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MELBOURNE, FRIDAY, JULY 13, 1951.

SIXPENCE WEEKLY.

THE MENACE OF CENTRALISM

Critical Address by

F. A. Bland, M.H.R.

It is worthwhile, as we look into the future of constitutional change, to remember just what has been our experience in the immediate past. That experience has suggested that people are opposed to piecemeal constitutional change. These remarks link up with the proposal that there should be a constitutional convention, because I am quite sure that the only way in which we shall be able to get full approval of constitutional change is by a complete revision of the Constitution so that the functions of the States and the powers of the Commonwealth will be clearly defined. I mention those matters for the earnest consideration of the House.

I shall now refer to two other sections of His Excellency's speech. In one he stressed the pride that we have in our parliamentary heritage, and in the other he detailed the functional and organisational changes in the government departments and mentioned the decision to increase the number of Ministers. It has always seemed to me that Australians have been lacking in curiosity about the working of our parliamentary system. They are proud of it, as His Excellency has said, but there has been a tendency to take things for granted and to be indifferent to the effects of certain changes upon the prestige and privilege of the Parliament. There has been a tendency to concentrate in the hands of the Executive more and more of the power that rightly belongs to the Parliament. That has been the result of a long development, and the Parliament, instead of resenting it, seems to be prepared to accept the role thrust upon it of a mere instrument to give effect to the intentions of the Government. That has lessened the prestige and authority of the Parliament . . .

In Australia during the war there was an extraordinary growth of the volume and character of delegated legislation, which not only made dangerous inroads into the liberties of the people, but also seriously restricted the authority and reduced the prestige of the Parliament. The right honorable member for Barton (Dr. Evatt) realised the force of the popular alarm, and appointed a committee, whose duty it was to restrain abuses. There was also a parliamentary select committee, which functioned between 1930 and 1942 in an attempt to keep track of administrative excesses. However, instead of there having been an anxiety to preserve the authority of the Parliament, and thereby to protect popular liberties, the dominating thought has seemed to be how best and how completely could these investigators be silenced. I

hope to see re-established in this Parliament the parliamentary committee on regulations and ordinances that was abolished in 1942. I welcome the assurance of His Excellency that the Government intends to revive the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Accounts that has been out of action since 1932. Only by having standing committees on legislation, accounts, and foreign affairs, will the Parliament be able to maintain its authority and prestige in any conflict with the Government. I was glad to hear that action will be taken in this direction.

Another development that has seriously restricted the authority of the Parliament has been the establishment of a proliferation of statutory corporations without any proper consideration of the relationship that should exist between them and the Parliament, or their consistency with the doctrines and principles of ministerial responsibility. Some of these corporations have been the administrative instruments for the application of the doctrines of socialisation, the high water mark of which was reached during the last decade. It is a matter for regret that socialisation still floods many fields that are showing signs of clogging under rigid bureaucratic administration.

I turn finally to the administrative changes referred to by His Excellency. They, of themselves, emphasise the character of the political, administrative and economic revolution that has taken place during the last decade. The appointment of another Minister must have caused the Prime Minister some concern, for it will make more difficult his future task of securing the redistribution of Federal and State powers. Every addition to the Cabinet gives rise to fresh problems. It adds another voice to the Cabinet discussions, it increases the size of the agenda, it raises new difficulties of collective ministerial

responsibility and it poses new problems of determination and co-ordination of Government policy. It also causes difficulties in Public Service management. The magnitude of the administrative and political changes and their rate of development can best be realised by noting that during the last decade the size of the Ministry has been almost doubled, the number of departments has been almost trebled, and the Public Service has become four or five times as large as it was.

(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.
6. 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

The Menace of Centralisation

(Continued from page 1)

Roughly, there have been changes of three types. There are those like the uniform income tax legislation of 1942 that have gone far towards destroying the substance of federalism. That system of taxation has provided the States with easy and plentiful supplies of money without the States suffering any of the odium associated with the raising of it; and that is tending to encourage political irresponsibility at the State level. The several ways in which this situation can be altered have been frequently canvassed in this House, and I do not propose to traverse them at this juncture. However, I hope that the conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers, which is to be held later this month, will make some progress towards ending this wholly unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Other changes also have tended to upset the administrative balance between the Commonwealth and the States. The addition of several scores of new members to this Parliament will inevitably add so many more voices to advance reasons why the Commonwealth should undertake new functions or expand existing ones. Notwithstanding all such tendencies, the Government of the Commonwealth would be wise to divest itself of as many as possible of the functions that it has assumed during the last decade. It should decide what functions it should retain and what functions should be returned to the States. Remembering the federal principle, that is another reason why a constitutional convention should be held as soon as possible.

