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SIXPENCE WEEKLY

The Liberals and Price-Subsidies

A Change of Front

It appears that Mr. Menzies is determined to continue paving the way for his own defeat. Although his "come back" was widely hailed as an example of his political courage and wisdom, there is every sign that his second period as Prime Minister will be an even greater disaster than was his first. He appears to have forgotten nothing and learnt nothing during his long years in the Opposition. Already he has made major surrenders to the Socialist planners. And every new retreat makes it increasingly difficult for a stand to be made.

If the Menzies Government is to be successful in challenging Socialist strategy, which creates and exploits situations all designed to continue the centralisation of power, it must sooner or later face up to the problem of rising prices. Inflation is the rock upon which the present Government will come to disaster. And the Socialists and Communists are well aware of this fact. Every new increase in prices—and the increases are now taking place almost daily—creates ideal conditions in which the Communists can operate. We predict that increasing inflation will inevitably lead to increasing industrial unrest as the workers, misled by their Communist and other "leaders," strive by strikes and similar methods to increase their wages to keep pace with rising prices.

Hard Work

While the present inflationary financial rules are maintained, Mr. Menzies and Mr. Casey are merely adding fuel to the flames of discontent by telling people that only by working harder can prices be reduced. Increased production by the individual will only be obtained when the individual obtains a worthwhile increased reward for his efforts. He sees no value in increasing his effort when the value of his money is progressively destroyed by inflation, and when taxation also still takes far too much of any increased earnings. There is plenty of hard work still being done in Australia, and if Mr. Casey, who only last Sunday appealed for harder work, would care to take a look around over the weekends he will find that a lot of this hard work is being done by individuals for their own direct benefit. For example, the Taxation Monopolists do not take any of the benefits.

Policy Statements

The decentralisation of credit control by the introduction of a general price-subsidy scheme should be the Federal Government's first major assault upon the inflation menace and a necessary preliminary to the defeat of the Socialists and Communists. We may be wrong, but we have good evidence to suggest that just prior to and just after their electoral victory on

December 10, many Liberal and Country Party leaders felt that price-subsidies were an essential part of any anti-inflationary campaign. As Leader of the Country Party, Mr. Fadden made it perfectly clear that his Party was committed to a re-introduction of price-subsidies.

The Melbourne *Sun* of October 20 of last year reported Mr. Menzies as having said at a press Conference in Canberra:

"The problem of arresting inflation would be a feature of Liberal policy . . . The Federal Government abandoned the very price subsidies which were operating against an increase in living costs. The Government tries to blame the States and infer that Federal control over prices would have kept prices down . . . If the cost of production rises so does the price of the article, unless somebody steps in and pays the difference to protect the customer. That somebody can only be the Government."

It was inferred during the Election Campaign that the question of subsidising basic items in the economy would be undertaken by a Liberal-Country Party Government. The Chifley Government was attacked both in speeches and in advertisements for having abolished price-subsidies.

In a press statement issued on January 22 of this year, the Liberal Premier of Victoria, who presumably knows what policies the Federal Liberals propose, said that the Victorian Government would ask that the Federal Government restore subsidies on vital consumer goods. He said: "Substantial subsidies from the Commonwealth are the only means at the moment by which retail costs can be controlled."

Following Mr. Hollway's statement, the following news item appeared in the Melbourne *Sun* of January 26: "As a first step in bringing value back into the pound, the Federal Government is likely soon to subsidise some commodities in the cost-of-living index. Cabinet plans to begin its anti-inflation drive, in fulfilment of election pledges, on February 7."

"Appointment of a Ministerial economic policy committee was announced today by the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies). The committee, he said, would work next week

with a team of experts so that the Government could formulate a policy on price subsidies at once. . . . It was learned officially today that under the new subsidy system no attempt will be made to fix a price ceiling because this might inflate the Budget while wages and other industrial costs were unpegged."

The "Experts"

But it is now apparent that any good intentions Mr. Menzies and his colleagues may have had were countered by the arguments of the economic "experts," most of them openly declared Socialists. There is therefore only one answer to the situation:

(Continued on page 2)

OUR POLICY

1. The preservation of Australia's sovereignty as a part of the British Empire, and the exposure of all internal and external groups which attack that sovereignty.
2. The preservation and extension of genuine local government.
3. The preservation and strengthening of all Constitutional safeguards for the purpose of protecting fundamental individual rights.
4. The encouragement of all activities designed to bring Governments under more effective control by the electors.
5. The preservation and extension of genuine free, competitive enterprise and private ownership, and opposition to all Monopoly, whether it be "private" or State.
6. The support of a financial policy which will (a) permit free enterprise to make available to all individuals an increasing standard of living and greater leisure for cultural pursuits; (b) result in no further increase in the community's indebtedness and the sound business practice of gradually reducing existing debt.
7. Recognising that the basis of any sound economy is agriculture, the encouragement of agricultural policies which will ensure the preservation and building up of soil fertility by organic farming and gardening; and the prevention of soil erosion and the protection of forests and watersheds.

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

TO THE POINT

No Policy Change

In its editorial of March 17, the Melbourne Age comments upon the Menzies Government's Banking Legislation as follows:

"The present Government has been well advised not to carry its electoral victory on banking to extreme or vindictive lengths. The reconstituted controlling authority effects very little change in substance. Previously the Governor of the bank exercised single authority with the guidance of economic advisers, subject to a veto power by the Federal Treasurer in the event of a fundamental difference with the Government on major questions of policy. Now the governor becomes chairman, retaining his advisers as co-directors in conjunction with an equal number of other directors who are to be representatives of the general community but not associated with any other bank. Any serious dispute between the Board and the Treasurer will be subject to the adjudication of Parliament.

