasion, or with infiltration by armed raiders or trained saboteurs, or with radio warfare urging rebellion, or by an internal condition of chaos threatening to spread outside her frontiers, or by the massacre of her native peoples. On the contrary, it is her accusers who have been notoriously and openly doing these things, and who complain that, despite all their assaults upon Rhodesia, her internal peace, order and relative prosperity have not sufficiently broken down, and that therefore a military invasion is demanded.

In other words, Rhodesia is 'a threat to world peace' only in the way that Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg were 'a threat to the peace of Europe' in 1939, since by their mere existence they presented 'an intolerable barrier' to the 'irresistible expansion' of the National Socialist Reich. But if racial nationalism explains the Afro-Asian war against Rhodesia, and the declared Communist policy of world conquest by corruption explains the normal exploitation of any such trouble by China and Russia, what can account for those 'champions of democracy' Britain and the U.S.A. finding themselves on the same side as these allies against Rhodesia?

One reason is that the propaganda of the racist Left has been more successful in these countries than ever that of the Nazis was, and has produced a curiously twisted version of white supremacism, whereby black people, in the exercise of power, are judged on a vastly lower standard than white people. The blood of the Christian Left, in particular, is a most specialized fluid which boils with righteous rage selectively, not so much at the oppression or even slaughter of the people, as at the skin colour of the oppressors. Thus, the police shooting of the crowd at Sharpeville in South Africa occasioned about a million times the moral indignation (if any) which greeted equally, or far more, bloody and brutal events which have occurred in other parts of Africa and in Asia, but under non-white government. One thinks of the appalling genocide of the Tutsis in Ruanda, the butchery of the Lumpa Church in Zambia, the bloody suppression of the South Sudanese, the violent seizure of power by the Communists in Zanzibar (now part of the Government of Tanzania) the years of bloody chaos in the Congo, the hundreds that died in election riots in Nigeria, followed by the military assassinations and dictatorship—not to mention the wholesale massacres in Indonesia and the recent wars waged by Indians against the Nagas and Pakistanis, in order to maintain their rule over subject peoples.

It is a pity these people do not realise the insufferable insult which is offered to the non-white people by this dual standard of morality, whereby only the members of the white race are treated as fully human and responsible for their actions; and even more by the assumption that of course the aspirations of black people are in line with those of the more violent nationalist gangsters and murderers to whose mercy many of them have been handed over by white governments. Ironically enough, the policy of the aggressive nationalist is nearly always rushed 'Europeanization'—total subjection to the worst elements of the white man's way of life, including urbanisation, industrialization, slumization, and complete enslavement to the white man's money-and-employment system, and his destructive and battling 'ideologies' of nationalism, racism, capitalism and socialism. The fact that the local African agents of this enlargement of the white man's money empire are co-skin-coloured with the victims is merely a point of tactics. It was, in fact, the more responsible white colonialists who, knowing full well the dangers and evils as well as the good things which are inherent in 'European civilization', were concerned to protect the people from too hurried a transition (such as had taken, e.g., the British people several centuries) and to interfere as little as possible with their way of life and customary systems of government. It should be added that this superiority of attitude and approach had nothing to do with race, but was to be attributed to the powerful, though still limited, influence of the Christian religion, which is non-racial; and in so far as this has been abandoned or corrupted, there is no reason to suppose that the courage, charity, humility and sense of responsibility which are necessary in good government reside under a white skin rather than one of any other colour.

RHODESIA AND DEMOCRACY

But if race-hatred is the main ideological weapon being used in the cultural and political conquest of Africa, 'democracy' is the ostensible excuse given for the singling out of Rhodesia as the special target of this weapon, and for the refusal of the British Government, and of all Parties, to recognise her independence. Hence all this blatantly insincere nonsense about 'rebels', 'traitors', and an 'illegal regime' as applied to a British community with a somewhat 'old-fashioned' loyalty to the Crown and to traditional British values, including a strong sense of responsibility for the maintenance of law and order, and for the gradual and peaceable transition of the rural and pastoral peoples under their control to a technological civilization.

Considering that it was a Conservative Government which 'recognised' the gang of Communists who seized power with Chinese aid in Zanzibar, that the present British Government 'recognises' a long list of African military dictatorships and other 'undemocratic' and completely 'unconstitutional' regimes, some of which have broken off diplomatic relations with Britain; consider-

ing also that Rhodesia has been internally self-governing for forty years, that she has set a good example to the rest of Africa, especially in respect of African education and economic standards, and that it was the African nationalists and the British Government who, between them, broke up the great experiment in multi-racialism which was implicit in the Central African Federation, it is not surprising that the Rhodesians lost patience and declared their own independence. Though in doing so they dealt a damaging blow to the true Britain, by dividing the Crown in its constitutional duty from the British tradition as exemplified in Rhodesia, and dividing the loyalties of the patriotic Briton between the two. The healing of this breach is a desperate need if either Britain or Rhodesia is to survive in any recognisable form.

Even in respect of the franchise Rhodesia has set a good example to the rest of Africa in introducing the ballot gradually to the Africans, and at present subject to educational and income qualifications. Even the Wilson regime admits that an immediate introduction of one-man-one-vote could be disastrous (which is an admission that universal suffrage is not necessarily the same thing as democracy, in any good sense). What they demand is its early, though not immediate, introduction, and that this shall be guaranteed, whether or not it may still be too early and therefore still disastrous. On the other hand, it is no mean task that the white settlers have achieved in their seventy years of occupation and forty years of independent rule, in bringing a population which might fairly be compared with that of iron age Britain, two thousand years ago before the Roman occupation, to something comparable to nineteenth Century Britain, after the Great Reform Act, when the ten-pound householders got the vote. Certainly this casts no reflection at all on the people concerned, black or white; but it should surely take them another generation or so to achieve universal suffrage, which took another century in Britain.

