

# THE SOCIAL CREDITER

## FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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### MODERN SCIENCE (XVIII)

Isn't it wonderful how quickly a beam of limelight becomes populated?

Sir Arnold McNair, on February 17, responded to the invitation of the editor of the *Liverpool Daily Post*, "though not a scientist," to write about scientific research from the University point of view. This is, I believe, the first popular appearance of the Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool University since his cautious exposition of Federal Union in the first year of the war. He said one of the two primary duties of a University was to extend the bounds [why bounds?] of knowledge; that they must do this not only because of the value of the direct products of research, but research by teachers inspired and 'fertilised' teaching; and that a scientist working in a university laboratory "is more likely to follow wherever the light leads him, without stopping to consider whether his work can ever have any practical application than the scientist working in an industrial laboratory." So the reader now knows that what leads the economists is—Light! He also says that "there is now evidence that the period of comparative starvation is about to come to an end and that the Government will in future see that the university laboratories are adequately equipped." This is a variation on the well-known quantity theme, as is also the suggestion that "when the war is over... the universities, properly financed, will be ready to resume their task and to raise the output of research and trained researchers beyond pre-war level." I have already referred to Sir A. D. McNair's long connection with the political problems of the coal industry, and it is possible that "output" is an idea, early acquired, which has stuck in his mind. I can understand that the output of men properly trained (*i.e.* in the opinion and to the specifications of big business, *e.g.* I.C.I.) is not merely desired by Big Business but is necessary to it, and that the pretensions of Big Business to world control are unrealisable without it. I can understand the effect of Sir Arnold McNair's few moments as a (non-scientific) *prima donna* behind the foot-lights upon the Marx-sodden gallery. What I cannot understand (excepting by resort to the most uncharitable hypotheses), and what shocks me, is the complete detachment of this head of a university from all the *real* problems of modern education and his ready acceptance of a popular myth as the basis for his exposition. If there is one thing which is unquestionably of subordinate importance in discovery it is equipment. And to desist for one moment from the supremely difficult but necessary task of making this clear to planners, muddlers, messers and busybodies of all kinds (which, and not propaganda of the heresy, should be at the present time the primary concern of the head of an institution faced with "the greatest crisis of its history," *vide* Mr. Vere Cotton) is to play straight into the hands of those who are determined, and who have announced their determination, to shatter the

whole fabric of Christian civilisation to its foundations—and deeper if possible, so as to ensure against any possibility of a resurrection at any time of a force which it is their aim to overturn and to supplant. The destruction is intended to be final as well as complete.

The hall mark of a genuine original and creative idea that is not an idea about something which already exists in nature is chiefly that no mechanism exists to instrument it—and if it is found impossible to construct one (and usually from absurdly simple elements) the idea can be safely dismissed as not being a genuine new idea after all. Douglas's notion of price-adjustment and his ideas of a civil service of policy are excellent examples. Why *must* we heap equipment upon universities alleged to be run without a policy and *must not* elaborate machinery for the smooth working of the social order?

Discovery is an affair of discoverers, and even they cannot make a profession of it. But given the man, the requirements are simple. They are to live in an atmosphere which is not thoroughly corrupt, so that he may remain reasonably uncorrupted himself; to have an objective which is a real and intelligible objective to himself if to no one else, and to be secure in the pursuit of that objective at least to the extent that no one can come along and substitute for it another objective altogether. "A bad workman does bad work with any tools, and, in addition, spoils good tools." Well, they're busy spoiling the good tools. But, as for a good workman, was it not once the last task of the apprentice to use his master's tools to make his own? The Zeiss micro-dissector is a magnificent instrument. You can pick the nucleus out of its cell with its aid. But so you can without its aid, if you know how to do it. I have never heard of a single material addition to knowledge that has resulted from picking a nucleus out of a cell, whichever way you do it. The vogue for things of this sort calls to mind how much of modern 'research' is the work of adolescents, who are run in teams. Each little 'discoverer' is really only a fraction of a discoverer. Readers familiar with the current clap-trap about the 'army' of 'Science' marching on Giant Ignorance, *etc., etc.*, may have failed to discern through the haze the underlying feature of this instance of modern 'progress,' which is that the right hemisphere of the little 'discoverer' does not know what its left hemisphere is doing, and that both hemispheres together don't know why they are doing it. Policy, and policy in its most fundamental sense, pure, unadulterated individual initiative, should be, one would think, the body and soul of scientific inquiry. The fact that it is no longer so only shows how split the mind of society now is.