Lastly, there has been the consequential growth of the number and cost of officials. It is a well-established fact that every addition to the army of officials carries with it

a potential threat to the liberties of the individual. That that threat has not been lessened in recent years is realised when one studies the trend on the part of officials to engage actively in party politics.

HOW TRUE

If the energy devoted to the dismemberment of the British Empire had been devoted to its development; if the truth had been pursued with a tithing of the energy consumed in the propagation of political and financial lies; if our diplomacy had worked with the same devotion upon the bad lads of the Kremlin as it did upon the only friends we had, we should not now be faced with any communist problem or any problem worth mentioning. —Rockhampton Monetary Reform League's "Information Bulletin," June 1951.

ISRAELI AGGRESSION

Why is "Israel" never named by the United Nations as an aggressor? Is it because of the large proportion of Zionist Jews and Communists in that discredited organisation? Is it, perhaps, because Trygve Lie, President of the Security Council, is a self-confessed Socialist, probably a Communist, and the support of Communists for Zionist world ambitions is well known?

A radio report of September 21 said Israeli troops had driven 4,000 Bedouins and 1,000 refugee Arabs, in the last seven months, from the Negev area of Palestine into Egypt. The Jews have confiscated their tents and lands.

Again, some weeks ago, Syria complained to United Nations that "Israel" was digging drains in the demilitarised zone — probably neutral territory — between the two. Syria resented the encroachment, fearing attempts to snip off a bit of Syrian territory, and brought in her troops. "Israel" did likewise, and then complained to U.N. of Syrian aggression! So far, we have not heard that U.N. has sent any of her "armies" to drive out the intruders.

—"The Vigilant" (Adelaide), June 1951.

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The Victorian League of Rights has launched a special educational campaign to bring to the attention of all responsible members of the community all aspects of the Communist conspiracy. The first of a How-To-Defeat Communism Series of booklets has been published. This booklet, by the League's Campaign Director, Mr. Eric D. Butler, is entitled *The Truth About Communism in China*, and is an excellent introduction to the frightening subject of Communist influence in high places in Western countries.

The League appeals to all *New Times* supporters to co-operate fully in ensuring that this important booklet is widely read. The price is 1/- per copy post free. Orders of one dozen or more at 8/- dozen, post-free. Order now from The Victorian League of Rights Box 1052J, G.P.O., Melbourne.

The Menzies Government, whose tragic record of ineptitude in the past sixteen months has seen the country drift further and further towards economic stagnation, is making it quite clear that it intends doing nothing towards arresting that drift. It is following the pattern of its first term — do nothing, muddle along, and blame it all on the Communists, who have now become an issue out of all proportion to their true importance.

The Government has had full powers to deal with the Communists. The Crimes Act, as it stands, is a piece of legislation strong enough to deal with any internal menace. I don't know how many of you have read the Crimes Act. Here are a few of its provisions.

Section 30A of the Act says: —

"(1) The following are hereby declared to be unlawful associations, namely:

"(a) Any body of persons, incorporated or unincorporated, which by its constitution or propaganda or otherwise advocates or encourages—

"(1) The overthrow of the Constitution of the Commonwealth by revolution or sabotage;

"(2) The overthrow by force or violence of the established Government of the Commonwealth or of a State or of any other civilised country or of organised Government; or

"(3) The destruction or injury of property of the Commonwealth or of property used in trade or commerce with other countries or among the States;

"Or which is, or purports to be, affiliated with any organisation which advocates or encourages any of the doctrines, practices, specified in this paragraph.

"(b) Any body of persons, incorporated or unincorporated, which, by its constitution or propaganda or otherwise, advocates or encourages the doing of any act having, or purporting to have, as an object the carrying out of a seditious intention as defined in Section twenty-four A of this Act."

On top of this, Section 24A defines a seditious act as any attempt to cause disaffection against the King, THE GOVERNMENT, or Constitution of any British country, or to promote ill-will and hostility between different classes of subjects.

