

The "New Times" is a really independent, non-party, non-class, non-sectarian weekly newspaper, advocating political and economic democracy, and opposing totalitarianism in all its forms.

Now, when our land to ruin's brink is verging,
In God's name, let us speak while there is time!
Now, when the padlocks for our lips are forging,
Silence is crime.
—Whittier (1807-1892).

THE NEW TIMES

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Govt. Control of Coal Mines is a Failure

Hard Facts Revealed in British House of Commons

One of the most interesting and illuminating of recent debates in the House of Commons was that of February 23, 1945, on the Ministry of Fuel and Power Bill. The object of the Bill was to extend the operations of the Ministry of Fuel and Power, which has had control of the coal-mining industry, etc.

The disastrous failure of Government control of the coal industry was made abundantly clear by critics. It was even frankly admitted by some Labour Members—e.g., Messrs. Shinwell and Collindridge—who were, nevertheless, prepared to vote for the Bill!

From the speeches as recorded in the Official Report (British "Hansard") we quote the following pertinent extracts:

The Minister of Fuel and Power (Major Lloyd George): "I beg to move, 'That the Bill be now read a Second time.' . . . The Government is now examining the future organisation of the electrical industry as regards both generation and distribution. A Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Heyworth, has now been sitting for some time conducting an inquiry into the organisation of the gas industry. The panel of experts, which was appointed to re-examine the Severn Barrage proposals, has already reported, and I hope, that the Report will be published next Monday. The Committee on hydro-carbon oil duties, under the chairmanship of Sir Amos Ayre, appointed jointly by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer and myself, has also reported, and its Report is being studied at the moment. The Fuel and Power Advisory Council, under the chairmanship of Sir Ernest Simon, is looking into the problem of domestic heating. Finally, in regard to coal, regional surveys of our coal resources in all the coal-producing regions have now been completed except I think in one instance, and they will be published as soon as possible. The first is actually at the printers at the moment, and the Report of the Committee of Mining Engineers, to which I have already referred, which is inquiring into the technical steps needed to increase the efficiency of the coal-mining industry, will be in my hands fairly soon."

Mr. David Grenfell (Gower): ". . . What is the use of coming here today with window-dressing, asking for legal confirmation of a programme which, ostensibly, commenced three years ago, but has led to no result at all? . . .

"It is no use throwing across the Floor of the House cheap and shabby gibes at the miners—yes, and sometimes at the coal-

owners, too. I know how little the responsibility falls on both sets of people, if conditions are fundamentally bad. If conditions are bad, no coal-owners or miners can solve the problem."

Wing-Commander James (Wellingborough): ". . . Judged by the results, I pray heaven it will not be allowed to exist in the post-war period . . .

"I have made the statement that the Ministry has fallen down completely on this job. Let me justify that statement. I have taken the trouble to get out the official references for each figure, which I shall give. The picture is a most gloomy one. In 1943, 10,000 more men produced 12,000,000 tons of coal less than in 1941. If we carry the comparison on to 1944, then comparing 1944 with 1943 we find that a further 2500 more men were employed and that 9,000,000 tons less was produced. The decline has been continuous. Comparing 1944 with 1941 we find that with 12,500 more men nearly 21,000,000 tons less coal has been produced."

Mr. Austin Hopkinson (Mossley): "Will the hon. and gallant Gentleman give the House the corresponding figures for the last period of coal control in the last war? Exactly the same results were obtained. The longer control went on and the more men we employed the less coal was raised. Exactly the same thing has happened again. Therefore, it is unfair to condemn the Minister for carrying out a policy which was a Government policy and had already been proved to be rotten."

Wing-Commander James: "I am referring to the system and not to the Minister . . ."

Mr. Shinwell: "Is not the hon. and gallant Member just being polite and no more?"

Wing-Commander James: "Not at all. It is the vicious system of Government

Significant Political Pointers

In an article in "The Australian Quarterly," back in 1943, Professor Giblin outlined the general plan designed by himself and other professors for further enslaving the Australian people. Professor Giblin made it perfectly clear that, so far as he and his fellow-plotters are concerned, "It is certain that some greater public control of economic activity has come to stay as a permanent feature of every country's economy."

But he foresaw the difficulties of maintaining bureaucratic controls under peace conditions: "Sectional interests, affected by controls, will work for the abolition on high public grounds of curtailing bureaucracy and stemming the tide of socialisation. The danger will be of it becoming a political issue."