"For practical purposes there does not seem to be much difference between the two arrangements. Neither of the governors who controlled the bank since 1945 had any important differences with the former Treasurer (Mr. Chifley). They were his consultants and advisers and their advice was always respected and usually accepted. There is no reason to suppose that similar relations will not exist with the present Ministry. Half of the members of the reconstituted Board are to be Government officials, preserving continuity of policy—properly so, since a great part of the bank's business is related to Government departments."

When the Melbourne Age comments as above on the Menzies Government's Banking Legislation, it is evident that the new Government is as much committed to a centralised credit policy as was the Chifley Government.

Dr. Fuchs

"No more foreigners to handle British secrets." Thus a recent press headline following the conviction for espionage of Dr. Klaus Fuchs. The British Government must be castigated for this dastardly act of "racial discrimination!" Once foreigners in general are prevented from participating in our military secrets, it is only another step and we will refuse to allow them to govern us. This is, of course, as all students of Zionist-Communist literature know, "Fascism," which cannot be tolerated in a "democracy."

Community and State

"The particular evil of this century is precisely this confusion of the community with the State, which is only a part of the community and its life. Everybody is increasingly reduced to politics . . ."

-The Tablet, England, Jan. 21, 1950.

Mr. Eden

The following extract from Lieut-General Sir Gifford Martel's book, *An Outspoken soldier*, is a striking commentary on the

evil policies supported during the war by Mr. Anthony Eden, the man who is generally recognised as the next leader of the British "Conservatives":

"Before this conference (the Moscow Conferences where the Allied Foreign Ministers met and where the United Nations Organisations was inaugurated—Ed. N.T.), I had pressed our Embassy in Moscow to try and get something settled about the questions of our personnel in North Russia and all the difficulties which the Russians had put in our way. The Ambassador had replied that all these matters would be dealt with quite easily at the Moscow Conference, where we would be represented in considerable strength. I found, however, that Mr. Eden had no intention of raising any controversial points. Whenever a point was raised to which the Russians objected it was dropped at once. As a result the Conference produced great goodwill, but I really could not see that we had made any headway at all. All the difficult problems, such as those dealing with Poland, had been left severely alone. On the last day of the Conference I was walking along with Mr. Eden and he told me that he realised that he had not raised a number of important points which I have stressed, but that he felt sure that as a result of the goodwill he had produced we would now obtain all we wanted in these directions from the Russians. I replied that we would naturally follow his goodwill policy quite loyally, but that I did not believe that we would get anything out of the Russians from this policy, Mr. Eden was very annoyed and said: That is the most hopeless line to take. Of course you will not succeed if you have no faith in this goodwill policy.' I replied that I was entitled to express my own views and they turned out to be only too terribly true. What a difference it would have made if we had only taken a firm line with the Russians right from the start." Pp. 255-56.

Electricity Price Rise

Further proposed increases in the Victorian State Electricity Commission's charges for light and power are not surprising. Apart from the fact that the bigger it gets, the more inefficient it becomes, the S.E.C. is, although a Socialist enterprise—owned by the people, you know—subject to the inflationary price rules which affect all industry.

It is significant that there have been no Communist-inspired outcries against the S.E.C. These outcries only take place when the private gas companies, far more efficient than the S.E.C., dare to increase their prices. Even the daily press usually attacks the gas companies for increasing prices. Why no attack upon the S.E.C.?

Gold Insanity

A recent press headline reads: "World gold output is higher." Now isn't that encouraging. A yellow metal is dug out of numerous holes in the ground and placed in other holes in the ground; usually vaults like the one at Fort Knox, U.S.A. Does any sane person believe that the progress of the human race depends upon the amount of gold that can be discovered?

UN-British Broadcasting Corporation

"The most un-British concern in the Empire," is the way Lord Craigavon, head of the Listeners' Association of Britain, sums up the British Broadcasting Corporation. This is a disquieting view of an institution, incorporated by Royal Charter, whose voice is the voice of Britain the world over, and whose publications boast circulations running into millions. But the Listeners' Association pulls no punches in its campaign to reorganise Britain's broadcasting system, and abolish the monstrous B.B.C. monopoly.

Lord Craigavon certainly makes out a strong case for a less internationally minded and more British B.B.C. He produces plenty of evidence that, in its vaunted anxiety to be impartial, the Corporation almost leans over backwards to keep the "Soviet View" before its listeners, giving prominence to vicious and highly-colored attacks on Britain, and permitting the glorification of the Soviet and Stalinism, without comment or qualification of any kind.

More recently the attitude of the B.B.C. to the Royal Family has come under fire. There have been protests about its failure to play the National Anthem on the first birthday of Prince Charles, and the slight recognition given to the King's birthday on December 14. This was contrasted with the eight minutes' broadcast devoted, on the same day, to the 70th birthday of Stalin, a week later, which among other tributes, listed the presents he was to receive, including at least one from Britain.

Replying to these protests, the B.B.C.'s Chairman, Lord Simon, contented himself with saying that the Corporation took pride in its record in such matters, which could safely be left to its discretion. Apparently there are a good many people who think otherwise, and they are not confined to the B.B.C.'s home listeners. —The Editor, *The Listener In*, Melbourne, Feb. 4.

We understand a check-up is being made on the Australian Broadcasting Commission, particularly in regard to the amount of time given to Communists and fellow travellers.

"SOCIAL CREDIT AND CATHOLICISM"

By George-Henri Levesque, O.P., Professor of Economics. Laval and Montreal Universities, Dominican House of Studies, Ottawa.

Introduction by Eric D. Butler.