That means, subject to interpretation, that any attack on the Government of the day, even now, could be dealt with under the Crimes Act. The latter part could mean that any criticism by labour of capital, or vice versa, could be construed as a breach of the Act.

The Crimes Act gives the Government all the power it needs to deal with the Communists, or any other menace. Any group of people who constitute a genuine menace to the safety of Australia must run into the Crimes Act at a very early stage of their operations.

If the Communists have not broken the Crimes Act, then their menace has been greatly over-rated. If they have, and I believe they have, then why hasn't the Government acted?

It is this inaction of the Government to use the powers it has, while it clamours for new, and, in a British country, outrageous powers, over the lives of citizens, that glooms the future.

More and more people, even in the Liberal Party, are developing misgivings.

It appears that the Government has made up its mind to allow the country to drift further and further to the economic wall. That, if possible, it will allow real misery to stalk the land, and public exasperation to reach such heights that it can be whipped into hysterical acceptance of anything, however outrageous to democratic principles the suggested remedy might be. That is the atmosphere in which liberty dies.

—Frank Browne, in "Things I Hear,"
June 12.

Progress!

There was a time in this country when no Government would have been able to survive if it failed to meet a crisis on the supply of one basic item of life. But today nothing seems to happen when not one, but a whole host of vital items, have disappeared from the standard of life.

To see precisely what has happened it is only necessary to consult the regimen of the State Basic Wage as operating in 1931. Those were the minimum requirements that Mr. Justice Heyden had described as necessary for a family living in a civilised community. The Court adopted a regimen of goods, and then assessed the value of them to fix the basic wage.

The Industrial Commission decided that these were the minimum requirements to meet that standard, for a man, his wife, and three children each week: 20 lbs. bread; 6 lbs. of flour; 1 lb. rice; ½ lb. sago; ½ lb. cornflour; 1 dozen eggs; 7 quarts of milk; 5½ lbs. of sugar; 2 lbs. of jam; ½ lb. treacle; 2 lbs. of butter; 8 lbs. of beef; 4 lbs. mutton; 2 lbs. of fish; 1 lb. bacon; 8 lbs. of fruit; 1 lb. raisins; 1 lb. currants, 11 lbs. of potatoes; 1½ lbs. onions; 8 lbs. of vegetables; ½ lb. tea; ½ lb. of coffee.

Go through that list carefully. Those were the minimum standards for the man on the basis wage. When he collected his wage, he had no difficulty in buying the quantities mentioned. He was able to live as a human being in a civilised community.

But how many families are now getting 7 quarts of milk a week? How many families are able to buy 2 lbs. of butter week? Today, the only people who can reach that standard are those who know someone in authority, have a special priority, or are prepared to pay black market prices.

In 1929, the Court did not feel it necessary to make any special provision for such items as kerosene and candles. They would have regarded that as going back to the dark ages. The Court, who told a worker that he should not have electricity for light and gas for cooking, would have been branded as reaction.

Today, the family that could obtain guarantee that it would be able to buy 11 lbs. of potatoes every week would be regarded as being in the specially privilege class. The 1931 basic wage earner could get his ½ lb. of tea, his 1½ lbs. of onions his ½ lb. of coffee, his ½ lb. of bacon, and 2 lbs. of fish every week in the year. The truth is that the basic wage earner of those days had a better balanced diet, and more variety in his food, than the man on £3 a week today.

In those days, in order that the basic wage earner should be able to hold up his head as a civilised human being, the Court made provision for one pair of double bed blankets to last five years; 2 pairs of single bed blankets and two single bed quilts, with sheets to last two years; pillow slips one year; towels one year, as well as serviettes. How many people have been able to renew their blankets during the past five years? How many expect to be able to afford them in the next five?

Similarly with clothing. The workingman was entitled to a new best suit every eighteen months, a hat every year, three pairs of pyjamas every two years, and all the other essentials. The wife and children were also provided for in the regime: on a scale that few families could afford these days, despite the allegedly high wage being paid.

—J. T. Lang, in "Century," June 22.

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Inflation

The Victorian Chamber of Commerce has called for "a national plan" to defeat inflation. While the intention of those responsible for this proposal are laudable, it is clear from their statements that they have no idea of what is required to halt the inflation spiral. The Chamber states that "No one political party can solve the current problems without the support of the community, which can now be expected to back a national plan only" This statement infers that inflation can only be defeated by imposing further sacrifices upon all sections of the community. If the people of this country really desire to protect their independence, they must strongly resist any policies, which impose farther hardships and centralised controls. These policies are unnecessary.