The full-time staffs of Universities in Great Britain number nearly four thousand, of whom nearly nine hundred are professors. What sort of testimony is it to the competency

of these men that, keenly critical as the majority of them are of the imperfections of their environment, even those of them whose speciality is investigation have not laid bare the true causes of the very things which impede and obstruct them in their own lives, the removal of which they know to be essential to any advancement worthy of the name? Concerned ostensibly with the advancement of science and the spread of knowledge, they have not even noticed the growth of ignorance, so that Mr. Christopher Hollis can write, "There has, in sum, hardly been a period of history during which the decline of everything that is meant by civilisation has been as rapid and as steady as it has been during the period of compulsory education."\*

It is important that the team-structure referred to above should be understood. A glance at the prospectus for any 'Honours School' (the public has access to all these things in the reference departments of the public libraries) will reveal that when Tommy reaches the last rung of the ladder 'from elementary school to university' he has been led there through a 'prescribed course' which represent a small fraction of the 'subject' he professes. 'Research' now often forms a part of the last stages of this course. It is, of course, conducted under direction. From now on, Tommy may spend his life in routine investigations (among which may be some at least of the 'startling discoveries' of the newspapers). Or he may be taken onto a university staff, where, in theory, he has considerably greater freedom in alliance with much less knowledge of the world. What actually happens to him?

(To be continued.)

TUDOR JONES.

## Alberta's Financial Proposals for Post-War Reconstruction

*The substance of an address broadcast in December by the HON. E. C. MANNING, Premier of Alberta.*

I have been requested to deal tonight with some proposals for post-war reconstruction that seem to have aroused a great deal of public interest.

You are all aware that a Committee of Members of the House of Commons under the Chairmanship of J. G. Turgeon, Member of Parliament for Cariboo, B.C., has been making an exhaustive enquiry into the important questions of post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The Provincial Governments were invited by this Committee to make submissions outlining the various reconstruction projects which they considered practicable and expedient for their Provinces. Recently it was my privilege on behalf of the Alberta Government, to submit a Brief, setting out certain of our recommendations in this regard.

I do not propose to deal tonight with that part of our submission which dealt in a comprehensive manner with the scope and nature of necessary post-war reconstruction work within Alberta. While this may possibly be of interest to persons outside our Province, it does not directly concern them.

However, the second part of our brief dealt with a matter which certainly does concern the people all across Canada, and for this reason I have been asked to deal with

it on this broadcast.

It should be clear to all that there is no great problem involved in specifying what physical projects should be undertaken in the post-war reconstruction of our national economy. In this respect, the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the Canadian people can be stated in terms of agricultural and industrial development, of rural electrification and irrigation, of housing and transportation, of conservation, reforestation and recreation projects, of social security and of just wage conditions. Furthermore, we all know the abundant resources we possess and the adequate human and mechanical means available for developing those resources to an extent that would provide sufficient goods to guarantee every Canadian family absolute and complete economic and social security.

The problem which confronts every industrialist, every farmer, every municipality, every Provincial Government and every department of the Federal Government is: "How can these post-war development projects be financed?" This is the all-important question which we dealt with in the second part of Alberta's submission to the Turgeon Committee—and, as far as I know, it is the only definite, practical proposal for the financing of Canada's post-war reconstruction programme that thus far has been made. . .

Some persons are inclined to argue—"Well we don't have to worry about that: if unlimited funds can be provided to finance war time destruction, they can be provided to finance peace time reconstruction." That is only partly true—the funds can be provided, but not by a continuation of the methods being employed to finance the war.

Since the beginning of the war, Canada's national debt has more than doubled. It is now over eight billion dollars. That means that every family in Canada already is carrying a federal debt burden alone of over \$2,000. And this debt still is piling up at an ever increasing rate. You can readily see what the ultimate end will be if this method is used to finance a vast national programme of capital development after the war. Apart altogether from the crippling scale of taxation which would be necessary to supplement such a scheme of debt-finance, the continuation of wholesale borrowing must ultimately precipitate the complete collapse of our entire economic structure. Yet under our present financial system the choice is between the continuation of such a policy, or a return to the financial restriction of the pre-war years, leading to restricted production, mass unemployment and general insecurity—conditions which the people of this country will never tolerate again. . .

Let us face the facts realistically. The outstanding features of the chaotic economic conditions which existed during the period between the last war and this war indicated very plainly where the real trouble lay.

On the one hand we had tremendous productive resources—as the war has proved—producers were able and anxious to produce, but they lacked markets; this resulted in restricted production and mass unemployment; retail merchants were anxious to sell goods to the public—but their problem too was the lack of a market. On the other hand we had widespread poverty and privation, and the vast majority of the people were in want—because they could not obtain the goods which could have been produced in abundance. And the only reason why they could not obtain the goods was because they lacked the money with which

\**The Growth of Ignorance* by CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS in *The Tablet*, February 19, 1944.

to buy them. It was entirely a problem of shortage of purchasing power.