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LIBERALS AND PRICE SUBSIDY

(Continued from page 1)

Public opinion must be informed and directed with such pressure on the individual Member of Parliament that he will compel his Government to, stand up to the "experts" and force a reversal of the present policy, which if continued, can only lead to greater and greater disasters. Mr. Menzies might recall, while he still has time, the old Chinese Proverb, which states that it is too late to consult the Book of Dates when a thunderbolt has struck. The thunderbolt is already starting to strike.

Mrs. Vasey and War Widows

(A letter to the Editor from BRUCE H. BROWN)

Sir,

During recent years Mrs. G. A. Vasey, widow of a courageous and gallant Australian General, has been a great worker on behalf of war widows. Her unselfish and untiring efforts have been worthy of better results, and it is because of the unexpected announcement in "The Argus" of 13/3/50 of her intention to throw in the towel that I am taking the liberty of offering comment. The report in "The Argus" says that Mrs. Vasey "is so dismayed by the Federal Government's coldness to her plea . . . that she is preparing to give up the fight." It is sincerely to be hoped that she will not do so.

Mrs. Vasey's efforts have been directed specially to two aspects of the war widows' case—(i) the despicable snooping to which they have been subject, and (ii), the severity of their struggle to live on such meagre pensions. As to the snooping, no decent Australian would be a party to it, but we have to face the fact that some of the provisions of the laws as passed by Parliament provide the excuse for suitably minded officials to do that sort of thing. One of the best ways to stop it is to expose it, and it is a good thing that the war widows have an organisation with an able spokeswoman like Mrs. Vasey, who can get co-operation from the press. I feel sure that Mrs. Vasey has had some success in the matter of stopping the snooping on war widows, and it is possible that she would achieve even greater success if she adopted different tactics. It is a mistake to concentrate on the Prime Minister, or on prominent members of the Cabinet. The ordinary Member of Parliament is the one to tackle, and he should be tackled by the war widows in his own electorate. The ordinary members of Parliament give directions to the Cabinet, and if they do not get what their constituents want then they can dismiss the Government, or can themselves be dismissed by their constituents. In the case of the Prime Minister, he is a member of a safe seat and can be dealt with only by the people of his own electorate.

Laski and Casey

On August 1, 1945, just after the election of the British Socialists to power, the then Chairman of the British Labour Party, Professor Harold J. Laski, announced in a broadcast to the U.S.A. that the programme of the Attlee Government "would follow the broad outline of the Tennessee Valley Authority Scheme."

Now, as Mr. R. G. Casey, who obviously feels that his mission in life is to organise the whole of Australia from Canberra, is an admirer of the Tennessee Valley Socialist project, do the other Members of his Party feel that following the policies of a leading Socialist like Professor Laski is the way to defeat Socialism in Australia? Or, like the electors, are they merely pawns being used to further ambitions of power-lusting planners?

We would be pleased to publish any replies to the above questions. Has any Member of the Federal Liberal and Country Parties even the courage to answer them?

Regarding the amount of the war widows' pension, I am afraid these long-suffering women have little hope of effective improvement until a more intelligent approach is secured to the vital question of Government finance. The pensions must be paid in money, and under present arrangements the Government supply of money is limited to what it can thief from the people through taxation, or obtain from a small section of the community by way of loans. In other words, it does not produce any money, but merely joins in the bitter struggle experienced by ordinary men and women to collect a disproportionate share from the limited supply of money as dictated and controlled by Government and non-Government agencies.

The community never gets any financial credit for public assets and community development. It gets only financial debt. The certified professors, employed by governments of all political colours as financial advisers, talk glibly of the economic "law" under which "for every credit there must be a corresponding debit," but none of these great fellows ever say a word about the equally necessary "law" that for every debit there must be a corresponding credit. It is the failure to recognise this fundamental aspect that brings about the present insanity called the economic system. Governments take no financial credit for bridges, railways, highways, waterways, footpaths, schools, aerodromes, and all the other things that go to make up organised society in a civilised state, not only as at the time produced, but also as at the increasing utility value from year to year. This is the basis of what is called the "national credit" from which adequate pensions should be available without any question of taxation or deprivation of any other social service. Mr. Menzies and Mr. Casey profess not to understand this, and are accepting advice from men who do not want them to understand it. For this reason I suggest to Mrs. Vasey and the war widows of Australia that they by-pass the Commonwealth Ministers and concentrate

Immense Influence

. . . Hiss either had great power to fascinate or he belonged to the inner circle of politicians who exert an immense influence in world affairs. Judging by reports and comments in the British Press, for instance, one would imagine that Whittaker Chambers was the villain and Hiss the very parfait gentile knight. Even where there was no apparent disposition to conceal Hiss' guilt the commentators besought us to weep because of his "tragedy." One periodical—the *Spectator*—went farther. In an editorial note it affected to know better than the twelve men and women of the jury who, after hearing all the evidence and all the arguments, had found him guilty. The verdict, said our contemporary, should have been "not proven." There is, it would seem, a fashionable political world transcending parties and frontiers. Those who belong to it never lack for friends.

—*Truth* (England), Feb. 3, 1950.

on the ordinary members of the Federal Parliament, ever remembering that these members are paid servants, and that it is their duty to see that the reasonable requests of the electors are complied with. I also suggest that war widows try them selves to obtain a better understanding of this financial question and then assist in spreading that understanding to other sections of the community.

Are You a Direct Subscriber?

At present the *New Times* is reorganising as a preliminary to an expansion drive which it is hoped to get under way within the next few weeks. Every supporter of the *New Times* who is not at present a direct subscriber can help our expansion drive by becoming a direct subscriber—if his newsagent is making no attempt to display the *New Times* and thus encourage new readers.