It is wrong to say that "no one political party" can deal with inflation. The present Government Parties are responsible for the policies, which are the direct and indirect cause of inflation. The Government Parties can reverse those policies, irrespective of what the Opposition thinks. What is to prevent the Government from starting to disgorge the centralised power, which it took over from the Labor-Socialists—and increased? Why cannot the Government close down several of its Departments and reduce the number of bureaucrats? Why must it continue with the Socialist Snowy River Scheme and other projects, which have no direct relationship to immediate defence, but which use—and waste! —materials desperately needed by individuals? Who is benefiting from an immigration scheme, which is bringing to this country hundreds of thousands of immigrants, some of them the scum of Europe, who place a further immediate burden upon a production system already groaning under the strains placed upon it by excessive capital expansion at the expense of consumer production?

The first step towards stability must be taken by the Federal Government. In Mr. Menzies' famous promise — now forgotten — "the burden of Government" must be reduced. But, even more than this is required. The Government must include in a policy of decentralisation, the expansion of a scientific price-subsidy system, which will effectively decentralise credit control. In a statement made in Brisbane last week, Mr. Latham Withall, the Federal Director of the Associated Chambers of Manufacture, indicated what is necessary when he said that the Government must immediately apply the price-subsidy principle to all food prices used to compute the basic wage. As Mr. Withall so realistically pointed out, the stabilisation of food prices would stabilise wages. And stabilised wages would stop the vicious circle of increased wages, followed by increased prices, which in turn force wages up.

Those who still ask where the money will come from to finance an extension of the price-subsidy system, should ask themselves where the money is going to come from to finance the six shillings increase in the basic wage which it is anticipated the Federal Arbitration Court will announce on July 17. The tens of millions of pounds necessary to finance this wage increase will require an immediate expansion of new credit by the banking system. Why not apply this new credit to price-subsidies, which would help prevent prices from rising, instead of making it the cause for further price rises? Government Members, who refuse to face this simple proposition, are courting political disaster.

THE SOCIALIST BIAS

The Communists are in power in China by military conquest, and it is a tragic confusion to assume they are there as representing anything permanent or authentic in the population. It is particularly surprising to find this fallacious and pessimistic identification made by men who are equally emphatic that Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang represent nothing at all. This is to accept the arbitrament of arms in a way that it would never be accepted, except by men who start with the pre-conception, expecting poor men to be Communists. Men are led to this when they start from materialist assumptions, when they underrate the importance of other things, like national tradition and memory, and, particularly, when they underrate religion. It has been very bitter for the exiled but authentic representatives of the Catholic peasantries of Croatia and Slovenia to see the readiness of British progressives to believe that Marshal Tito, with his atheism and collectivisation, is entitled to speak for a Christian peasantry.

It is the natural error of Socialism. Mr. Denis Healey, Secretary of the International Department of the Labour Party since 1946, has edited a brief and moving book, called "The Curtain Falls: The Story of the Socialists in Eastern Europe." He says in his epilogue: "There is no evidence that the peoples of Eastern Europe now consider such economic changes as the new regimes have imposed to be any compensation for the destruction of their right to freedom." And we agree with him, with the proviso that freedom involves great inequality of conditions, whose presence are the mark of an open society, and that one of the great mistakes of Socialist Parties everywhere has been to divide and undervalue freedom, as though it were valueless to poor men. The Communists always found the Socialist Parties good recruiting grounds, because these parties were full of men whose first enthusiasm was not for freedom, personal or political, but for the redistribution of wealth through the action of the State, and it was only necessary to convince such men that the price of Socialism, which must be paid by genuine Socialists, is the abandonment of a lot of the old liberties of "bourgeois society."

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Social Credit the Cure for Inflation

A Radio Talk by Mr. John Macara over 2 BL, Sydney, on June 2.

Social Credit is a belief. It is a belief that, in society, i.e., in association with his fellows, the individual more easily attains his reasonable requirements, and thus gains satisfaction.