If the people of Canada had been provided with sufficient purchasing power they could have bought the goods they required from the retail stores; these, in turn, would have placed orders for more goods with industry; producers would have increased production; unemployment would have disappeared—and, in fact, all our major economic problems would have been solved.

The chronic shortage of purchasing power was the dominating problem before the war—and it will be the dominating problem after the war if the same financial system is continued.

### Alberta's Financial Proposals

To meet that basic problem and the whole question of post-war finance, the Alberta Government submitted definite proposals to the Turgeon Committee for the reconstruction of our financial system. I will give you these in the exact form in which they were put forward.

#### "(1) NATIONAL CONTROL OF MONETARY POLICY:

*Control of monetary policy automatically carries with it control over the entire economic life of the country. It is a sovereign power which, in a democracy, should be vested in Parliament acting on behalf of the people.*

*"Therefore, a National Finance Commission should be established, to be responsible to Parliament through the Minister of Finance (a) for the issue and withdrawal of all money (both currency and credit) in accordance with the nation's requirements and (b) for the administration of the monetary system in response to the will of the people.*

*"NOTE: The Bank of Canada should be the means through which the National Finance Commission would operate.*

#### "(2) BANKS AND BANKING:

*"It is manifestly undemocratic that the sovereign power of creating, issuing and withdrawing money or credit, thereby controlling economic policy, should be exercised by private institutions. This power vested in the chartered banks at the present time should be discontinued and the chartered banks should be elevated to the position of servants of the public under the effective control of the government.*

*"Moreover it is an obvious absurdity that a democratic Government vested with sovereign authority over the monetary system should be obliged to put the nation in pawn to the banks in order to borrow money for national purposes. In point of fact the position should be reversed.*

*"Therefore, chartered banks should cease to create, issue and withdraw financial credit except as agent for the National Finance Commission, and they should be required to hold against all deposits a corresponding amount of cash, or, in lieu thereof, national credit certificates issued by the Bank of Canada.*

#### "(3) GOVERNMENT FINANCE:

*"As the custodians of the people's sovereignty and as the issuing authority for all money, Parliament should no longer be entirely dependent upon taxation and borrowing for its revenue requirements.*

*"Therefore, all money required for government expenditure, whether for purposes of financing reconstruction projects or for normal public services, should be issued on the*

*instruction of Parliament, by the Bank of Canada without debt to the nation. Taxation should be used primarily for the purpose of withdrawing surplus purchasing power as hereinafter provided.*

#### "(4) SAFEGUARDS AGAINST INFLATION AND DEFLATION:

*"It is a basic principle of any scientific monetary system that money should be created and issued as goods are produced, and it should be withdrawn and cancelled as goods are consumed. Furthermore this should be done in such a manner that at all times the public should have purchasing power equal to the collective prices of goods on the market, wanted by the public.*

*"If the total purchasing power is more than the total prices of goods for sale, a condition of 'inflation' will at once become evident and must be rectified forthwith. If the total purchasing power is less than the total prices of goods for sale then a condition of 'deflation' will immediately reveal itself and more purchasing power must be released to enable producers to obtain fair prices and overtake their production costs.*

*"The principle of maintaining a balance between consumer purchasing power and the prices of goods for sale to consumers is fundamental to any sound monetary system, either in peace or in war.*

*"Therefore, the National Finance Commission should be required to establish a proper system of accounting and, from time to time, ascertain the total prices of goods available for purchase by consumers and the total purchasing power of the public. Any surplus purchasing power should be withdrawn by means of an equitable system of taxation and any deficiency of purchasing power should be corrected by reduced taxation or by an increased issue of credit in the most equitable manner as authorised by Parliament, e.g. price subsidies, family allowances, health services, non-contributory security grants, etc.*

#### "(5) AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY AND TRADE:

*"Agriculture, industry and trade should be able to expand freely to provide the goods and services wanted by the public. Hence the financial requirements of agriculture, industry and trade should govern monetary policy and not vice versa.*

*"Therefore, adequate credit on equitable terms should be made available to agriculture, industry and trade to finance all wanted production.*

#### "(6) PROVINCIAL FINANCES:

*"Parliament, through the National Finance Commission, on an equitable basis and without infringing upon provincial autonomy, should issue to each of the Provinces the money to enable them:*

*"a. To finance post-war reconstruction projects coming within provincial jurisdiction.*

*"b. To establish and maintain the high standard of social services to which the Canadian people are entitled."*

I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that the adoption of those simple and straightforward proposals would do more to avert the catastrophe of post-war chaos and the danger of revolution towards which we are drifting than anything else which can be done in the field of economic reconstruction. They provide a practical basis for building in Canada after the war a sound and enduring democratic order in which every Canadian would be assured full security with freedom.

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### FROM WEEK TO WEEK

"We are witnessing the possibility of terrible reverses in Italy that may prolong the war, not for days or months, but for years," said Mr. Mackenzie King to Labour delegates in Ottawa on February 11.

