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From Week to Week

"Somebody told me yesterday that the Government here is about to fall, but that it makes no difference, for England is governed, in these days, by three men: Montagu Norman, Otto Niemeyer (he is also mixed up in this Hungarian Loan business), and a South African called Strakosch, whom I once met at Geneva."—Daniele Varè: *Laughing Diplomat* p. 235 (London, John Murray, 1938) quoting his own diary of January 18, 1924.

Reprinted from "The Tablet":

RUSSIA

ATHEISM STILL ASCENDANT

We print the following document in full, even though it is now nearly a year old, because it has considerable "chapter and verse" value. It appeared in the course of an article entitled "The Communist Education of Youth is the Principal Task of the Komsomol," on pages 11 to 24 of the December, 1946, issue of the Moscow monthly magazine *Bolshevik*, No. 23-24:—

"THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF SOVIET YOUTH"

"I. Never forget that the priests are the bitterest enemies of the Communist State.

"II. Persuade your friends towards Communism. Remember that Stalin, who has given the Russian people a new constitution, is the head of the godless not only in the Soviet Union but throughout the world.

"III. Advise your friends and the godless to steer clear of the priests.

"IV. Beware of spies, and bring to light those engaged in sabotage.

"V. Disseminate atheistic literature among the population.

"VI. A real member of the Komsomol is at the same time a militant atheist. He must know how to use his weapons, and he must know strategy.

"VII. Wherever possible, wage war against the religious elements, and prevent their influence on the comrades.

"VIII. A real godless must be an efficient policeman. It is the duty of every atheist to protect the safety and stability of the State.

"IX. Support the godless movement also with financial contributions, which are particularly needed for our foreign propaganda, since the latter, owing to existing conditions, can only function clandestinely.

"X. You cannot be a good Communist without being a convinced atheist. Atheism is organically bound up with Communism. Both conceptions constitute the basis of Soviet authority."

"The gangs grew into Big-Business enterprises. Men

who had confined themselves to such simple endeavours as murder, robbery, thievery, prostitution, and squeeze, found themselves heads of booming construction and transportation companies, food associations, Labour Unions, and all the restaurants in town.—"Tokyo's Own Al. Capone."—*Saturday Evening Post*.

Let's see. Where are we?

De-centralisation

Vide The Parable of the loaves and fishes, "... he divided them into companies and ranks of 50 and 100."

Centralisation

"My people and I have come to an arrangement. They say what they like and I do what I like."—*Frederick the Great* (quoted by Cecil Chesterton).

"Direction of Labour"

"For when men return to an old institution which they have discarded and the proper name of which has grown odious (as we are returning to the enslavement of labour), they are particularly anxious to avoid that name, and spend much of their energy in discovering some new way of getting the old thing under a new title—thus no one will call compulsory labour slavery, nor will even the word 'compulsory' or 'compulsion' appear on the surface. There will be some other term and I for one shall follow with curiosity and delight the evolution of that term."

—HILAIRE BELLOC in *The Cruise of the Nona* (1925) quoted by MR. HENRY STRAUSS, M.P., in the Debate on the Emergency Laws (Transitional Provisions) Bill, on November 19, 1947.

The Constitutional Issue

"With centralised control of the credit system, together with permanent price control, to be sought at a Referendum early next year," says the *New Times* (Melbourne), "the controllers of the Federal Government would be in the position to destroy completely every vestige of local Government in Australia, to impose upon the Australian people the tyranny now being imposed upon the British people.

"In the absence of any written Constitution limiting its powers over the lives of individuals, the Socialist totalitarians in Great Britain proceed ruthlessly on their way. . . .

"Our forefathers obviously understood this matter much better than the modern so-called 'progressives'; thus their ability in initiating and insisting upon the acceptance of such wisdom as that embodied in Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights. If we are going to survive, we have got to re-discover the wisdom of our forefathers and discover and develop the appropriate mechanisms whereby we can take effective action against the enemies of our way of life."

PARLIAMENT

House of Commons: November 19, 1947.

Emergency Laws (Transitional Provisions) Bill

Considered in Committee.

CLAUSE 1.—(Continuation for further periods of certain Defence Regulations.)

Major Sir David Maxwell Fyfe (Liverpool, West Derby): . . . This Bill provides an opportunity for considering the Defence Regulations and selecting those which shall not continue in force. . . . The primary purpose of Regulation 58A is contained in paragraph 1. I feel it so important the Committee should appreciate its primary purpose that I venture to read it out:

"The Minister of Labour and National Service (hereafter in this Regulation referred to as 'the Minister') or any National Service Officer may direct any person in Great Britain to perform such services in the United Kingdom or in any British ship not being a Dominion ship as may be specified by or described in the direction being services which that person is, in the opinion of the Minister or Officer, capable of performing."