In these days of rising prices, industrial chaos, bureaucratic controls, wars and threats of war, few of us can claim that his requirements are satisfied. To increase satisfaction, Social Crediters do not seek, nor do they desire, to alter the basic structure of society. They believe that a great incubus could be easily and quickly removed by a simple adjustment of the PRICE STRUCTURE.

In any factory, the total of wages, salaries and dividends, issued today, will not purchase the whole of today's production from that factory. There is a GAP by which the total of prices of goods produced today, exceeds the total of incomes received today. This gap is THE PRICE GAP, and it must be bridged in order that we may be enabled to buy what we produce. Otherwise our efforts spent in production are futile.

Heretofore, our efforts to bridge THE PRICE GAP have been applied to the wages end. But we find that, as wages increase, prices increase and the gap has not been bridged.

Suppose, for a change, we try to bridge the gap from the price end, by subsidising prices. But where is the money to come from?

Every rise in the basic wage necessitates the issue of additional bank-credit, i.e., the creation of NEW MONEY. As more and more new money is created, without any corresponding increase in the volume of goods, money loses its value.

If the new money issued in relation to wage rises were applied as subsidy to reduce prices, we would begin to "Put the shillings back into the pound." The subsidy should first be applied to bread-and-butter lines.

When the court determines a basic wage rise, let the Government estimate the amount of new money necessary to pay such rise; then, instead of applying it to the wage, apply it to prices as a subsidy, and thus REDUCE PRICES.

There is no other technique by which the Government can honour its pre-election pledge, "To put the shillings back into the pound."

If you desire to discuss this matter further, I will be pleased to supply more information.

Campaign on Price Subsidies Proposed

Following his radio talk over 2BL Sydney, published elsewhere in this issue, Mr. John Macara has issued a circular suggesting that a campaign be launched to influence the Government to meet the problem of rising prices by an extension of price subsidies. Mr. Macara writes:

Suggestions have been made that the widespread distress and dismay caused by rapidly rising prices affords an excellent ground on which to conduct a wide and successful electoral campaign.

There are a number of organisations which should be keenly and vitally interested in this matter — the Housewives' Association, Superannuated Officers' Association, etc., etc.

It might be pointed out that the Government is fully committed to the subsidising of the prices of the basic commodities, for this formed a prominent pledge given by the Prime Minister in his pre-election policy.

No further legislative action is necessary, for subsidies are at present being paid on tea, butter, etc.

The Government is deeply concerned in an endeavour to increase production. We are positively short of a number of basic commodities. The best method to stimulate production is to provide for producers a sure market at profitable prices, thus appealing to the strongest motive for human action, i.e., SELF-INTEREST. In the absence of concrete inducements, pep talks to producers constitute only a vain beating of the air.

The direct road to increased production is through SUBSIDIES.

We are willing and anxious to launch such a campaign for THE BRIDGING OF THE PRICE-GAP BY SUBSIDIES. But,

before committing ourselves to this action, we desire to learn, if we may, the amount of support likely to be forthcoming. You are therefore invited to indicate whether you are willing to co-operate in such a campaign, by canvassing for signatures, etc. A certain amount of funds will also be necessary to cover the cost of stationery, postage, etc.

We think you will agree that our most urgent need at the present time is to re-establish our morale. Nothing would achieve this more effectively than a successful campaign.

The matter we would propose to submit to M.H.Rs. would be in some such terms as the following: —

Dear M.H.R.,

I am deeply concerned with the alarming and continuous rising of prices. I am convinced that the only method by which prices can be stabilised and reduced is by a payment by the Government of a subsidy, as was done during the war.

As my representative, I desire that you bring this matter urgently under the notice of the Government; and that you will inform me of the action taken, either by personal letter or by public statement. Signature of Constituent and his address.

Those interested in Mr. Macara's proposal may write to him at 69 Lucas Road, Burwood, Sydney, N.S.W.

Socialism By Stealth

In an article contributed to "Human Events" (Washington), a Yale graduate, William F. Buckley, Jr., says ". . . Harvard gets most of the credit for nourishing the new, irresistible, mid-century liberalism—collectivism. Yale deserves just as much credit for it. . . . She doesn't make so many headlines; she doesn't contribute so much grist for Westbrook Pegler's columns, so many clerks for Supreme Court Justices, or so many articles for the "New Republic." But, in a very real sense, Yale is more systematic. She goes about her task of collectivising less ostentatiously. But let no one say that Yale is not pulling her oar, that she is shirking her responsibility to persuade her young men as to the merits of the Leviathan State.

