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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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The Abolition of "Interest"

Since the clientele of a newspaper reflects closely its journalistic standards, we should expect the circulation of *The Scotsman* to comprise an unusually high percentage of intelligent and well-informed readers and correspondents, and in the main, we believe that to be the case. This being so, a correspondence on the abolition of "interest" which has occupied its columns for some weeks is the more depressing.

The tone is all too familiar—the use of the word "capital" to denote money or credit, the assumption, without proof, and in the face of the evidence, that interest on money is the same thing as usury, that it has no reflection in fact, that it is the cause of our troubles, and that "Justice", which everyone seems to feel is something of the obvious nature of the multiplication table, and on which there can be as little argument, demands its abolition.

Those of us who have struggled against the raging torrent of abstractionism which resulted in the "nationalisation", i.e., centralisation of control with that of police sanctions of the Bank of England, must feel that once again we are confronted with Original Sin. Yet it is not so. It is not natural to argue and fight to the end that two oppressive agencies, those of Government and Finance, shall be combined into one irresistible tyranny, but rather an acquired and cultivated madness. If a simple child of nature were to be convinced that an accounting of the fructification of a grain of wheat was necessary to the useful distribution of the crop, it would delight him that a device which would tally with that increase should be employed. But the products of our educational system ("Who can trace what is taught in our village schools?"—*Protocols of Zion*) have acquired such immunity to the idea of a connection between the mind and things, that they see neither the necessity nor the connection.

If this materialistic civilisation is to continue, and we see no immediate alternative, there is no way open to man by which he can control his destiny other than by exactly the same method by which the Mediæval Parliaments controlled the King—by voting or withholding Supply. That power has been usurped almost entirely; and the usurpation would be completed by the abolition of the "interest" which is all that the public gets of the financial credit created by the centralisers, on behalf, and to the injury of, the individuals who comprise it.

So far as we have noticed, in no letter of the series is there any mention of a subject which is integral with that of "interest"; we refer to the steady fall in the value of money units. If this were not due to an hypnotic blindness, induced by an "educational" curriculum designed to blunt the critical faculty, surely someone of the intellectual standard proper to a writer to *The Scotsman* would have commented on the fact that the fall in the value of money exceeds the rate of interest allowed on Savings Certificates. That is to say, in terms of real values, they are a fraudulent offer.

This coin-clipping, introduced by the Jews six-hundred years ago, and pursued in various forms since then, has more to do with financial disorder than all the normal interest rates paid to individuals.

Form C. F. 6.

National Insurance (Applications)

"Sir E. Graham-Little asked the Minister of National Insurance whether he is aware that a number of citizens, while being prepared to pay the weekly contributions to National Insurance, have refused to apply for registration from conscientious convictions; and whether he will supply such persons with cards before subjecting them to the measures required by Regulation 1274 of 1948.

"Mr. J. Griffiths: I am not aware of such objections. But if a person prefers to give the Department the particulars necessary to determine whether he is liable or entitled to pay contributions either in a letter or orally at a local office of my Department rather than by filling up the standard form of application, he is at liberty to do so."—*House of Commons, Official Report*, December 1, 1948.

Concerning the above, a correspondent points out the apparent discrepancy between the Minister's disclaimer of knowledge of objection to "apply" for alleged benefits which the individual does not desire to receive and conscientiously objects to pay for, and his assertion (see *T.S.C.* August 23, 1947) that by His Majesty's command, he had given his careful consideration to a Petition for the Right to Contract Out, which ends with an unequivocal declaration of objection to National Insurance on moral grounds. Our correspondent gives further evidence of divergence in the Ministry's reply to a letter from himself. This correspondence was published under the heading 'C. F. 6.' in *T.S.C.* for July 10, 1948. He has sent us a copy of a further letter to which there has been no reply. This was addressed to the manager of a local office of the Ministry.

It seems clear that the million or so people who have not yet applied for registration, who are being threatened with dire penalties if they do not sign Form C. F. 6., have the alternative open to them of attending a local office to give such particulars of a factual nature as are required.

Serge Nilus

An article in *The Patriot* says that Serge Nilus, was the husband of a lady in waiting of the Empress Alexandra, Mlle. Ozeroff, and suggests that the original of the *Protocols* was found by him in a library inherited from a close friend of the Emperor Alexander I. "A couple of months later Nilus published and sent her [the owner] a copy of the *Protocols* of the Learned Elders of Zion. In thanking him she asked him for her book, but his reply was evasive. The book was never returned."

PARLIAMENT

House of Commons: November 25, 1948.

Identity Cards

Lieut.-Commander Hutchison asked the Minister of Health if it is intended to retain identity cards permanently.

The Minister of Health (Mr. Aneurin Bevan): The cards are an essential part of the National Registration system, which renders valuable services in connection with food and clothes rationing and in other ways; they must be retained so long as they are of use.