The effect of that is that the Minister or any local office of the Ministry can direct any person to any job. It will be appreciated that in addition there are ancillary provisions, notably in Section (4) and (4, a) of the Regulation, by which the Minister can make various orders for regulating the engagement of workers, or for securing sufficient workers for certain industries. These are the orders which have been the subject of Prayer and discussion. We are considering tonight the question of whether the fount and origin of these orders, the Regulation itself, will remain in force or not. In other words, we are considering whether or not we are to proceed along the path of industrial conscription and the slave State.

Mr. Quintin Hogg (Oxford): . . . From time to time we on this side of the Committee have been twitted with what I believe to be the totally fallacious argument that, under the system of economic life in which we repose our confidence there must necessarily be a pool of unemployed. I believe that to be false. Whether or not that argument be true or false the speech to which we have just listened can leave absolutely no doubt in the mind of any impartial observer that under the system of economics in which the hon. Member for Nelson and Colne believes—whether or not that applies equally to any or all hon. Members opposite I do not pretend to know—there must be a pool of slaves compelled not merely to work at something—because that is not the point under this regulation, which the hon. Member had evidently not read, or at least had not understood—a pool of slaves—

Dr. Morgan: Whose slaves?

Mr. Hogg: —not merely to work at something, but to work at the particular thing which the Government direct him to do. The hon. Member for Nelson and Colne was good enough—after a string of epithets upon which I shall not seek to rejoin him—to say that we did not mean what we said when we opposed this Order. I beg him to believe that he is wrong. I speak, of course, only for myself. . . .

. . . This question of freedom and slavery has always had a particularly intimate meaning for me. It is an odd confession to make, but I was brought up on the arguments between freedom and slavery, as my maternal grandfather

was concerned with the American Civil War, which was fought on that very issue. I was brought up to understand how very formidable the case for slavery really was, and how very insidious were the arguments by which it was supported. What were those arguments? They were the arguments which have been addressed to the Committee by the hon. Member for Nelson and Colne. They are the arguments by which the Minister of Labour sought to defend his Order the other day.

Mr. S. Silverman: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to be saying that at the time of the American Civil War, slavery in the Southern States was supported on the argument that the United States of America at that time were in an emergency created by a war, and had to find their way out in this way?

Mr. Hogg: The arguments were almost identical. It was in fact the main argument of the Southern States. The arguments were these: first, that the public interest required slavery, that they had to get the dirty work done somehow, and only the niggers could be made to do it. So we are going to have a class of niggers in this country, people who belong to "a form of employment incapable of exact definition," or some such phrase as that, in the new order. The dirty work has to be done somehow, and so we have to make the niggers do it. The second argument which was used was that slavery might be a bad thing, but it was a necessary thing, and the slave owners would always administer it kindly and humanely, and could be trusted to do so. In the main, the argument was true; the slave owners did, in the main, act kindly and humanely, and could be trusted to do so.

Mr. S. Silverman: I want to get this clear, because it seems a very important point. Surely, that argument, in those circumstances, was advanced in favour of making one section of the community, although the slave section, do the dirty work. If this order were directed only to one section of the community, the analogy would be complete. The difference is that whereas they say the dirty work could be done by a few, we say everybody must do his share.

Mr. Hogg: That is not so, as I am about to show from a reference to these regulations. That is precisely what the right hon. Gentleman does not say, and the hon. Gentleman, with his usual acumen, has exactly forecast my point. The effect of this Order, as I shall endeavour to make clear in the course of my ineffectual remarks, will be to impose on some people, but not on others, the obligation to do the dirty work. Precisely for that reason I say it is chattel slavery, and nothing less. . . .

The next argument which was used was, of course, that the niggers were happier when they were slaves. The hon. Gentleman did not emphasise this to quite the same extent as he emphasised some of the others. The argument is constantly heard from the Benches opposite. It is, of course, in another form, the argument we have been hearing for the last two years that in the years before the war economics enslaved people, and so now when they are enslaved legally instead of economically they will be happier because they have additional security. Of course, the niggers were happier very often when they were slaves. I doubt the strength of that argument. I doubt whether it really is sufficiently strong to justify an abominable institution. The other argument was, of course, that the niggers were so idle that they would not work unless they are made to.

Mr. Emrys Hughes (South Ayrshire): Is it in Order

continuously to describe another nation as "niggers"?

Mr. Hogg: The hon. Gentleman has not fully appreciated my argument. . . .

I was endeavouring to show that the arguments are identical with the traditional and, let it be said, most formidable arguments in favour of chattel slavery. . . . So far from treating the word "nigger" as a contemptuous reference to those who had the misfortune to be slaves in America, I was trying to summarise accurately the arguments by which chattel slavery was justified by their opponents. I had reached the argument that we heard that the niggers were so idle that they would not work unless they were made to work.