We are, fortunately, also "witnessing the possibility" (sic) of an early, and, we trust, final reverse to Mr. Mackenzie King's political fortunes, a happy event which would confine his opportunities of spreading alarm and despondency to a small and unimportant minority.

The real basis of Mr. Mackenzie King's policy during the armistice years is beyond dispute. He has been at pains to emphasise that Canada is autonomous but "Britain" is not. He is a thorough-going believer in the British Empire if it is run from Ottawa in consultation with Washington, but paid for in Somerset House.

Canada is an autonomous and valued member of the Imperial family, but she is not the only member. In spite of Mr. King's impassioned love for the United States, the prestige of Canada, and its control over its own destiny is incomparably higher as a Dominion of the Imperial Crown than it could ever be as a State of the Union. And whatever attractive terminology might be proposed in such a context, that is exactly Canada's alternative.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is indignant that anyone should make money out of land in war-time. Quite right. Of course, no one ought to make money out of war except Labour, the Bureaucracy and the Banks. Down with culture. *Ecrasez les infames!*

But we notice that, as usual, anyone is at liberty to lose money out of land, either in war or peace. We have yet to hear an Archbishop protest against the iniquitous taxation of land with the object of forcing it into the market to be picked up by speculators.

It is clear that the Church of England, not to mention the dissenting sects, has either no consciousness, or no will, to challenge the fundamental idea of collectivism, which is totalitarianism. It is a promoter of that political trick, "the common good." Once you admit the propriety of manipulating a man's circumstances and station in life unilaterally, it is a matter of very little consequence whether you do it by the mechanism of the Divine Right of Kings, or a Government Department cultivating administrative lawlessness by means of Enabling Bills and Orders in Council.

There is not a Government in operation anywhere in the world to-day whose fundamental principles would pass

a simple reference to Christian Doctrine, which is merely another way of stating that their axioms are not axioms, but fallacies. Either Christianity is a fraud or it isn't. As a direct consequence it is now nearly impossible to pass any law which does not create a greater body of injustice than it rectifies, even if its intention is honest.

"The McArthur Command is only 25 per cent. American in its land forces, although the balance of air power is different. But in the step-by-step painful push through New Guinea, the burden of the fighting has fallen to the Australians."—T. B. RICHARDSON, Canadian Press reporter in Australia.

In the recent municipal elections in Toronto, the C.C.F. failed to elect a single candidate.

Amongst the many indications of a common control of national policy in nearly all the countries involved in the war, is the extension of political censorship of the same nature as that which existed in Russia, Germany, and Italy in the armistice period. This censorship goes far beyond mere control of the printed word. Its most effective or deadly, aspect, is the control of travel, and even of conversation. Every traveller to Russia has remarked upon the amazing ignorance of the ordinary Russian on the conditions existing in "capitalist" countries, and the delusion that the most elementary amenities of life, rare as they are in the land of Socialism, are unknown elsewhere. In Germany and Italy, the passport and the exit visa, instead of being a right, were a carefully restricted privilege, the effect being to present a type of traveller to the outside world whose opinions and behaviour were selected by the home bureaucracy.

The intention is clear enough, and is of the same nature as the systematic murder of the Russian aristocracy. It destroys the opportunity for comparison, and eliminates cultural competition.

More than anything else at this time, those persons who value a free world require to direct their attention to this central direction. If it is not eliminated, the defeat of Germany will merely mean the selection of another suitable tool to pursue the same ideal. There are visible claimants already.

Any doubts that the British are a great race ought to be put at rest by a consideration of the persistence with which they refrain from using, perhaps in every period of their history, more than an irreducible minimum of their best available talent, and by preference drive it abroad.

This reflection is prompted by the thought that in the greatest crisis of our history we are employing as Governor of an unimportant little West Indian island a man whose training, experience and ability in many ways are probably unmatched.

To say that circumstances make it impossible to employ him in a major role is merely to say that we don't appreciate the gravity of the situation.

### The "New Fabianism"

"Lord Woolton himself runs the risk, no doubt undeservedly, of being described as a founder-member of the New Fabianism."  
 — *The Economist.*



## The Education Bill

### SUPPRESSION OF OPPOSITION

The Prime Minister, on October 13, 1943, gave the following pledge in Parliament:

"There is no question of far-reaching changes of a controversial character being made by the present Government unless they are proved indispensable to the war. Another Government might take a different view, but not this one . . . I certainly could not take the responsibility of making far-reaching controversial changes which I am not convinced are directly needed for the war effort, without a Parliament refreshed by contact with the electorate."