That is exactly what social crediters must do before the next Federal elections: make the professors' bureaucracy the major political issue. Without their bureaucratic staffs, the professors and their fellow-conspirators will be rendered comparatively harmless. This matter requires YOUR urgent attention.

* * * * *

"Their main objective, therefore, is to

Facts About Factories

Factories employing 101 or more people represent only 4.8 p.c. of the total factories in the Commonwealth, but they employ 61.3 p.c. of all factory employees.

Their development has received tremendous impetus from the war.

In 1938-39 there were 946 of such factories, employing 272,022 people.

In 1942-43 the number had risen by 332, to 1278, and employees by 197,153, to 469,175.

Factories employing fewer than four people are still the most numerous at 8744, or 33.1 p.c., but they employ the second smallest number of people at 17,292, or 22 p.c.

The number of factories employing up to 20 people has declined, because expansion has taken them into the higher field.

The greatest gain, both in the number of factories and employees, was in the larger undertakings.

—"New Era," Sydney, 27/4/45.

take everything from the individual, vest it in an untouchable organisation, the larger the better, and thus change the choice of minor tyrannies, which are vulnerable, into an over-riding single tyranny, which is invulnerable. Taxation is the primary tool by which to attain this desired end, but restrictive Law, and in particular Licence Law, is a valuable auxiliary. But Law is the Agency both of Taxation and Licensing."—C. H. Douglas, in "Where-soever the Carcass Is."

Mr. Curtin and his socialist colleagues wholeheartedly support the above programme. Mr. Curtin is most emphatic that there can be no general reduction in taxation:

"I could see some point if reducing taxation was necessary to stimulate employment, but the men are not now available for the jobs offering. So there is no point in reducing taxation and increasing the use of Treasury bills. That is the type of finance with which even the Sane Finance League would agree."

Of course they agree with you, John! No one who has made a study of financial policy would now claim that they ever seriously disagree with you.

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The following is portion of a resolution passed in the Perth Town Hall in 1932: "That the monetary system must provide for the passive displacement of men by machines, by allowing the increased leisure" (Continued on page 3)

control which is to blame and not the unfortunate Minister who has to try to administer an unworkable system."

Mr. Shinwell: "This is a matter of high principle. I am not making any attack upon the hon. and gallant Member. The Minister must accept responsibility or divest himself of it. If he is dissatisfied with the control measures to which the hon. Member for Mossley (Mr. A. Hopkinson) has referred he must say: 'I cannot accept this position and I resign.' Surely, that is the right course."

Mr. Erskine-Hill: "Is the hon. Member saying that he approves of the figures that have been given and the results that have been obtained?"

Mr. Shinwell: "Not at all. Far from that being the case it seems to me that the whole case rests on this: that if it is desired that the Department should continue the existence of the Department must be justified, and it can only be judged by its results."

Wing-Commander James: ". . . The figures that I have given are all taken from official records and are a most terrible commentary on the efficiency of State control. Every assurance has been belied. Why, when this has happened, should we accept more control? Surely the whole

development, of the war has shown that State control is a failure and the sooner we abolish the Ministry . . . the better."

Mr. Collindridge (Barnsley): ". . . This question of coal is not merely a war question. Speaking in my own constituency a few days ago I said that if Britain was to be successful after the war, we had primarily to deal with the question of coal. It is the basis of all we produce, and unless we solve the problem, we shall be in great difficulties. I expected some explanation of how the decline in output could be dealt with. We have had this brain wave emanating from the Department that we should go on a 12-day fortnight, go for the clearing of the coalface daily and work one Sunday in four. If ever there was a case of the mountain having conceived and brought forth a mouse it is to be found in suggestions made to the country and to the mining industry in particular on this subject. By the sheer futility of these suggestions, the Ministry has come into more disrepute than any Government Department that I know of. I am sorry about it, because I want the Department to be a success. I am not asking for its discontinuance."

"I have been a miner, and I know too (Continued on page 2)

NOTES on the NEWS

The impudent action of Jewish organisations seeking to obtain special representation at the San Francisco Conference is nicely rebuked by Sir Isaac Isaacs in the Melbourne "Argus" of April 30. He points out, inter alia, that, "The San Francisco Conference is a congress of self-governing nations. They severally speak and vote for all their citizens without discrimination . . . The Jews of Britain, Australia, Russia, America and the rest are represented by the respective delegations as fully as their fellow-citizens. . . . A special Jewish delegation, to sit as a nation, would be a contradiction, and in view of Moslem antagonism, a dangerous one." He also gave some good advice to Jews on the question of loyalties, which, he says, "may be plural provided they do not conflict." It was a valuable and timely criticism—and it is to be hoped that Sir Isaac is not labelled "anti-Semitic a result."