This is the argument about spivs and drones. The word "niggers" is not used yet, but "spiv" is, and both have as much justification when applied to human beings. The only disadvantage of "spiv" is that it means nothing, whereas "niggers" refers although perhaps impolitely, to an obvious physiological fact. The argument is that the spivs are so contrary that they will not work unless they are made to work. I do not like the habit of referring to a number of people whom one intends to enslave by an opprobrious epithet as an excuse for turning them into slaves. Frankly, I dislike it. . . .

I venture to point out to the Committee that even if it were true it would not justify an anti-human institution. . . .

What we are discussing tonight is the production of wealth by an economic process. It may be that the production of wealth is extremely necessary and urgent for the survival of the community; that I admit may well be the case, but if we give in on this vital point of freedom now, we are taking the decisive step to make slavery a permanent feature of our institutions. I cannot for a moment be persuaded that the mere fact that during the war death has to be dealt out with an even hand, the mere fact that this is so should justify us in abandoning the fundamental principle of freedom which is that a man should be entitled to choose his occupation, and I add, in all solemnity, that he should be entitled, if he pleases, to be a worthless and idle fellow.

Having attempted to deal sincerely with the argument of the hon. Gentleman for Nelson and Colne, I wish to address myself to the more substantial arguments which are sometimes put forward on behalf of the Government. The first argument is based on the necessity for a redistribution of labour, and for the necessity that everyone—a proposition with which we should all agree—should play his full part in so far as in him lies in the national effort at the present time. I believe that argument is bad for practical reasons, which I shall endeavour to show, but before I come to deal with the practical reasons, I want to say that even if I were persuaded that slavery was the only way out for this country, I should still be against it. I would rather see this country, much as I love it, ruined rather than see it go on with this policy. . . .

Having said that, I suggest to the Government that they are being wholly misguided as regards the practical results of their policy, because it seems to me that they are perfectly right in saying that a redistribution of labour is probably the prime necessity for our recovery from our economic problems. I admit that, and I appreciate that they are seeking to deal with this problem in this way, and that they have, at any rate, that legitimate objective in mind. If one analyses the

figures, which I think it would be out of Order to do in this speech, I think it can be made abundantly apparent that, if all the people who are now in work were only working, not harder, but just as hard, on different things than they are doing now, there probably would be either no crisis at all or one of very much smaller dimensions than is the case at present.

I do not believe that that is really capable of dispute, but what I do say is that this regulation will do nothing to effect a practical redistribution of labour at all, because it will not deal with those categories who are now primarily misemployed, and, secondly, this regulation, and the scale on which it is proposed to employ it, are still inadequate to deal with the problem of the redistribution of labour, because the turnover of labour which is required is in advance of anything whatever that will be secured by the operation of this regulation, which is all that public opinion will tolerate the Government to impose.

Therefore, I say that this is a misguided approach. We are sometimes asked on this side of the Committee for an alternative. Well, there is an alternative—an alternative which I should not be in Order to develop now, but which I can mention in a word—the return to the price mechanism. The price mechanism has its defects and it will always have its defects. So has slavery, and if I have to choose between the two, I know which I am going to choose. Moreover, I believe that the defects of the price mechanism can be overcome, whereas the defects of slavery cannot, and I believe that the price mechanism is able to effect changes in the redistribution of labour on a scale comparable to what is required, whereas slavery cannot, because, whatever else may be tried, this people has never, by its nature, been addicted to a life of servitude. . . .

There are people who prefer slavery to freedom because it gives them greater security. I suggest that they are selling their birthright for a mess of pottage. I cannot help it if the hon. Gentleman makes that choice. I believe it to be true that, if the price mechanism were allowed to return in our present economic situation, the hon. Gentleman would not suffer the experiences of 1929. I am bound to say that, if it was not so, I would prefer freedom to slavery, even if it were freedom to starve—[An HON. MEMBER: "What does the hon. Gentleman know about that?"] Now, apparently, we are to be starved, but not with freedom, on 2,700 calories a week, or less than the unemployed had before the war.

Dr. Morgan: That is not true.

Mr. Hogg: I have one or two other things to say to hon. Gentlemen opposite who prefer security to freedom. Their attitude is not merely false, it is also a very foolish one, because, as a matter of fact, all the good things of life and all the material standards of life, for which we have been working and fighting for years, now depend, in the last resort, upon freedom, and, if we destroy freedom, in the end we shall destroy that state of society in which these things are possible.

This regulation, it is alleged, is designed only against the idle who will not play their part in the national effort, but that is not its effect. Its effect will be to select for adverse treatment people who are either self-employed or who are employed in one, two or three named categories, or who are employed in some capacity which it is difficult to classify.

(continued on page 7).

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Saturday, December 6, 1947.

The Local Government Bill

Mr. Aneurin Bevan's new Local Government Bill presents, among other items in a mixed bag, a new and confusingly statistical method of allocating Government grants to Local Authorities; a proposal that valuation for rating assessments shall in future be done by a new central department of the Income Tax Office; and new modes of valuing houses for assessment purposes.