Needless to say, we desire all those supporters who get their *New Times* through their local State Electoral Campaign or Social Credit organisation to continue doing so. We are mainly concerned with eliminating newsagents who will not co-operate with the *New Times*.

The direct subscriber is the most profitable financially to the *New Times*, and also requires the minimum of office organisation

Action Group Financial Appeal

Further Support Required

Mr. John Browne, Honorary Secretary of the Social Credit Action Group, reports that a further £40 has been subscribed to the Group's 1950 financial appeal. Approximately £140 has been now subscribed, but this is only a small portion of the total required for this year's big campaigning.

All those *New Times* readers who intend to support the appeal are urged to do so immediately. Plans for campaigning are being held up until the appeal is finalised. The growing inflation is driving more and more people to an earnest consideration of the price-subsidy and National Dividend idea. It is hoped to produce and widely distribute a special brochure on the issue as a preliminary to further action designed to direct public attention against the individual Members of Parliament.

Donations for Action Group should be forwarded to Mr. John Browne, the Hon. Secretary, Social Credit Action Group, c/o Box 1226L., G.P.O., Melbourne.

"New Times," March 31, 1950 — Page 3

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Perversion of Price-Subsidy Idea

For some time past a number of news items from the U.S.A. have stressed the growing food gluts in America. The following is a typical report, from the Melbourne "Age's" Special Correspondent in Washington:

"In a huge limestone cave near Atchison, Kansas, there lay this week sufficient food to supply 1,000,000 hungry people with generous breakfasts for five months. Yet this cave held only a fraction of the surplus food that the United States Government has built up in recent months. In other caves, warehouses, abandoned factory buildings, plane hangars and even in the bottoms of laid-up Liberty ships, the surpluses are piled in the greatest quantities of stored food the world has ever seen.

"They have been gathered through the Government's policy of buying food out of the market to keep farm prices up . . ."

The U.S.A. Government is spending tens of millions of dollars to subsidise production of food. Undoubtedly a considerable portion of the "price supports" as they are called in the U.S.A., has been made available by an expansion of financial credit.

Now, in case it should be claimed that the U.S.A. food situation is a condemnation of the policy of price-subsidisation, which we have consistently maintained is the only answer to inflation, we desire to draw attention to the fact that we disagree strongly with the policy being pursued in the U.S.A. This policy is a perversion of the price-subsidy idea.

Assuming that all the American people are consuming all the food they desire, which is far from certain, it is obvious that portion of their financial credit is being used to subsidise food production which is not required locally and which, because of "sane finance" cannot be sold to the peoples of other countries.

One of the most tragic aspects of this insane policy is the tremendous strain placed upon American soil fertility, which has already been dangerously reduced by bad farming practices in the past. The subsidising, either directly or indirectly, of production, which the individual has not freely indicated he desires, has already resulted in the sabotage of many of the world's resources like iron and petrol. This has been bad enough, but when the destruction of the very basis of life itself, soil fertility, is subsidised, it is surely perversion of the worst type. It recalls to mind the old saying that the Devil is God upside down.

The major idea underlying the price-subsidy mechanism we advocate is that every improvement in the methods of production should be passed directly to the individual via a progressive reduction in the price level, thus automatically increasing his real purchasing power. But it is important to stress the fact that price-subsidies should only be paid on that production required by the consumer and bought at the retail counter. The only sane purpose of production is consumption, and under no circumstances should the individual's financial credit be used to subsidise production, which he does not require.

If the Americans adopted this price-subsidy idea, their production of foodstuffs would be reduced to the stage where it met genuine American requirements. If all production were subordinated to the individual's genuine desires, modern production methods would enable a drastic reduction in working hours and more time in which to enjoy what had been produced.

Magna Charta

About the time our copy of Magna Charta appeared in *The Vigilant*, it happened that a broadcast on the very subject was given over a local national station. It was the first of a series of talks whose purpose appears to be to debunk many of our cherished traditional beliefs as well as some current ones. The first talk, on Magna Charta, was given by Professor Portus, of Adelaide University.

The following letter of protest was sent at once to *The Advertiser*: —

—In these days of prevailing and ever-growing threat to our democratic institutions, it is distressing to hear, as I did the other evening, a well-known professor of Adelaide University take advantage of the freedom of the air to broadcast on a national station what can only be called an attack on that chief guardian of our liberties, Magna Charta.

This teacher of the young idea, this moulder of minds, casts doubts upon the validity of Magna Charta for the present day. He jeered at the venerable document as a mere settlement of disputes between the barons, the church, and King John. It was not, he asserted, a charter of freedom for the common people of England.

As Professor of Political Science and History, he ought to know that in those feudal times there were no "common people" in the sense of the Communist "proletariat." There were the barons and the serfs, but there were also the freemen, the small freeholders of land—the "yeomen of England"—and the merchants and craftsmen.

It was the latter classes, as well as the barons and church, to whom the Great Charter applied, and if the professor will read its articles, as I have done, he will find they set out and define a basis of inviolable rights, not merely for the church, and barons, but for all freemen and their heirs for ever.

It ill benefits a teacher of British history thus to scoff at and try to sap the foundation of our constitutional law, even by suggesting, as he did, that freedom itself has no definite meaning. Is the professor aware that he is using the weapons of the internationalist Fabians and Communists? I am, etc., MARY H. GRAY.

The letter did not appear. An inquiry many weeks later brought the reply that the letter had been "rejected."

A week later the same professor followed up his Magna Charta broadcast by some more debunking about the Mother of Parliaments. Can nothing be done to stop the A.B.C. allowing these men—for he is not the only one—to undermine our faith in our democratic institutions and standards? For that is what they are out to do.