But as we have seen, the invention of the radio, whereby one voice can reach and influence millions, has already rendered one-man-one-vote dangerously obsolete, a mere extension of multiple voting power to the mass-hypnotist, so that the secret, statistical, majority ballot is already becoming a pointless farce in Britain, which many people prefer not to become involved in, while in many other countries it has led either to the ritual act of submission to the one-party dictatorship, or to a military take-over and the abandonment of the ballot altogether.

If only the racist Left who are so active in denouncing the Rhodesian 'whites' could be persuaded to take some of their own slogans seriously, and to think of people as people, and not as 'whites' or 'blacks', even they would see that the people who have been ruling Rhodesia compare very favourably in their record of government with that of most of the other 'élites' who have been exercising power in Africa. The point about the Rhodesian

'settlers' is not their skin colour, but their relatively advanced technology and political heritage. Under their leadership the Africans have known a peace and prosperity they never knew before; they have multiplied to ten times their number; they have made greater progress in education and technology than in most other parts of Africa; they have retained in some degree their traditional systems of village and tribal government, with headmen and chiefs to act as a sort of 'ombudsmen' to carry their wishes and complaints to the central government—a system by no means to be jeered at (as it is) by anyone interested in genuine democracy; and finally, they have achieved a limited franchise, with every prospect of a gradual advance in influence over the central government until ultimately a predominating control. Furthermore, about half a million Africans have 'voted with their feet' to leave the neighbouring African countries to go and live and work in Rhodesia for a large part of the year.

As against this, we are offered the prospect of one-man-one-vote at an early date, with unlimited power for the winners of the propaganda campaign, who would be, with predictable certainty, the more violent and effective emotion-routers, the nationalists whose present declared policy is hate, kill, burn, maim, destroy. Against these, and assuming that the U.N. or 'Britain' holds the ring and assures 'fair' and 'equal' chances to flog the mass-mind through the mass-media, what chance could any wise or moderate or statesman-like appeal, whether from black or white, have? Has the Christian Left completely forgotten that colonial Governor who 'fairly' and 'democratically' put the judgment between an innocent man and a robber to the agitator-controlled multitude?

As for the suggested 'safeguards for minorities' which would be part of the establishment of majority rule—judging not only by what has happened elsewhere in Africa, but also by what is happening in Britain, this is merely the manipulative use of words. It is of the essence of the current idea of ballot-box democracy that the *vox populi* confers upon the 'elect' the unlimited power formerly attributed by divine right of the *vox dei* to kings. There must be no limits—not even to handing the people over to foreign rulers, dosing them through the water-tap in their homes, taxing the very personal services which make up the very structure of social life. The unlimited power of kings was long ago successfully defeated and balanced by other powers, but the same arrogant claim is now made by elected Leaders, and it must be defeated and balanced by other powers if human freedom is to survive. This, indeed, is the great struggle of the Age.

RADICAL RE-THINKING

The time, then, is ripe for a radical re-thinking about the nature of democracy, and of the sort of Society which we want to live in; and drastic events, both in Britain and in Africa, and, indeed, in the World at large, are forcing this upon us. The answer

lies in a direction not hitherto sought at all by any of the parties or major political movements, and it has the simplicity of the Red Indian's advice: "The way to cut down a tree is to cut down a tree!" The way to achieve democracy is to increase the power of the people; first, by relegating all possible choice to the field of economics rather than politics, since, where money is properly distributed it provides a mechanism of choice incomparably more flexible than any conceivable political system; and second, by developing the electoral system, both in local and in national politics, in the direction of greater *responsibility*, both of the voters, and of their representatives.

It cannot be too strongly urged, therefore, that widespread and serious thought and discussion, both oral and written, both private and with the maximum publicity, should be devoted to this question of enlarging the responsibility of the elector. Perhaps, in the first place, and in view of the widespread abstentions in the 1966 Election, by providing a place for rejection of the candidates and their policies on the ballot form, and by making the signing and publication of the vote at least permissible. This would be with a view to abolishing the secrecy of the ballot and introducing the open and recorded vote, with taxation allocated in accordance with voting (as well as income) as suggested by C. H. Douglas in his address on *Realistic Constitutionalism* in 1947. At the same time, the people's representatives might be freed from the power of the Party Whips by making the voting secret in Parliament and in Big City Corporations, while their pay should be related to the state of the national economy.

If, as seems probable, these ideas are too radical to be entertained by the 'competing élites' and their captives, means can surely be found for introducing these principles into local affairs, as has been most effectively done with the *Voters' Veto*, and also for trying them out outside the official electoral system, which, at the very most, cannot be more than a minor mechanism in the daily operation of democracy. Such ideas as these have been put forward, and even tried out from time to time, by a small minority of people during the last thirty years; but now at last they seem to be rising to the surface spontaneously. The growth of consumers' associations, the move towards abolishing earning limits for old age pensioners, the revival of the idea of 'opting out' from national insurance and the health service, the growing feeling against the bullying of individuals by trades unions, and the spontaneous attempts to use the *Voters' Veto* by unconnected groups, all point in the same direction, of the insistence of ordinary people of their right to reject or to contract out of a policy. This spontaneous movement is of the stuff of which democracy is made, and the next few years will show whether it will be crushed, or whether it will lead to a new and wonderful development which will leave its mark for good on the history of mankind.