Mr. Derek Walker-Smith described the probable results of the first item: "... the effect of these proposals is to see, for example, that the rates will not rise more in Durham than in Surrey, but the effects of the proposals are not to see that the rates will not rise in Durham and Surrey, which they very probably will. It is because this Bill is based on the principle of the equalisation of burdens and not on their alleviation."

To invite the Income Tax Office to make a new Domesday Book is like giving powers to make a map of your private house to the hold-up man who robs you at your office; Domesday Books are compiled at the behest of Conquerors. The powers given to the new assessing officer have hitherto been shared by three authorities more or less locally answerable for what they do.

The proposals on methods of valuation are calculated to discriminate against the owner-occupier of small houses, and occupiers of small flats, valuations of which will probably be doubled.

At second reading the Bill offered little opening for a great attack on principle, but tempting avenues for criticism of method. Most of these last were explored, and they led deep into the confusing brash of the technique of valuation and taxing (with ominous hints for the rate and taxpayers of new 'sources of revenue' for the local authorities).

The effect of the Bill will be to confuse the ratepayer, and to confuse him particularly on the grounds for a clear allocation of financial and other responsibility by the ratepayer. The central authority makes the assessment, the local authority the rate: who then is responsible for what we have to pay? And when we have paid our rates, and when further, Mr. Bevan has taken the weighted population and divided it into the total rateable value to find the average rateable value per head of the population, and then pushed the Exchequer (for which read 'our tax-pocket') into paying to augment the local authorities' rateable value to the extent to which they may fall short of the average... why then how much have we paid? Who now understands his own income tax? Who will understand his own rates and the incidence of his taxes on his rates? The cheerful headline of the ('rabid Tory') *Daily Mail*, "Good; rates are going

down", is what Mr. Bevan would like us to believe. Were expenditure to continue at its present rate some local authorities might be in a position to lower their rates—but only at the expense of other people's taxes. But expenditure will certainly rise: consider the rates necessary to pay for cradle-to-grave control by hosts of those benevolent and brief-cased bureaucrats in black hats—the rates needed to teach them to be bureaucrats; to make them benevolent; to set them up with Art galleries or huge hotels and to equip them with a trousseau of forms, condescending, patronising, incomprehensible, illogical and invariably impertinent. And when you have considered the Education Act and the new Health Act, and intelligently subtracted the Poor Law and the Hospitals (which you are now to pay for from your tax-pocket) have you remembered the new Planning Act; and what of the Fire Services Act? No, rates will not go down.

Mr. Bevan's Bill is in fact in the nature of a precautionary dispersion of responsibility. When facing the appalling rise in rates and taxes involved in implementing these 'services' (short of a misplaced monetisation of stolen social credit, which is unlikely, because it means an admission of the existence of social credit) no-one can complain of unequal rating, and demand relief on those grounds; and if they do demand relief from rates they have to make it up out of taxes. "It is impossible to treat an authority badly;" said Mr. Bevan in introducing this Bill, "all you can do is to ill-treat a person." So he does.

Now the most important thing to notice about this Bill is that before the war, no one would have stood for it. People understood what rates were, what assessments meant, that both were too high and were pressing to have them lowered. Many successful campaigns were carried through reducing rates and assessments and pointing out the disparity of the sums paid away in loan charges, which in many cases amounted to the equivalent of much more than half the amount raised in rates. So successful were these campaigns (through following the advice of social crediters and the United Ratepayers' Advisory Association), so robust the spirit and so enormous the power generated, that the financial system itself was threatened and had war not intervened a change in it might have been forced and *governed by the real desires of the people*. But war came; and some years later a bill was passed regulating the borrowing of local authorities, which now goes through a central government-sponsored authority. Thus the attack on loan charges was obscured, for the charges on the new loans were less exorbitant (which was good) and the ultimate sources of the money well camouflaged, at least from the ordinary man. The present Local Government Bill has a similar effect on the incidence of rates.

But what of Parliament? The gathering instituted specifically to *not-pay* taxes, to protect people from tyrannical taxation, now chiefly concerns itself with devices to screw more money from them, by local means as rates or central means as taxes or grants. Yet our people still want lower rates, and our taxes are almost beyond bearing: but who is there now to stand between the people and tyrannical taxation? A Parliament subverted by its own power? The history of Edward I's efforts at raising money for his wars, for instance, is one of stubbornness and turbulence on all three sides, ending again in the re-affirmation of Magna Charta. Do we lack the courage to demand, as our forefathers did, as the price of a tax, some personal freedom for all inviolable by the regulations and restrictions of the temporary holders of power.

E.S.D.

That Old Serpent*

(1)

By NORMAN F. WEBB.