DUMBARTON DANGERS: It has been reported that hundreds of amendments to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals were pouring in at San Francisco, and that opposition to the so-called "Security" Organisation is taking shape. One American group, headed by Senator Bushfield, opposes the voting formula on the ground that "it puts three big Powers above the law." This group also contends that "the League consequently becomes impotent to prevent a major conflict and becomes an agency for policing smaller countries, to enable big ones to run the world." The Chicago "Tribune" says that "the situation will logically result in an armament race between Britain, America and Russia." Perhaps later on, Germany, Italy, Japan and others may also create a World "Security" Council! So far, the Conference seems more interested in framing legislation against the countries that have defeated Hitlerism than against enemy countries.

TAXATION TROUBLES: Opposing the idea of "zoned" tax reductions, non-Labor Federal Members are seeking a general reduction, especially on incomes up to £1000 per year. Strangely enough the Labor stalwarts strongly oppose this, although it embraces the workers, whom they pretend to represent. Primary producers' representatives seek a special reduction for farmers, and businessmen are pressing for special concessions on bad debts and sales-tax burdens. Making these sectional approaches makes it possible for each section to be played against the others; this could be eliminated if all sections united against their common enemy—taxation. It should be possible to unite all these sections on a demand for an immediate reduction of, say, 25% in direct taxation and 25% in indirect taxation, with the provision that all future proposals for additional taxation must be submitted to the people by referendum. A lead along these lines should receive solid public support.

HOUSING HORRORS: A discharged serviceman with over three years' service to his credit, as a reward is compelled to live in a garage with his wife and four children aged from five to eleven, and there's likely to be another very soon. In addition to serving his country, he has also answered the populate-or-perish propaganda. And now he has to fight those who promised him a square deal at home—he has to defeat the political humbugs and the bureaucrats whose regulations prevent houses being built. This is only one of thousands of cases, which embitter men and women and make them wonder how Hitlerism became established in their own country while our soldiers were overseas fighting it. It is a distressing thought that these heroes have yet to defeat the local army of bureaucrats in order to win the peace.

TWO-UP TRAILERS: While gunmen, thugs and thieves are rampant, policemen's

time is being devoted to spying on and arresting unofficial bookmakers and "two-up" players. In Adelaide recently twenty-six aborigines had £48 in fines and £14 in costs mulcted from them. It appears that the game took place in a camp, and no evidence was produced to show that the players were interfering with anyone, or that they were compelled to play. Some native women were also exercising their individual choice as to how they spent their own money, and the police say they were using their child-endowment money (presumably such money is identifiable!). The magistrate, after relieving them of their money (child-endowment money included), fatuously advised them to use their money to better advantage, and promised them goal for the next offence. Good old democracy!

"FEED AMERICA FIRST": A Washington source reports a well organised revolt developing in Congress against the Lease-Lend administration. The slogan is "Feed America First." One statement of the organisers is that "U.S. soldiers in the Pacific seldom see butter and fresh meat, and they want to know where 175,000,000 lbs. of butter and a million tons of meat exported for relief purposes went." U.N.R.R.A., alarmed at the revolt, hastily issued figures purporting to show that the consumption of food per head had actually increased. It is interesting to note press reports that our own troops seldom saw the food that our Planners assured us went to the forward areas. It is time for an account of the food production which apparently neither the troops nor the civilians (Continued on page 2.)

More Officials, Less Production

In the British House of Commons on January 16 Sir W. Smithers asked the Minister of Fuel and Power how many officials were employed in the Mines Department in 1941, and how many were employed in his Ministry at the latest available date.

Major Lloyd George: "At the beginning of 1941 the staff employed by the Mines Department numbered 1177. At the beginning of last December the staff employed in my Ministry numbered 5157. My hon. Friend will no doubt recollect that when the Ministry of Fuel and Power was formed it took over many functions in addition to those of the previous Mines Department. The staff taken over was approximately 3625, the largest block of staff being in the Regional Petroleum Offices."

Sir W. Smithers: "But can the Minister not see that in proportion to the increase in the number of officials, the production goes down?"