- The Vigilant, Adelaide, February 1.

Prophecy

In an editorial of October 21 of last year, we made the following observation concerning the real Socialist menace: "It is obvious... that the mere act of voting against the Chifley Government on December 10 will not defeat Socialism."

Events at Canberra are bearing out our contention.

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New M.H.R. Attacks Centralisation

Challenging Address by Mr. D. DRUMMOND

It is news indeed when a Federal Member of Parliament makes a plea for the reduction of the Federal Government's powers in favour of greater powers for State Governments. Mr. D. Drummond, newly-elected Country Party Member for New England, N.S.W., is to be warmly congratulated on courageously drawing attention to the basic constitutional issue in his maiden speech at Canberra on March 7.

We have watched Mr. Drummond's writings for many years — his book, "Australia's Changing Constitution," being a real classic — and we do hope that he will, as a Federal Member, continue the fight for genuine local Government which he waged so consistently as a State Member in the N.S.W. Parliament. If there are sufficient men like Mr. Drummond in the new Federal Government, they may, with the support of electors, yet stay the deadly policies of centralism, which are slowly enslaving the Australian people.

As Mr. Drummond's speech was inadequately reported in the daily press of the big cities, we have much pleasure in publishing in full the most important parts of it. We trust that our readers will ensure that Mr. Drummond's remarks are brought to the attention of responsible members of the community.

Mr. Drummond said:

I propose to speak on Australia in relation to the British Commonwealth and on proposals for the alteration of the Constitution. This is an historic meeting of the Australian Parliament. It is the first meeting of an enlarged House, which has undergone the first serious alteration since this Commonwealth was founded some 50 years ago. I come from the oldest Parliament in Australia to the youngest Parliament in Australia. After nearly 30 years in the Parliament of New South Wales I come to the Parliament of the Commonwealth. I hope that before I leave this Parliament I shall have assisted in removing that stigma very considerably. I shall endeavour to elaborate that remark as I proceed.

I suggest that the time has arrived for a complete review of the relationship of the Commonwealth and the States. On that historic occasion in 1927 when this Parliament was opened by His Majesty the King, who was then Duke of York, I approached the portals here with another member of the State Parliament who afterwards became the Minister for Lands in New South Wales, and a flunkey at the door, dressed in knee breeches and all the other appurtenances of his office, said to us, not very politely, "Where are your passes?" We produced our parliamentary passes and said, "We are State members." His reply, given in unmistakable terms, was, "State members are of no account here." That reply had a great deal of significance in the years that followed. I turned to my colleague and said, "Do not let us argue with this low fellow," and we retreated in such good order as we might. Having watched the military maneuvers on the hill behind, we made a strategic descent on Parliament from the back of the building and walked in the back entrance. Nobody challenged us. So my first attempt to enter the Federal Parliament was repulsed with indignity and my first entrance was secured by strategic maneuver. On this occasion, I come with the full support of the very important electorate of New England . . .

I did not tell that story of my first descent into this House purely for the pur-

pose of amusing honorable members or the people who may be listening to the broadcast of these proceedings. I told it because I have found that it is symptomatic of the attitude of the Commonwealth to the States over the 50 years of federation. I believe that the nature of that approach has been determined by childhood, now verging into adolescence, and I trust that in the years that are to come the Commonwealth and its great Public Service will have a new conception of the relationship of the Commonwealth and the States and will realize that it is a great partnership—a partnership that can be operated by financial and intellectual leadership from the Commonwealth, working out through the machinery of the States and the State public services, which have shown exceptional capacity to serve and co-operate, particularly during the war years.

I am greatly interested in the intention of the Government, expressed in the Governor-General's Speech, to bring about certain amendments of the Constitution. It is proposed that the Constitution shall be amended to give the people the power to say whether the Government shall socialize industry or not. Having had some 30 years' experience with lawyers as well as with laymen, I say that the Government has a man-sized task in devising something through which the lawyers will not drive a coach and four. Insofar as this Government can take from this or any other Parliament the right to impose socialization or anything else against the will of the people, and give to the people the right to say what they shall do, I am at one with it. I believe in trusting the people. I believe that there is an inherent core of common sense with the people. I have seen governments representing both sides of politics go to the country with proposals which have been rejected but which their leaders in the light of events of years afterwards, were prepared to admit were mistakes. Although the government had thought the proposals were the best under the circumstances, the people had acted wisely.

I want to refer to one or two other amendments of the Constitution to which I

sincerely trust this Government will be able to give serious attention within the next two or three years. The first of these is the financial independence of the States. Immediately I mention that, somebody wants to know if I want to force on the people all the evils of dual taxation, and so on. I do not consider that the two things are inseparably bound up, but I do say that one thing that is inseparably bound up with my statement is the fact that unless the States are financially independent we can eliminate them as an effective part of the Commonwealth partnership. The federal compact can be destroyed by a process of attrition, which is well understood by those who control the power of the purse. For those who believe in federation and democracy as well as those who believe that the centralization of government is the beginning of dictatorship, this is a most important fact. Karl Marx, when addressing the German Communists in 1848, told them that at the time of the re-organization of government in Germany the democrats would strive for a federal system of government. In brief, he said, "You must oppose them because only by the concentration of the powers of government in one place can you hope to secure the control of the German nation or any other nation." When I look at Australia and the work of the architects of the Constitution and realize that they themselves made provision for the continuance of this federation unless the people by specific vote so amended their Constitution as to destroy it, I must say that one of the most important things to which this Government, or any government, can direct its attention is the early strengthening and expansion of the federal system. I am irrevocably opposed to the methods that were advocated by Marx, who realized with his brilliant mind that the Communists could gain control of a nation through a concentration of the powers of government in one parliament. I am opposed to such methods, not merely because I want to contest the doctrines of Marx, but because I believe in democracy and have faith in it. The powers of government must be decentralized if democracy is to flourish. Every intelligent man who considers this problem must understand that, although decentralization of administration has many faults, which render it liable to failure, decentralization of political power under a safeguarding federal constitution is, as Marx foresaw, an effective way of stemming the rising tide of Communist ideals. I should give all my support to communism if I believed that it would bring greater happiness to the human race, but I have found no reason for believing that it would do so. On the contrary I am convinced that it would force the human race to depths of degradation and despair from which it could climb back to the bright light of freedom only with the greatest sorrow and travail. I do not wish to see this nation attempting to traverse such a dreadful path. Another point that emerges from an examination of constitutional problems is the necessity for the formation of State constitutions so as to bind State governments to courses of action that are just and equitable to all citizens. A recent court decision held that the Chifley Government's