At the conclusion of the first part of this appreciation of what is undoubtedly a splendid example of biography, tragically cut off before its actual completion, a question was asked, and it was suggested that an attempt might be subsequently made to answer it. The question was this: was the historical figure known as Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, a unique and isolated phenomenon and his life an achievement of pure personality? Or, alternatively, did it constitute a useful and pertinent example of repeatable political principle? Neither question is directly tackled in this present essay; chiefly for the reason that Mr. Money-peny's exposition of the controversy over the Repeal of the Corn Laws is so excellent, and throws so much additional light on Disraeli himself, that the matter had to be deferred. This super-heated controversy of just a hundred years ago over what were, ostensibly at least, only differing methods of achieving the same objective, the well-being of Great Britain and her dependencies as they then were, was the turning-point in Disraeli's remarkable career and, according to himself, not in that only but in the affairs of the world.

The circumstances and events of 1832-47, which appear to have a remarkably close parallel in the present time, demonstrate with dramatic clearness the extreme difficulty which the average human mind experiences in separating and distinguishing between methods and ends. Paradoxically, the real need is, of course, to reconcile them; but they must be seen in separation, in their proper sequence, before they can be so reconciled, and the average individual's thinking is too confused to achieve within himself that necessary operation. His mind contains no clear conception of means and ends as two distinct and separate parts of a projected whole or synthesis. More often than not it is filled with a confused conflict for precedence between the apparently divergent impulses behind the one and the other, in which any kind of reconciliation is almost impossible. And it is in this more or less endemic condition of mental confusion, and the indecision arising naturally from it, and particularly when its oscillations are suddenly intensified by some special circumstance or event—a state which has been deftly epitomised in a Bulletin issued in 1936 by the organisation known as P.E.P. (Political and Economic Planning) as “in war, or under threat of war”—that the agents of the Evil Forces of the world always choose to go to work. With unerring instinct they seize the opportunity, ostensibly to remedy the trouble by removing the alleged cause, but in fact always to gain some particular strategic point of their own at the expense of a distracted populace.

The impulse is perennial; all history teems with examples of it,—to take one at random, and, with no special emphasis, the Crusades,—only the scale alters, its catastrophic effects tending terribly to increase in proportion to its numerical size, as the last three major wars, counting in the Napoleonic War, tragically demonstrate.

And we see the tendency in full operation to-day when, after a world war insidiously used to acquire powers of almost complete control over society in this country, they are

afterwards employed to wound and deflect the nation's economic and cultural life, and permanently to obstruct and diminish her productive capacity by the arbitrary introduction of new methods, as a solution of post-war shortages. The proposition is, of course, without any coherence or logical association whatsoever. But that is the nature of all such propositions, where control of the chief organs of information has been obtained. It takes the simple form of an arbitrary statement that suits the long-laid plans of its authors; beyond that, according to the formula, nothing is needed except a general atmosphere of crisis.

That is the atmosphere to-day, just as it was a hundred years ago when in October, 1845, Sarah Disraeli wrote from Buckinghamshire, where she tended her ageing literary father, to her brother Ben: “It rains here so that I don't think a dove would find a dry spot to rest on. It cannot be called an Autumn, for most of the leaves have been washed off the trees. But our present despair, and everyone's, is the potato cholera . . .” At that time England was passing through a social and economic crisis, precipitated by the international upheaval which followed the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. The Irish potato famine added just that touch of immediate panic that allowed the International Money Interests to use the occasion for their own purposes; purposes which had little or nothing to do with the starving Irish peasants. Then, as now, Westminster was stirred to its depths, which, it has to be admitted, are never very far from the surface: “Four Cabinets in one week!” exclaims Lord Roehampton in Disraeli's novel, *Endymion*, “the Government must be even more sick than the potatoes.”

The real impulse behind the proposal to repeal the Corn Laws or tariffs on imported grain, was largely in order to promote the interests of international trade (Exports) and credit finance. The immediate object alleged was the need to save the starving Irish peasantry. Between the two ideas there was no logical association whatsoever; for, in fact, the only hope of the Irish small-holder, deprived of his staple food, was the price he might get for his little patch of oats, the only protection for which lay in the tariffs. As a means to meet the ostensible end it can be seen to be as unrealistic as the present cry for nationalisation in the interests of production. In both cases the attack is on an allegedly ineffectual method. In fact, it is an attack on “empiricism” in general, the method of trial and error, which is the reverse of doctrinaire, implying, as it does, some policy beyond itself.