Since the Government can scarcely hope to prove that this post-war Education Bill is either not "far-reaching" or is "indispensable to the war," or that the preparation of a vast administrative change, to come into operation by April 1, 1945, can do anything but hinder the war effort, they are forced to maintain the pretence that it is uncontroversial. As, however, no legislation can be imagined which is more controversial than a simultaneous extension of State control in the fields of education, religion, and local government, particularly in a nation in which the instinct for freedom and decentralisation in these matters is strong, and which is fighting a totalitarian State, it is obvious that the absence of all opposition to the main principles of the Bill, both in Parliament and in the National Press, is clear evidence, in itself, of the suppression of such opposition.

There appear to be three stages in the imposition of such a further step towards National Socialism by a ruling group which is still finding 'democracy' useful as a political formula:

1. Negotiation in secret with the leaders of any 'interests' which may be affected. Mr. Butler has been greatly complimented on his success in reconciling so many conflicting interests. The Bill was described by *The Times* as 'a masterpiece of compromise.'

An excellent example of his methods was given when he addressed the London Teachers' Association on January 29, 1944. The teachers were obviously worried about the effect of the proposed vast expansion on size of classes, and the training of the required new teachers. They were unimpressed by the explanation that quality and quantity could both be advanced at the same time. Mr. Butler then produced his real argument. There was, he said, a 'plum' for almost everybody in the Bill. If there was not one for them, there was still time to put it in. But the main 'bank balance' of the Bill must not be upset. He went on to refer to the setting up of a Commission to go into the question of higher salaries for teachers. The teachers then sat back and relaxed!

The other side of the picture is given by the following quotation from the speech by Mr. Liddall (Lincoln) in the Debate on the Second Reading of the Bill (*Hansard*, January 19, 1944, col. 283):

"... my right hon. Friend must be highly gratified that his proposals have been so widely acclaimed by the Press and people. There was one discordant note early this month when a Bedford delegate at a teachers' conference condemned the Bill as a fraud. That ignorant

outburst only strengthens the opinion held by many of us that some of the existing teachers, like some of the existing schools, will have to be altered if they are to conform to the prescribed standards."

It would be extremely interesting to know just why the Headmasters' Conference unanimously supported the Bill. The Roman Catholic Hierarchy began their Statement, which strongly criticised certain aspects of the Bill, with the words: "While we welcome the generous provisions of the Bill for the reconstruction of the national system of education . . ." a gesture which is entirely its own affair, but has strategical implications. The opening, combined with the decision of the Catholic M.P.s not to oppose the second reading, suggests a very clear victory for Mr. Butler in the preliminary negotiations. His manifest anxiety to avoid any opposition to the Bill as a whole gave evidence of the Government's awareness of its own weak position, and it seems possible that a considerable minority could have prevented the launching of the Bill during the war by expressing, in good time, their determination to oppose it on the ground 'no mandate for controversial legislation.'

The alternative to yielding, for the Government, would have been to have pushed it through, and to have directed against the minority the full force of the propaganda at its disposal. The effect of this on morale, and the clarification of the issues at stake, would have been such that it seems unlikely that the Government would have taken this course at this stage in the war. However, the sanctions available appear to have been sufficient to deter the leaders of any minority from taking the much-feared line of uncompromising opposition. What were they?

2. When the negotiations with the chief powers are complete, it is necessary to arrange for a blast of propaganda from all sides to precede and accompany the actual appearance of the projected measure. The Education Bill was particularly well provided for in this respect. A positive barrage of approval—from the Conservatives, and the Socialists, the Archbishops and the Nonconformists, the Teachers' Associations, the Headmasters, the Trades Unionists, and the Big Industrialists—was put up to smother and scare off the expected opposition. Obviously, if the Bill did not run counter to the will of ordinary people, there would be no need for all these appeals to them to unite, to be tolerant, and on no account to do anything which might interfere with its passage into Law. As it is, one can judge of the extent to which it was expected to arouse the disapproval of its victims by the size of the barrage deemed necessary to smother any expression of it.

3. Finally, in order to maintain the pretence that it is an uncontroversial measure, as regards its main principles, it is necessary actually to suppress any attempts by isolated groups or individuals to express their opposition in Parliament, in letters to the National Press, or in the reports of Conferences, etc. in the National Press. Evidence is accumulating of this suppression e.g.:

IN PARLIAMENT: an M.P., in replying to a letter from a constituent, stated that he had attended the House with the purpose of opposing the second reading, single-handed if necessary, and had approached the Speaker on both days, but was unable to get into the Debate.