"Yale recognises that the most important single springboard from which to launch collectivism is the basic economic course. Approximately half of her undergraduates enrol in 'Elementary Economics' before leaving New Haven. And so it is here that much of the work can be done.

"To that end, in the past five years, books by Samuelson ('Economics: An Introductory Analysis'), Bowman and Bach ('Economic Analysis and Public Policy'), Morgan ('Income and Employment'), and Tarshis ('The Elements of Economics'), have been used as basic texts.

"Now all of these books profess respect for the institution and achievement of free enterprise, a tactic indispensable, at the present, to successful collectivising. Socialism still has to be subtle. So it is only after calculated enthusiasm for our economic system that these text writers proceed to undermine the free market place. This approach is far more effective, in my opinion, than a hundred lectures at Harvard by Harold Laski. For he bore the label 'socialist,' and his straightforwardness put many of his students on their guard.

"Not so with the text writers of Yale economics (whose approach is adopted by most of the instructors)."

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Destruction of Property Rights in England

By H. Swabey

It must be about fifteen years since Major Douglas wrote an article about the seizure of coal mining royalties. He said that this did not matter to people who had no coal under their lands, or were not dukes, but that it would hit the ordinary man below the belt when he had his own savings confiscated, or words to that effect. The ordinary man's savings are dwindling with accelerated momentum by now, but it is the attack on property on which I should like to comment. I suppose that the right to hold property distinguishes a free man from a slave, and that the safeguarding of property is a great function of Law. Otherwise, property will come into a very few hands.

The activities of our police State came particularly to my notice when the local paper reported that a man had been fined for supplying eggs, laid by "his" hens, to his wife for her cafe. Unfortunately for him, he kept 25 hens instead of 24, and both he and his wife were fined £10. It was an instance of rotten law and savage penalty. In response to a letter of mine to this paper, I received a letter from another victim of the State. It included an enclosure, which had been received in July 1950.

"Persons having any interest in lands the subject of impending action by the Minister under the provision of Section 85 of the Agriculture Act, 1947, are asked particularly to note that the Minister is not prepared to enter into any negotiations with them for the purchase of their interest otherwise than by way of compulsory purchase, or to negotiate with them as to the price to be offered or accepted, in advance of the giving of a certificate which authorises him to purchase compulsorily.

"Accordingly it should be understood that any representations made to him, either in writing or in person, as to the merits of his contemplated action, which are based solely upon questions of price or compensation, will not be taken into consideration by him and cannot be allowed to influence the action under consideration . . ."

The recipient of this notice did in fact suffer personally for standing up to this tyranny, and was "taken into custody on a charge of an offence for which a punishment by imprisonment could not be lawfully ordered." Sir Robert Peel did not create a police force for nothing.

It is obvious by now what is happening to our constitution, of which Blackstone wrote in his concluding words: "The protection of THE LIBERTY OF BRITAIN is

a duty which they owe to themselves, who enjoy it; to their ancestors, who transmitted it down; and to their posterity, who will claim at their hands this, the best birthright, and noblest inheritance of mankind." This constitution, at the time those words were written, was based on land and subdivision into parishes. These were barriers against monopoly, for within this constitution no one was able to "gain the whole world." It found no room in it for the Cabinet system, to the disgust of Whig historians who mention Montesquieu or Blackstone. And it had certain excrescences.

These excrescences were the savage penalties exacted for certain crimes, and for many of them Whig ministers must have been responsible. But these were as good an excuse as any to attack the constitution itself, and to abolish good Law, together with savage penalties, at the same time taking good care to eliminate the parochial and landed system of responsibility itself. But, evidently, now that good Law has been broken down, there is nothing to stop the reintroduction of savage penalties.

On a previous occasion, the attempt was made to bring slavery into England, but it was clumsily done, and was not tolerated. For Edw. VI "ordained that all idle vagabonds should be made slaves, and fed upon bread and water, or small drink, and refused meat; should wear a ring of iron round their necks, arms or legs; and should be compelled by beating, chaining or otherwise, to perform the work assigned them, were it never so vile." It is much more attractive to proclaim the right to employment.