On this issue, Disraeli, the rising young Jewish member, who had not yet been even in a minor office, courageously took his stand, not only against the whole Whig Party and their international banking friends, but against his own formidable leader. The system he defended, which is known as the Mercantile—Mercantilism—is traced from Elizabeth and Burghleigh, under whom, and carrying on into Stuart times, we see its useful effect on England's character and consequence. Not easy to define, it may perhaps be best described as anticipation of Bentham's political and economic philosophy of “enlightened self-interest” applied nationally. What it amounted to was the employment of tariffs with the single-minded object of balancing and ironing out any unevenness in home production. Neither Free Trade, nor Protection, but both, or either, according as the enlightenment of the government saw the nation's need. The individual with exclusive theories got short shift in the spacious days of Shakespeare; there was little sympathy at High Levels with

*The matter for these observations is taken entirely from Vol. II of *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli*, by W. F. Money-peny, and forms a continuation of that published in *The Social Crediter* for August 9, 1947, on Vol. I.

what may be called the Malvolio-Cripps complex—"Because thou art virtuous, are there to be no cakes and ale?" Seventeenth century England was beautifully poised. But it was a precarious balance, because so much more instinctive than conscious, and the international exploiters of the fruits of natural, unself-conscious equilibrium, saw their opportunity of killing two birds with one stone, in financing the wonderful and expansive potential of Stuart England, and directing it against their own great rival in the international field, the Church. Hence the turmoil of the domestic scene. Disraeli quotes a statement attributed to William III in a secret conversation at the Hague, preceding his entry into England with the Bank of England, so to speak, as part of his military impedimenta: "Nothing but such a constitution as you have in England can have the credit that is necessary to raise such a sum as a great war requires." One wonders if the same reflection is not being made to-day of the American Constitution.

So Dutch Finance, as Disraeli calls it, was introduced into England on the understanding that William would never let the landowners, established by Henry VIII, be despoiled of their lands by a revengeful Church; the conditions on their side being that they became internationalists rather than nationalists; or perhaps better that they altered their cosmic conception from one based on an international Church to one deriving from an international Money System. No doubt this suited William's backers, but it had the unfortunate result of confusing and destroying the confidence of English statesmanship; introducing alien objectives into their Mercantilism, their economic methods, and considerably dimming the enlightenment of their self-interest as far as the nation itself was concerned. For the men of Elizabeth's reign, figuratively speaking, England's prosperity was their own; their estate was not being mortgaged or guaranteed by an outside influence that might require them to follow this or that policy regardless of the needs of the country. But it was far otherwise with the ruling Whigs of the Eighteenth Century; all simplicity had gone out of the issue facing them, with their financial commitments abroad calling for the sacrifice of the prosperity of the broad acres which constituted their home, and incidentally, but with far greater significance, the home of all the many they governed. Is it any wonder that the *rise* of tariffs, called Mercantilism, had by the beginning of the Nineteenth Century become an abuse, with all enlightenment gone out of its application, and that the political economy of the country—the field of statesmanship—had reverted to almost impenetrable jungle, a perfect cover and breeding ground for ideological partisans? Whatever face England presented to the outer world at the turn of the last century, her domestic policy had already lost much of its stability and confidence, and the demoralization, the internationalization, of England's happy economy—that just balance that had produced from the primeval forest the almost unmatched beauty of the English country-side and market town—had set in.

Up to about the last quarter of the Eighteenth Century the country had been an exporter of wheat. But by 1791 a deficit appeared, due partly to the drain which had already begun even then from agriculture to industry, and partly to the increase in the population. A tariff was imposed. But expedients that were a protection in time of peace, were found to be of no use "under war, or threat of war," and all through the Napoleonic period the price of wheat steadily rose. Under

the tariff this phenomenon, whether intentionally or not, was largely misinterpreted as the direct result of the rapacious landowners feathering their nests at the expense of the country; which was actually its short-term effect, though not necessarily due to any particular astuteness on the part of its beneficiaries. As is now beginning to be recognised, the main cause was the gradual emergence into the light of the inherent defects of a classical and rigid Monetary System, crystallised and finally clamped down on the expansive national economy by the creation of the Bank of England. Here again there is a remarkably close parallel to the situation of the Industrialist to-day, blamed, as was the land-owner of a century ago, for the inherent, *and still inhering*, defects of a system of distribution he does not understand or directly control, the operations of which automatically play up to all his less admirable instincts at the expense of his co-operators in production. And where his industrial forefathers, led by Cobden and incited by these same International Money Interests, headed the hunt that, in the sacred name of International Trade, has destroyed England's happy agrarian balance, he in his turn is now being arraigned everywhere by the latest proteges of the same Destructive Power, in the guise this time of Totalitarian and Bureaucratic Governments—the ultimate stage of that insidious combine, referred to by Disraeli as "those who are beneath power, and those who would be above it"; big business using the mob for its own ends—and in being made the scapegoat for the horrid results produced by the very System which those Powers impose and maintain. Nothing short of an elementary symbolism can enable one to comprehend so terrific a movement; and almost automatically the mind reverts to the references in Revelations to "that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world," whose downfall is predicted there. "Now is come salvation and strength," exclaims the far-seeing revelator, "... for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