The following quotations from *The Times* (February

10, 1944), which puts them under the heading *Friendly Atmosphere for Education Bill*, show another method of dealing with opposition:—

“The Education Bill comprises 111 clauses and nine schedules. At the end of two days of debate in Committee the House of Commons was still occupied with Clause 6.” (This clause establishes the County, or County Borough, Council as the Education Authority, and by implication takes away the powers of smaller authorities.) *The Times* continues:—

“There was some disappointment yesterday because the amendments relating to the position of the old Part III education authorities were ruled out from the discussion of Clause 6 on technical grounds; but these or similar amendments will be debated on Part I of the First Schedule . . .” The Part I referred to deals with the setting up of joint education boards for two areas, and does not raise the main principle of centralisation at all; also it comes after clause 111 of the Bill.

IN LETTERS TO THE NATIONAL PRESS: the same M.P., with a claim to be heard in educational matters, wrote a letter to *The Times*, criticising the main principle of State Control in the Bill. The letter has not been published, nor any other on the same lines. It will be in accordance with previous practice, however, if, once the Bill is assured of a safe passage, a few belated opposition letters are allowed to appear in some of the newspapers.

AT MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, ETC: At a National Conference on the Education Bill, addressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and held in London on February 12, 1944, a Mr. Oldenshaw tried to move an amendment, deploring the centralising of control over education at Whitehall. He was told that no amendments would be accepted, but that he might ask a question. The Town Clerk of Maidenhead then asked “Is the Conference satisfied that the best way to stimulate local interest in education is to abolish large numbers of small local authorities responsible to the people, and substitute authorities like boards of guardians, responsible to nobody?” The question was cleverly sidetracked. Later a member of the Southend Education Committee asked that in view of the omnibus nature of the resolution, and the refusal to accept amendments, it should be put to the meeting clause by clause, so that the delegates could vote for what they wanted, and would not have to vote for what they did not agree with. The reply of the Chairman (Sir Walter Citrine) was that the resolution consisted of one clause only. Later, a woman asked what was the use of all this planning the education of our children while their fathers were being killed, and demanded that Peace be made before such measures were attended to.

It goes without saying that none of these incidents was reported, but that the sense of various speakers who criticised the Bill as not going far enough in the direction of State control was reported in the National Press.

The following is a quotation from the report of a Catholic Teachers' Conference in the *Catholic Times*, January 7, 1944:

“Mr. Timms condemned the secret negotiations of the forces opposed to full financial aid to denominational schools, the suppression of opposition at their meetings, and the

N.U.T. executives' attitude of ignoring the wishes and rights of large numbers of its members.”

The opposition has therefore been restricted to expression in the press of certain minorities, of which the Catholics are the chief, and in the local press, which has published many letters against the Bill, letters to M.P.s, and the private conversation of ordinary people. Nevertheless, it has one spokesman who gets the widest publicity on the National scale, and that is Mr. Butler, the sponsor and chief beneficiary of the Bill. This gentleman has been travelling about, and, it seems, coming across some ordinary people who have expressed their views to him. These views make him very agitated, and he cannot help dragging them into his speeches in order to demolish them. For instance (*Hansard*, January 19, 1943, col. 212) “Here I want to make it clear that it is no part of the Government's policy in promoting this measure to supplant the home. I should like indignantly to repudiate any suggestion that that is our policy . . . It is the Government's desire that family life shall be encouraged . . .” or again (col. 230) “I would ask those who feel deeply to dismiss from their minds the wholly unwarrantable view that the Government desire to tear away Church schools from unwilling managers or to force them inhumanely out of business.”

Now who could have told him that these things are what he is doing? Not *The Times*, nor the Archbishop, nor the B.B.C., nor anyone who was allowed to speak in the House. Whoever it was, it is now useless, after finding it necessary to defend himself against them in Parliament, for him to pretend that there is no radical opposition to the Bill.

In conclusion, the importance of obtaining the maximum publicity for the fact of this suppression of public opposition is considerable. It will place us in a stronger position for regaining lost freedom after the war, and also for resisting other such measures (*e.g.*, the threatened compulsory insurance) which will also have to be put forward under the pretence that they are not controversial. We have at present a very limited amount of freedom of expression, as of action. If it is not used, and expanded, it will disappear altogether.

C. G. D.

## FEARS IN AMERICA

The Washington correspondent of *The Economist* has described a meeting of “a cross-section of the American middle class” (women to the number of “thirty or so”) who were asked to say what they were doing and what they thought the world was going to be like after the war. “My husband and I had fought with everything people have to fight to secure for our children a chance at an education and had them ready so they could ride a steer through college, but since the Government has got through with us our children will do well to drag a cotton sack through high school.” The correspondent also quotes the wife of a doctor serving overseas, who was apprehensive about the absorption of practices. “Here she repeated the line at present being sponsored in mass circulation by the American Medical Association—the threat to all doctors contained in such proposals to socialise medicine as the current Wagner Bill.”

## Points from Parliament

House of Commons: February 11, 1944.