(Continued on page 8)



Cloche Gardening

By "COBBETT"

Although cloche gardening is widely practised in Great Britain, France, and other European countries, there has been comparatively little use of cloches as yet by Australian gardeners. No doubt the greater variety of climates and longer periods of sunshine in this country have been largely responsible for the neglect of a technique for growing very late and very early vegetables. However, the use of cloches is worth investigation by all gardeners who desire to minimise, if not defeat, the handicaps of various types of weather.

Importance of Glass

Glass is a most effective material for protecting plants from wind, frosts, and excessive rain. The glass also allows the sun to pass through to warm both plants and soil. It acts as an insulator and ensures that the warmth is retained.

Glass is so effective in cloches and glass-houses because it permits short-wave radiation. Although ordinary horticultural glass prevents the passage of ultra-violet waves, these waves are not essential for plant growth, as they are for animal growth. There is, therefore, no necessity to have any special glass for permitting the passage of ultra-violet waves.

A Modern Development

Greenhouses, which can, if desired, be heated artificially, and frames, have been used for several hundred years, but cloches are a comparatively modern development in the use of glass for growing plants. While it is true that greenhouses can be used for raising vegetables and flower seedlings, to be later transplanted, it must be borne in mind that certain vegetables and flowers are better not transplanted at all, while it is generally too expensive to grow only one crop in a greenhouse.

Although frames are much cheaper than greenhouses, and are particularly valuable for raising seedlings, they also have limitations. As the light only comes from above, there is a tendency for plants to be spindly. Frames must be ventilated and watered, and, unless they are portable, the soil naturally becomes exhausted of its fertility.

Major Points

The following are the major points in favour of the cloches: They are much cheaper than either greenhouses or frames. Easily moved, they can be continually moved from crop to crop as required. This

ensures that the soil does not become exhausted by being always covered. As cloches are made entirely of glass, there is no shade—except from the wire holder—and light reaches the plants from all sides. Not being completely closed at the top, cloches are adequately ventilated. There is no necessity to water under cloches. Being narrow, the lateral movement of moisture ensures adequate moisture from outside the glass. The soil under cloches therefore never becomes caked, but retains its natural tilth. Even if watering is found necessary, water poured outside the cloches is adequate and ensures sufficient moisture under the cloches.

Frost Protection

Cloches give adequate protection against wind, heavy rain, and frosts. They are a great boon in providing protection against either late or early frosts, the terror of the market gardener. During the day—usually warm and sunny before a frost—the soil under the cloches is well warmed by the sun. The cloches retain the warmth during the night, the result being that plants under the cloches are safe. Tests have shown that the temperature under cloches may be as much as fifteen degrees higher than the temperature outside. It is, however, important to remember that frosts not only freeze the glass of the cloche, but also considerably reduce the temperature of the air within an inch or so of the glass. It is therefore essential to make certain that plants never touch the glass; that cloches of an adequate size for the type of plant are used.

Early Vegetables

Although several gardeners around Melbourne have already successfully grown lettuce and other vegetables all the year round under cloches, their main advantage is in enabling vegetables to be produced much earlier than normally. For example, over the past few years in particular, Melbourne vegetable growers have complained about the lateness of tomatoes. With the use of cloches it is possible to have tomato plants well advanced before the warm weather starts. The cloches can, of course, then be removed and used for other vegetables—although they can even be used during the summer months to hasten the ripening of the fruit if necessary.

One Melbourne gardening enthusiast has had outstanding success with watermelon growing. The cloches enable the melon vines to be sufficiently advanced by the time the really warm weather arrives that there is no trouble about the melons ripening before the autumn.

Tomato Growing

Cloches have been used successfully in England for the ripening of late tomato crops. The tomatoes are grown in the open during the late summer and the cloches are used as soon as the danger of early frosts appears. As the tomato plants are too tall to be covered even by the highest cloches, they are laid down under what is generally described as the barn-type of cloche. It is true, of course that the plants need to be trained for this purpose. However, the trouble is well repaid by the production of tomatoes at a time when they are very scarce and highly priced. As compost grown tomatoes, which have been adequately pruned, will produce up to 20 lbs. of tomatoes per plant, a comparatively small number should be sufficient for the average family's requirements.

Root Crops

Cloches are ideal for the growing of root crops like carrots, turnips, parsnips, radish and beetroot. After the ground has been prepared for seed sowing, it can be covered by the cloches for two or three weeks before the seeds are actually sown. This enables the soil to be warmed up and ensures a very quick germination of seed. It has also been found that a greater percentage of seeds germinate.