And just as the well-favoured Augustan grandees of those golden times failed in not seeing that a bigger portion of their own glowing affluence spilled over to the straitened agricultural labourers and tenant farmers who were their partners—an elementary generosity which would have prevented the excessive drift to the towns;—coming short through complacency, to use a favourite term of their age, in the enlightened charity of their self-interest, so the Nineteenth Century industrial captain has even more conspicuously failed to recognise the reasonable needs of his co-operators in production. If a closer identity had existed between the self-interest of the Whigs and that of the people of England, the national policy of the country could not have been so deflected and the minds of its rulers divided by the alien counsel and pressure of Threadneedle Street. And the same applies to the industrialist to-day and in almost identical circumstances. By their lack of enlightenment and common charity they have lent a persuasive air of disinterested humanitarianism to the propaganda of their enemies, which it is extremely difficult to combat, and which constitutes its most powerful aid in recruiting popular support for what is, in fact, just an envious intrigue stirred up amongst the less admirable of those ignored ones to gain power and income at the expense of the population as a whole, and without working for it. Viewing the matter even from its narrowest angle, there can be no doubt that with a reasonable spread of the potential prosperity even of the first decade of the

present century, such as the Social Credit National Dividend and compensated price would have automatically assured, the British Commonwealth of Nations would have presented a front sufficiently united to have frustrated all such international intrigue as precipitated the two world wars. Most certainly this last one could have been averted, had not the light which the book *Economic Democracy* was beginning to shed on the situation been peremptorily switched off in 1923. We can hardly blame the privileged rulers of the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth centuries if they failed to see what has become so infinitely more marked in these days without attracting the faintest official attention even of a Conservative Opposition. The phenomenon was new to them and only in its incipient stages then, and except for a small and not outstandingly intelligent following, Disraeli was alone in his complete and informed recognition of the pressure of international intrigues which enveloped the situation.

(To be continued).

PARLIAMENT—continued from page 3.

That is the operation of this regulation. It is those people whom we are determining to enslave, and not the population as a whole. There is no question at all of the great mass of the population being affected by this regulation in any way. There is no truth at all in the suggestion made from the benches opposite that all that is being asked is that everybody should make his own contribution. What is being asked is that certain specific categories should be enslaved, and that I am not prepared to concede on any terms whatever.

I want to ask the Committee, in the few remaining moments that are left to me, to consider what would have been the effect on various well-known historical personages if this regulation had been in force in the past, instead of the rule of Common Law by which Englishmen were then considered to be free. What would have happened to the man who invented the steam engine? Was he in a form of employment which it was easy to classify? There he was, wasting his time in the kitchen looking at the steam coming out of the spout of the kettle. What would the right hon. Gentleman have said about him? He would probably have said that he was a "spiv at the spout." . . .

If the right hon. Gentleman says that he is such a good judge of poetry and art, and such things, that the people affected in this way will only have to submit specimens of their work to him in order to get a licence to pursue their craft in their own way and time, I can only say that I do not believe him. There is only one way in which one can really value the operations of the artist, and that is by giving him freedom. Oddly enough, moreover, there is only one person in the world who can classify who is and who is not a genuine artist, and that is the person himself.

If we are, in fact, going on with this policy, there is absolutely nothing in the world which is going to protect the ordinary man or woman who happens to be something of an individualist—and who happens to wish to lead his or her own life—and, it may be, to offer to the community in that way something far better than those whose business it is to be occupied more regularly in some humdrum task—from being prosecuted and enslaved, and sent to prison. I would point out that I do not speak on this matter for other Members of my party; I do not speak for anybody but myself, but, nonetheless, I speak with complete sincerity. I believe

it is the duty of people to refuse to register under this regulation.

If anybody does refuse on conscientious grounds, let the right hon. Gentleman send him to prison and I shall be proud to go with him. I shall do my best to get him out if I do not go.

The Minister of Labour (Mr. Isaacs) . . . The hon. Gentleman has tried to play with what he himself has admitted is a serious subject.

Mr. Hogg: I was never more serious in my life.

Mr. Isaacs: The hon. Gentleman finished by advocating that people should disobey this regulation and refuse to register.

Mr. Hogg: I meant that seriously, too.

Mr. Isaacs: I believe the hon. Gentleman did. I wish it was possible to test the hon. Gentleman's sincerity in the matter by giving him a direction and seeing what he would do about it.

Mr. Hogg: On a point of Order. I am very happy to accept that test. The right hon. Gentleman can direct me to-morrow, and I shall refuse to obey his direction.

Mr. Byers: On a point of Order. Is it in Order for a Minister to be as vindictive as that so quickly?

The Deputy-Chairman: Perhaps it would be as well if the Minister continued his speech.

Mr. Isaacs: I want to deal with some of the points which have been made this afternoon. . . .