—"The Social Crediter (England),

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The Simplicity of Social Credit

Social Credit can claim the distinction of being based upon the immutable truth of inheritance. Moreover, it can claim the further distinction that we owe to its author the discovery of the fact that endorses and confirms this truth, so that within Social Credit itself we find that absolute relationship and alliance between truth and fact which alone enables the truth to be realised and experienced. For it was the detection of a "flaw" in the price or accounting system, causing a gap to appear between purchasing power and prices, that disclosed what might be called the very stuff of the inheritance, and contradicted the assumption of orthodoxy that costs in industry were automatically self-liquidating. No attempt is made therefore, in Social Credit to rectify the gap or flaw, to contrive to abolish it. On the contrary, it is used as the basis for the remedy. For it supplies, as it were, the means or the wherewithal for the technical proposals necessary for the distribution of the inheritance.

The economy is the acme of perfection. Nothing is lost, nothing discarded, and nothing wasted. The very fact, the thing, which, while ignored or denied, acts as a menace and a curse, binding man to servitude, when acknowledged becomes the means of his deliverance, and is seen to be a benediction and a blessing. Indeed, it is difficult to see what could be done without it to realise and actualise the truth of man's inheritance, and raise his status, at once, from that of a servant to that of an heir.

The simplicity of Social Credit distinguishes it also from every other economic and political reform, whether of right or left. For all these, being based on the assumption that industry is, or should be, or must be made to be self-liquidating, and

that man must be fully employed, are merely variants of the efforts and schemes designed to force facts to fit this assumption. All therefore involving, as they must, plans for supercapital production, whether for New Deals, militarisation or for developing the "backward countries," plunge man into ever increasing debt and taxation. This forcible manipulation of facts in furtherance of a purpose inimical to man, and in disregard and denial of the truth, is leading man into a realm of fantasy and illusion, and creating that state of dementia into which the world is being ever more rapidly driven. Only, however, when facts are left to speak for themselves—it has been said that facts act as though they were in the pay of Social Credit—do they lead to the truth which embodies them and which they are designed to manifest, and hence to a state of sanity and enlightenment.

But simplicity is suspect, and arouses opposition. Man has been taught to see some virtue, in the hard, the difficult, the long and tortuous way to achievement. Probably it ministers to his vanity. He is, at any rate, inclined to despise the short cut, the easy way, the line of least resistance. Nevertheless, the right line of least resistance—there is a wrong one, and it is not denied that difficulties may be encountered in finding the right one—is the only intelligent and efficient one to take. Otherwise, one behaves like the ant that strives again and again to climb over an obstacle

when it could so much more easily and quickly get round it.

The strange thing to be observed, however, is that Social Credit changes nothing, alters nothing; only a factor in the situation hitherto ignored is utilised. But the result is a change so radical that everything is changed. And the nature of the change is religious, because it is a binding back to reality.

—Beatrice C. Best, in "The Social Creditor" (England).

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CENTRALISATION ELECTRICITY IN N.S.W.

Most N.S.W. country centres now "enjoy" blackouts, though they didn't until the State Electricity Authority was created to control power in N.S.W. This E.A. inaugurated a system of "feeding in" and "feeding out" power, which was supposed to equalise the State's power resources or something, but only made the growing confusion worse confounded.

At Tamworth recently, a conference of 11 councils drawing power from Tamworth station tartly announced that it didn't want any interference with the station by the Electricity Authority. As reported by the "Shire and Municipal Record," the chairman (Ald. Varley, mayor of Tamworth) put it this way: —

"We do not want the undertaking to come under the control of a [proposed] county council. We believe that if the occasion arises where it will be controlled from Sydney, the whole northern area will suffer."

A delegate who had accompanied the Electricity Authority on a tour of the district said he was convinced all it sought was an excuse of any sort to create a county council to take over generation and distribution of electricity. Another, who had heard the E.A. spouting at Murrurundi, said, "the whole thing had been carefully rehearsed some weeks previously," and that the E.A. had confessed it didn't know how Tamworth supplied electricity as cheaply as it did. When somebody else

said that from the moment Tamworth yielded control it could expect blackouts, and a woman delegate said none of the women in the area wanted what Sydney housewives had to endure, the decision to oppose the notion "strenuously" was unanimous.

Meantime, Orange has discovered that politics play their part in blackouts. The cherry city was free of them until, in the words of the "Shire and Municipal Record":

"The State Electricity Commissioner, Mr. Conde, recently put an end to Orange's long blackout-free record by ordering the council to have blackouts, despite the fact that it had been shedding the required electricity load without interruptions to its normal service."