### BEVERIDGE REPORT

*Sir E. Graham-Little* asked the Minister without Portfolio whether he is aware that the official brief Report, asserted to contain all that anyone needs to know about the Beveridge Report, while giving publicity to the benefits promised, suppresses certain restrictive regulations included in the full Report; and whether, as this will mislead the public, who would see the brief Report but not the more expensive full Report, he will issue an amending statement indicating particularly the suppressed passages, with publicity comparable with that accorded to the brief Report.

*Sir W. Jowitt*: The brief Report was issued in December, 1942, in view of the public demand for a shorter and cheaper edition of the full Report, and it carried no assertion in the sense suggested by my hon. Friend. It indicated plainly which of the paragraphs of the full Report had been omitted and, in general, stated very briefly the ground covered by them. The object of the brief Report would have been defeated had the contents of the omitted paragraphs been embodied with greater particularity. I do not think that there is any ground at this date for the issue of a further version of the Report.

House of Commons: February 15, 1944.

### EDUCATION BILL

Considered in Committee [*Progress 9th February*].  
[Major MILNER in the Chair]

CLAUSE 6.—(*Local education authorities*.)

Question again proposed, "That this Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*Mr. Loftus* (Lowestoft): ... This Bill is the first step towards national reconstruction after the war and this Clause involves the first step towards the centralisation of authority. That is an issue which will arise in all our post-war policies and I want to say, quite frankly, that I shall oppose centralisation, the removal from local authorities of their power, unless it is proved to be absolutely essential. This Clause has aroused consternation, not only among members of local authorities but among our ordinary citizens. I have been stopped in my constituency by many parents, with children at local schools, who are filled with concern at the effect of this Clause.

I thoroughly agree with my hon. Friend the Member for South Croydon. Under this Clause authority may be vested 40 or 50 miles away. In Lowestoft to-day, we have a vigorous authority and a population of nearly 50,000. Under the Clause, the new authority will be 44 miles away—an 88 mile journey for those who have to attend its meetings. What will be the result? The professional man, the shopkeeper and the working man, who are members of the local education authority at present, with full powers, will not be able to participate in full administration. An ordinary working-man can attend a committee meeting in the evening. He cannot spend a whole day going to Ipswich and back. In Lowestoft our municipal elections are vigorously contested. In the 25 years I have been a member of the county council

I have never known an election for a county councillor in Lowestoft. Why? Because most people have not the time to attend meetings. My hon. Friend the Member for Norwich (Sir G. Shakespeare) said that the proposed scheme would be more efficient. Efficiency is a means towards an end. The mistake we are making to-day is to make the means into an end. The object of efficiency in government should be to give the fullest opportunity to the individual to participate in the democratic administration of the country.

I say to my right hon. Friend that the onus of proof that this Clause is necessary rests on those who propose it. It must be proved to be absolutely necessary. I would challenge my right hon. Friend to prove that this Clause is necessary on the grounds of efficiency. Take the record of the Part III education authorities. Over 80 per cent. have certificated teachers, as against 60 per cent. for the counties. Take their record under the Hadow reorganisation scheme. In 1934 the boroughs carried out 59 per cent. reorganisation, the counties 39 per cent. and the Part III education authorities 71 per cent. It may be said that you must have the whole matter of education under one authority. Is that the argument? I would answer that if that argument is used we have to include the universities; by including the universities we are on the road to regionalisation and it is therefore an argument against the county councils. The hon. Member for Norwich suggested that the Clause is desirable on financial grounds, but we can prove, by the progress of reorganisation under the Part III authorities, that that argument does not apply. It can be proved in another way. I think many of these large Part III authorities contribute more to secondary education than they receive back in the cost of their secondary schools. I can prove that in my own case.

This Clause cannot, therefore, be defended on the grounds either of efficiency, of progress or of finance, and I would say quite bluntly that the Department has always been prejudiced against the Part III authorities. In 1908 they issued a report under the Balfour Act hinting that Part III authorities would have to be abolished. The Hadow Report suggested that Part III authorities could not carry out reorganisation, but that has been proved to be entirely wrong, because they have carried it out much better than the other authorities. Inquiries to examine the whole question of Part III authorities have been asked for, but they have always been refused, and now those authorities are to be abolished without any inquiry...

If we take away the power of the purse, the power of raising rates and loans, if, in short, we take away the power of finance we take away the reality of power. I would conclude with this final remark. I believe that this centralisation will be destructive of vigorous local government spirit in this country. We ought to encourage such a spirit rather than to discourage it, because on it depends our great power of self-organisation which was so invaluable three years ago. Therefore, because I believe this Clause is an injury to the whole spirit and vitality of our local government, if it comes to a Division I shall vote against it.