Careful Planning Required

As the continuous type of cloche must be placed end to end, only the two outer ends being covered by an upright sheet of glass, cloche gardening necessitates the garden being specially laid out in rows. The cloche garden must also be carefully planned to ensure that the rotation of crops enables the cloches to be used to the greatest advantage. The individual gardener will, of course, have to experiment and discover the most effective method for using his cloches. As cloches have been used with such outstanding success in England, where the climatic conditions are generally much severer than in most parts of Australia, there is no doubt that they should be an even greater success in Australia, where there is more sunshine, particularly during the winter months.

Cloche gardening enables the home gardener to provide himself with most vegetables all the year round, while commercial gardeners can produce for the early and late markets.

The Chase type of continuous cloche, the only commercial type of cloche available in Australia at present, consists of a specially designed wire frame, which holds two sheets of glass in the form of a tent. These tents can be placed end to end in as long a row as is desired—thus the term "continuous cloche." The wire frame permits ventilation, if necessary, at the apex of the cloche; also the removal of one side of the cloche if any weeding or other operations have to be carried out around plants.

Afforestation

The end of our existing timber resources is in sight; unless we now adopt a vigorous tree-planting policy to provide for future needs, this country faces a timber famine within 20 to 30 years. Only S. Australia has planted anything like adequate stands of timber, and, unfortunately, climate, soil, rainfall and other factors beyond human control have rendered it necessary for S.A. to plant little save *Pinus radiata*, a softwood with a limited range of usefulness and which cannot take the place of hardwoods.

Homegrown timber helped to save Britain during the last war; without the pit props needed to shore up the workings it would have been impossible to mine coal. The wonderful little Mosquito bombers were built of plywood made from timber grown in Britain. During the winter offensive Russian soldiers travelled across the snow on skis made by British workmen from ash grown in England. Hardly a stick of this timber grew in Government plantations; it was cut on those English and Scottish country estates, which derive part of their income from growing commercially useful trees. In short, timber grown by private enterprise helped to save the Old Country and it can do the same thing in Australia.

There are three ways in which private enterprise can grow timber and make it pay. The first is the community forest scheme, for which Jocelyn Henderson, of Robertson (N.S.W.) has been such a staunch advocate. This idea, though new to Australia, is quite commonplace in Europe; 66 percent of the total area of forest in Switzerland is community-owned. America adopted the same idea some 40 years ago, and now the U.S.A. has more than 1500 of these forests. On common land, State land made available for the purpose or freehold property which has been purchased, the local governing body, assisted by voluntary helpers, plants areas of forest. These serve a dual purpose by also acting as parks for recreational purposes. When the trees reach a marketable size they are sold, the area is replanted and the revenue devoted to road maintenance, thus lightening, or even obviating payment of, local rates. Thinnings from the forests during the growing period provide a local supply of firewood.

The Jura district of France shows how profitable such forests can be when they are well established. Not only do they provide free firewood for the inhabitants; the profits from the sales of timber are so big that there is a complete freedom from local rates, and every man, woman and child in a population of 10,000 receives an annual cash bonus as well.

In the low and medium-rainfall farming districts of Australia, community forests would have to be limited to indigenous hardwoods to supply the local needs in the way of firewood, posts, telegraph poles, etc., etc., of which there is now a serious shortage in some places, but any district which has a rainfall of 30 or more inches can grow really valuable timbers, such as oak, which could make good the shortage of cask-staves, black walnut for cabinet-making, ash for tool-handles, birch for plywood, poplar for the match industry and Californian redwood for doors and other interior fittings.

Another way to get trees is by land-

owners in the areas of heavy rainfall planting part of their properties with commercially valuable trees—a life-insurance type of investment for themselves or for their children. At present an immense amount of money has to be paid in taxes because landowners can't obtain the materials with which to improve their land; tree planting can solve that problem.

The best way to get millions of additional trees would be for our big industrial organisations to plant them in order to provide future supplies of raw material. The Masonite people are doing it; another fine example is provided by the Broken Hill Pty. When Essington Lewis found that there was a wartime shortage of hickory tool handles, he decided to do what all our Forestry departments had neglected—grow hickory in Australia. With seed-nuts sent from America, J. R. Goode, the company's botanist, assisted by D. Whibley, a practical horticulturist, raised sufficient hickory seedlings to start plantations and to distribute trees to landowners whose properties had the necessary good rainfall, cool climate and deep alluvial soil.

One of the most profitable of similar ventures would be to grow that valuable timber, Burma teak, in North Queensland. One has only to look at the experimental plantation on the Atherton Tableland to see that, under sound management, it could not fail. —H. A. Lindsay (S.A.), *The Bulletin*, Sydney, Mar. 15.

Every farm would be the more fertile and profitable for being rightly planted with trees. Forty years of experience, and a special study of trees in relation to climate, water supply, crops and animals, enable me to speak with sound judgment. More recently I have gathered evidence from America, the Antipodes and our own country, which confirms the great usefulness of trees to farmers.

Farmers will naturally ask what will be the capital cost and upkeep of trees? How much of my precious land will trees take up? Compared with the improvements giving no more return, trees cost little. The land they take up is much more than compensated by the improved fertility, moisture, length of season, milking, lambing and resistance to pests and diseases of crops.

Trees, strategically planted in U.S.A., enabled farmers to return to farms (which had previously become blowing deserts) within three or four years. It was reckoned that under these especially difficult conditions, 5 percent, of land in trees brought back fertility and possibility of good, mixed farming. Under British conditions 1 per cent, to 2 percent, of actual farmland should be sufficient. That is a 100-acre farm should allow 1 or 2 acres for trees. Remember, these trees, as a rule, can be placed on land not capable of cultivation. Also, the right sorts will in a very few years save money in fencing and other farm timber, and provide profitable work to men in bad weather. The cost of bought timber should make every farmer think hard. There is not the slightest doubt he could grow his own at much less cost. The odd couple of acres devoted to strategic

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shelter and other planting, will be far more than made up for by earlier crops, better germination, comfort of stock, and a lessening in pests and diseases. In fact his timber should so benefit the farmer as to cost him nothing.