Orange's mayor and engineer are to beard Premier McGirr, Minister Cahill and Mr. Conde "immediately" to demand an explanation and revocation of the order. Mayor Jaeger said that Orange, through the efficiency of its engineer and the co-operation of local users, had performed the required "load-shedding" without blackouts, and it was obvious that other communities had noticed Orange's freedom and were asking questions.

—"The Bulletin" (Sydney), June 20, 1951.

BIG CITIES AND FOOD

All sorts of official controllers and price-fixers are running in all sorts of directions trying to do something about the current food shortages in the big cities. The plain truth is that a situation, which has been steadily building up for many years, has been speeded up lately by floods, transport muddles, strikes and "controls."

You cannot concentrate a third of the population of a continent in two big cities and a half in six cities, have them all employed and making incomes which allow them to eat more than they really need, and at the same time have the rural population declining, and expect the food supply to increase to meet the city demands.

Add to the population ill-balance a few things like floods, droughts, shortage of machines and material and labour on the land, bogged-down transport, and controls exercised by all sorts of officials, and you have a set-up which can result only in the one now existing.

What has happened is that land production has been steadily falling. The chronic shortage of coal is reflected in the shortage of butter. Man-hour output could not continue to fall in secondary industry without affecting output in primary industry. From the labour angle alone, what man (unless; of that philosophy which deliberately prefers rural to city life) will work for a farmer or struggle on a small farm of his own while the city offers him twice as much for doing comparatively nothing at all?

The note of bewildered astonishment in the city press over the inability of farmers to keep the cities fed is laughable to those who've watched the cities depopulate the country for a generation. It used to be said that one farmer supported four city workers. Now he's trying to support eight or ten of them, including herds of State and Federal employees and controllers of practically everything the soil produces except wool.

What can be done about it? There is no quick remedy. It is ten times as hard to get people out of the city as into it. Immigration is no help, since few modern immigrants go to farms, though plenty go into the selling and distribution of food-stuffs. All the same, some sort of a start may be made by recognising the true causes and giving away the silly notions

that more controls and increased prices for land products will increase those products.

Creation of two or three new States may offer some solution by attracting people from overpopulated centres to new seats of provincial government, around which would spring up small farms. Short of that, about the only thing likely to drive urbanised Australians out of their cities is the famine, which they will inevitably encounter if they persist in crowding together and leaving the land to crows and rabbits.

—"The Bulletin," June 20, 1951.

THE BIG COUNTRY'S LITTLE IDEA

"Both in Asia and in Europe [the Americans] have appeared with the torch of political democracy, and have begun with broad sympathies for parties and doctrines which have always found it easy to make a first favourable impression by representing themselves as progressive and democratic, the parties of the under-dog, of the common man, against a surviving feudalism, kings and aristocracies, and still more if they have been able to represent themselves as the George Washingtons of their own time and country, 'rightly struggling to be free.' But economically the Americans have been much more conservative, much more conscious that the stupendous material achievements of the North American continent have only been possible because the constitution was written by men with the strongest sense of private property, whose secure possession, in law, custom and social esteem, is the first great prerequisite for the release and stimulation of human energy.

"No amount of foreign aid is going to raise the level of average consumption in the Middle East or the Far East if no capital undertaking gets the chance to take root and grow and yield fruit without a political party, representing either extreme nationalism or extreme Socialism, overshadowing it, threatening its existence and appropriating its wealth as soon as any wealth manifests itself. The Americans have to forget and unlearn a great deal that it used to give them a novel glow to think and say about European Imperialism in the different parts of Asia, and to understand better how the European Governments created and maintained, for the first time

in history, conditions in Asia parallel to those which the American constitution created in the United States — Law and respect for law, and an open and secure field for the private man or group. It was a great tragedy that in 1945 so little was understood in America that the Dutch were given no encouragement or help to return to the Dutch East Indies, and that almost invariably the American influence was ranged behind local political parties headed by men whose speeches and acts showed no understanding of the real prerequisites of that economic progress which they quite genuinely desired for their people, whom they had and have no intention of impoverishing, though they no doubt will impoverish them, because they embody political regimes under which confidence cannot take root."

—"The Tablet" (England).

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