*Sir Ernest Graham-Little* (London University): I would support the plea for reconsideration of a plan which seems to me to carry its own condemnation. Surely, it is individual effort which makes for success in all spheres of action. I would like to draw a comparison from my own

experience of the value of local knowledge, and individual effort without which human endeavours will not succeed. I have spent a great part of my life working in a voluntary hospital. The voluntary hospital is a small institution, and it owes much of its success to the ardent interest of persons who know all about it and love it. I suggest that local knowledge and local interest are more important than anything that can be secured by the spreading out of responsibility and interest which seems to me likely to come from this Clause. I have no direct interest in either local or county authorities, but, on the general principle, I am sure it is better to have individual knowledge and interest than generally spread interest. I am much more concerned to secure efficiency than to secure democratic principles. If efficiency is secured, I would let democracy go.

*Major Procter (Accrington):* I oppose this Clause because I feel that if it is not amended it will stop efficient local authorities carrying on one of their most important functions. I represent a division which looks with apprehension on this Clause, which, if unamended, and if no attention is given to what we regard as an encroachment of the Government in local affairs will result in the filching from local authorities functions which they have carried out very efficiently in the past. This Clause is another example of the attempt by Whitehall which we have seen more and more in the last few years to govern towns by a system of remote control. By a gradual process local authorities are having their functions taken away and transferred to bigger authorities. That was done in the case of the police and fire services, and now we see the same influence at work in this Education Bill. It looks as if the war is being used as an opportunity for civil servants to take out their pet schemes, which they have filed away for years, dust them, put them into Bills, and get them passed into law without people understanding what is being done. In Lancashire we do not like to see these powers taken away from our local education authorities. We do not like it, and we want the Minister of Education to know we do not like it. Why should towns like Accrington, which, for years, have done excellent work, have their powers taken away? You are striking a grave blow at civic patriotism if you pass this Clause without amendment. Eventually, unless we say to Whitehall: "Hands off our local councils," we shall get to the position when there will be merely town halls without councillors, with only a caretaker to keep the place warm and comfortable for a local political commissar, who will govern our towns under the direction of the county and by the command of Whitehall...

*The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Butler):* ... When I am told by hon. Members that things are to be taken away from these Part III areas, my answer is that a great deal more is going to be put upon them. These authorities exist at the moment to administer elementary education, but, under the terms of this Bill, it may well be that the whole range of education, especially in the primary and secondary spheres is delegated to them... There is nothing in this Bill to alter the general structure of local government as a whole. What we are doing is to reassign certain educational functions...

*Mr. Hutchinson:* Will the Minister say something about the position of those authorities which will not be excepted districts under the Bill?

*The Deputy-Chairman:* No, I think that is just what we cannot do.

Question, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill," put, and agreed to.

CLAUSE 8.—(Duty of local education authorities to secure provision of primary and secondary schools.)

*Mr. Butler:* I beg to move, in 8, page 5, line 18, at end, to insert:

"(b) to the expediency of securing that, so far as is compatible with the need for providing efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable expense to the authority, provision is made for enabling pupils to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents."

There has been a wide feeling in the Committee and in the course of our previous consideration of the Bill that proper attention should be paid to the wishes of the parents and that nothing in the Bill should take away from the rights of parents or from the existence of the family influencing the child's life... The fruits of our deliberations have been put upon the Order Paper...

*Lieut.-Commander Bower (Cleveland):* ... my right hon. Friend says that he has simply taken the words of the 1921 Act and brought them up to date. The relevant words in that Act are:

"shall have regard to the interests of secular instruction, to the wishes of the parents as to the education of their children, and to the economy of the rates."

... The quotation I have given from the Act of 1921 gives the wishes of the parents a status of its own, whereas it is very highly qualified in the words of my right hon. Friend's Amendment. We attach very great importance to the primacy of the parents' right in determining the education of their children, and here it is being whittled away almost to nothing.

Who is to determine what is compatible with the need for providing efficient instruction and training? Who is to determine what is unreasonable expense to the authority? I really cannot feel that the wording of the Minister's Amendment is altogether satisfactory... I think my right hon. Friend might well strengthen the wording of the Amendment in the interests of parents, and I hope that he will be able to give us some assurance on the particular points I have raised, namely, as to who is to determine what is compatible and what is reasonable.

*Sir H. Williams:* I do not know what this means. In practice, suppose I am taking little Billy to school on his first day. Does it mean I have rights as a parent in discussing the curriculum with the headmaster or headmistress and doing the same at intervals throughout his school life, as people have when they are paying fees for the education of their children? If I have a child, and there is a school three-quarters of a mile away, and another half a mile away, am I entitled to choose to which of these schools I shall send my child? People say that this Amendment has, primarily, something to do with religion. I think it has but it covers the whole range of education. In what way is this enforceable by a parent against the local authority? Can they get an injunction? Unless they have the right to force the headmaster or headmistress to give attention to their wishes I do not believe these words in practice mean, anything at all.