He [Mr. Hogg] went on to refer to the effect on individuals. That is a matter to which I should like to come. He said we had no right to deprive men and women of the right to choose their jobs. What are we to do about this? Are we to see that people are to be deliberately engaged in work not necessary to the welfare of the community at a time when jobs are necessary? I do not know whether it was the hon. Member for Oxford or the hon. Member for Nelson and Colne (Mr. S. Silverman), who spoke before him, who referred to the fact that asking people to do those things they care about would be effective. I have a recollection of my own, of when, as a young man, I was engaged to sweep the snow from the streets of Finsbury—not because I wanted to do so, but because I had no other work to go to; and I remember I was walking to work in shoes that let in the water through to my feet, and I wanted a pair of boots. . . .

[*Mr. Isaacs's continuing argument was that the economic sanction operating on the individual between the wars was more terrible in its effect than the Regulation under discussion*].

. . . Sometimes the Opposition tell us that we are not taking this crisis seriously enough. The Government take it sufficiently seriously to ask our people to surrender that amount of freedom for the time being, and to take the jobs which we offer them. Yet, in doing this we are told we are doing a bad thing. How do we work it? When a man or woman comes into the employment exchange, we offer a choice of jobs. I went into this before, but perhaps hon. Members will not mind if I repeat it again. If it is possible, we will offer a man a job in the industry in which he has been actively employed. If not, we shall find an industry in which that class of labour can be usefully employed. It is not until a man has turned down the offer of the four jobs, for which

he is suited in the opinion of the officer, that he is told to take one. If a man who is offered a job accepts it, he goes there without being directed—[*Laughter.*] What is wrong with that? I can see what is wrong; it is not the statement which is wrong. Let me repeat it. A man goes to the exchange. He is asked to take a job. He says: "I do not like that one." He is shown another, and says: "I will take that one." Having taken that one, he is not directed.

Mr. Molson (The High Peak): It is Hobson's choice.

Mr. Isaacs: If hon. Members opposite are asking me to impose directions upon a man directly he comes into an exchange without giving him a chance, let them say so. We are trying to be fair. Please understand that some of us have worked side by side with working people. . . .

Mr. Blackburn (Birmingham, King's Neston) . . . I want to put to the Minister of Labour a point I put to him on the last occasion we debated this matter. It was decided by the unanimous vote of the Labour Party, on May 29, only six months ago, that we were not to have direction of labour, but were to have a differential wages policy. That was supported by Lord Dukeston, speaking for the Municipal and General Workers' Union, Mr. Arthur Deakin, speaking for the Transport and General Workers' Union, and the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, replying on behalf of the Executive, who used these words on the subject:

"We cannot accept the resolution moved by Mr. Deakin because it might, in some circumstances, appear to indicate that we favoured the direction of labour. We do not. We favour a differential wages policy."

It is only fair to recognise the fact that at the Election we said it was our intention to enlarge freedom. In my manifesto I made it clear that Socialism did not involve the direction of labour. I was specifically challenged on that point by my Conservative opponent. He said that Socialism did involve the direction of labour, and I said that it did not imply the direction of labour—

. . . I emphatically deny that Socialism implies, or should imply, in our British sense of Socialism, any diminution of personal freedom whatsoever. I say that we fought the General Election on the issue of obtaining a planned economy with personal freedom.

My second point is that the powers of direction must be linked with raw material controls. I suggest that a serious aspect of this is the threat made by the President of the Board of Trade, as he then was, only two months ago, when he said that if a firm did not fulfil what the Government regarded as its obligations in the realm of export trade, raw materials would be withdrawn from that firm. I do not deny that raw material controls are vital and must be exercised with great care, but if raw material controls are to be exercised in that way—

The Deputy-Chairman: I have allowed the hon. Member a great deal of latitude, but I think he is now going much too far.

Mr. Blackburn: I am submitting, Mr. Beaumont, that by the use of raw materials as controls, the Government are artificially creating unemployment and thereby placing workers under the powers of direction. That is a view put to me by many trade unionists, who ought to know, and I hope that it is a point which the Government will deal with. I would say that it is legitimate to use raw materials as controls in some circumstances, but it seems to me that a combination

of the withdrawal of raw materials, on the one hand, and the power of direction of labour, on the other, would be a most dangerous thing.

Finally, I come to the main point which I think this Debate raises. It has been said that the alternative to the direction of labour is direction by starvation . . .

Surely, the Government have taken the necessary steps to see that there is no starvation in this country again. Surely, we are all proud of the social security proposals which we have put forward. I think that starvation, so far as direction by starvation is concerned, is a thing of the past. . . .

[Mr. Henry Strauss (Combined English Universities), Mr. W. J. Brown (Rugby), Mr. Boyd-Carpenter (Kingston-upon-Thames), Mr. Hopkin Morris (Carmarthen) and Mr. Manningham-Buller (Davenry) all made points which we should quote but for lack of space. The Amendment was defeated by 217 votes to 131.]

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