Trees on farms grow much more quickly than under forestry conditions. This gives the farmer a big pull, and gives him a big lead at a time of timber shortage when prices will stay high for years. It will enable him to sell comfortably any surplus timber. There is no timber for which there will not be a future market under approaching world conditions; a far safer market than for the wrong varieties of fruit.

—*The Farmer* (England).

"Good Australians"

Albury radio retailers are concerned about the number of migrants at Bonegilla D.P. camp buying short wave sets who ask anxiously whether the set will pick up Moscow direct.

—*Sydney Century*, 17/2/50.

These are the "good Australians" who are brought out here at our expense! —H.G.

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"New Times," March 31, 1950 — Page 7

NEW M.H.R. ATTACKS CENTRALISATION

(Continued from page 5)

attempt to circumvent the Commonwealth Constitution in a certain matter relating to land was *ultra vires* the Constitution. The States are not subject to any such legal limitations. A State government can seize property upon any terms that it deems fit. It is not bound in any way to treat its citizens with justice and equity. Surely in any civilized community, provision should be made to protect every member of the community! I suggest that an amendment of the Commonwealth Constitution to enable the framing of constitutions for the States should be regarded as an urgent necessity. Pursuant to my earlier remarks concerning the necessity for expansion of the federal system and the removal from this Parliament of the stigma of being the youngest parliament in Australia, I suggest that steps be taken to modify the provisions that were embodied in the Constitution concerning the establishment of new States.

I have heard a great deal of twaddle talked about the intentions of the founders of the Constitution. The founders of the Constitution did not deal in humbug. They intended, as Sir Henry Parkes declared, that there should be a further sub-division of the existing unwieldy States. I believe that many of the evils that have hampered Australia's development have been due to the failure of Australian parliaments and the people to take advantage of the provision in the Constitution for the formation of new States. Such States should be established in areas like the New England district in northern New South Wales. That region was recommended by an eminent judge of the Supreme Court as the site for a new State. It has an area of 64,000 square miles, a population as great as that of South Australia, and, two years ago, its annual production, worth £100,000,000, was greater than that of the whole of Queensland. Yet we are compelled to put up with the inefficient system of government from a distance. We have a £250,000,000 plan for the development of Australia, which must grow into a £1,000,000,000 plan if the needs of this rising giant of a nation are to be satisfied, but if we are to succeed we must decentralize political power. Decentralisation would place in the hands of executive bodies on the spot the power to say "yea" or "nay" without reference to some distant capital. Governing bodies of that character would not be distracted, for instance, by the industrial problems that arise from the great aggregation of population in the relatively small area surrounding Port Jackson. Important local problems could be dealt with promptly and effectively by bodies with intimate knowledge of those problems.

The task of developing northern Queensland, central Queensland, northern New South Wales, southern New South Wales, and even northern Victoria should be handled on the spot by legislatures with an understanding of the needs of those areas and able to concentrate on them exclusively. The people who live in those districts have indicated, by the calibre of the representa-

tives whom they have elected to this Parliament, that they have the political capacity necessary to make such a system of state legislatures readily workable. Unfortunately, the new States project is rendered almost impossible of consummation by the nature of our Constitution. Successful efforts have been made in the part of New South Wales that I represent to stir up the public conscience on this subject, but whenever the people try to secure control of their own affairs they become enmeshed in constitutional difficulties. They should have the right of appeal to this Parliament. I have spoken at length, but nevertheless not so fully as I should like to have done, upon the subject of constitutional amendment. We should trust the people and give them the right to conduct conventions in order to deal with the subjects that I have raised. My observations at the unofficial conventions that I have attended have convinced me that the best results could be gained by that means. Critics will say that the decisions of people's conventions could not be carried into effect. My reply to that objection is that, if the decisions of fully representative conventions were submitted to this Parliament, only a very bold government or political party would refuse to give to the people as a whole the right to express their views upon those decisions.

We must break down the unwieldy system of government that is retarding development in the outlying areas of Australia. Existing governments are preoccupied with industrial problems in the most populous centres, and their attention is distracted from the needs of the rest of the nation. Unless we break free from this unprogressive system, we shall never succeed in raising Australia to the full stature that it should achieve as a nation. In order to avoid loss of power along the transmission lines, we should establish the generating station on the spot. Unless we establish additional States, Australia is likely to wander on the lowlands instead of reaching the highlands of nationhood, progress and prosperity. Since federation, Australia's population has practically doubled and I believe that within the next few years we shall witness much more rapid development throughout the Commonwealth. Australia stands on the threshold of magnificent possibilities. The forces behind are thrusting us forward. I believe that we shall respond; and one way in which we can do so is to clear the decks in order to utilize more effective means of meeting the increasing requirements of the country . . .

"Flexibility"

"I must express admiration for the able way Mr. Playford guides the Cabinet and his flexibility in borrowing from the Labor platform the principle of State ownership of public utilities."

— Election statement by a Labor candidate in the present S.A. elections from *The Age*, Melbourne, March 1.

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Outdoing the Socialists

The proposal to supply "free" milk to schoolchildren is another unnecessary slug for the taxpayer. Most parents are in a position to buy milk for their children and would prefer to feed them in their own way. The electors certainly did not ask for it, and neither did the Liberals mention it in their policy. The milk supplied will no doubt be pasteurised. Parents not wishing their children to have this cheap food will still be paying for it via taxation. Even the Labor-Socialists never thought of this one. —H.G.

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