Lieut.-Commander Hutchison: Does the Minister recollect that three years ago in this House he himself expressed his distaste for these cards and will he consider their abolition as soon as possible?

Mr. Bevan: The hon. and gallant Member will recall also that I have made a number of orders taking away most of the unpleasant features of the card system.

Mr. Renton: Is the Minister aware that national identity cards have one number and insurance cards have another number and, bearing in mind that so many members of the community are covered by both, will he consider the possibility of co-operating with his right hon. Friend to ensure that each member of the community has to think of only one number?

Mr. Bevan: I cannot, offhand, see where the advantage would be, but I can see how it could easily happen that the two cards would have different numbers.

Iron and Steel Bill—Allocation of Time

Mr. Quintin Hogg (Oxford) . . . I beg hon. Members opposite to believe that we on this side of the House who are opposed to the Guillotine Measures that have been proposed from time to time, and in particular to this one, are sincerely convinced that in proposing them the Government are murdering Parliamentary democracy and that those who support the Government are either their accomplices or their dupes. I must venture to point out some reasons why we hold that view.

So far as I am concerned, this is not a new view. Hon. Members will perhaps recollect that the very first speech I have delivered in this Parliament, in August, 1945, was a speech on the subject of Parliamentary procedure. On that occasion I ventured to say to the House that if ever there came a time—and I hoped there would not—when the Government of the day were able to say to the Opposition, "We are going to get our Measure, whatever you say, by a particular day, in accordance with a particular time-table," we should then have passed over the line which divides Parliamentary democracy from a dictatorship.

All the time since then we have been approaching closer and closer to this point until today, before there has been any discussion, apart from the Second Reading Debate, we are asked to send a Bill upstairs with a timetable attached so that the Government are able to say in advance, "Whatever you do and whatever you say, we are going to get our Bill through" by a particular date. On that previous occasion I ventured to point out, and I wish, with permission of the House, to point out again now, the reasons which led me to make that observation. First, we have to face the realities of modern Parliamentary democracy. They are these: the right to vote in the way which our consciences dictate is no

longer a guarantee of freedom, because under Parliamentary conditions the party system normally operates in such a way that the result of every vote is a foregone conclusion—400 minus 200 equals 200. Therefore, the Government need never give in because they are afraid of the right of Members to vote in accordance with their consciences.

I added on that occasion, and again I remind hon. Members today, that neither is the right of free speech in this Chamber an adequate guarantee of a free democracy. I told them then, and I tell them again now, what will be the position if the Government once know they are going to get their business through by a particular time. The position will be this. You can say what you like and call them any names you like, you can indulge in whatever criticism you like, you may defeat their arguments to whatever extent you like and at the end they will be perfectly happy and say, after the Division, "Very nice speech old boy," but they will have got their Business just as much as if you had not spoken at all.

Under modern Parliamentary conditions, under our actual working constitution, there is one sanction of freedom in this House and one sanction alone. That is the fact that the Government know that a want of reason on their part, a want of desire to give in to argument, a want of willingness to pay attention to other peoples' convictions and feelings, will, in fact, lead to greater difficulties in the passage of their own Business. That is the only thing which keeps this House from being a dictatorship and that is the thing which the Government are attacking in this Motion this evening.

It is because they are attacking the very citadel of freedom in our remaining institutions that we oppose the Motion bitterly; and we oppose it bitterly in the name of democracy. We do not believe that this House will be a free democratic assembly when and if this Motion is passed. It matters absolutely nothing that the right hon. Gentleman the Lord President of the Council should quote a number of even partial precedents for what he proposes to do, because the fact of the matter is that this is not merely a party question. Government after Government, of different party complexions, come to that Box, one party, then another, exulting in their Parliamentary majority.

Each party, when it attains that position, believes, I have no doubt sincerely, that it will stay there for ever, and that the people who are in the minority will never get a chance again. So each time the Government goes forward with fresh and ever fresh encroachments upon the right of the minority to govern the time of our Parliamentary proceedings. I am not accusing this Government of being the first, of taking the first step, in these proceedings. On the contrary, any student of our Parliamentary procedure will realise that what I am describing is something which has been going on for over a hundred years. But we are approaching, as I ventured to remind the House before, very close to the line which divides a free Parliament from a Reichstag. This Parliament, although it did not take the first, is beginning to take the last of the decisive steps which are bringing us over the line. It is for that reason that we oppose this thing with such force and bitterness today.

. . . On these occasions there are always hon. Members to be found opposite who advance the same sort of argument, which is, "We have a mandate for what we propose in this Bill"—or whatever it may be that is under discussion—"because it was contained in our Election programme. You,

the Opposition, although we will of our good nature allow you to state your case, are to have no effect whatever upon our decision to do it. No amount of reason that you may bring to bear will make any difference to us."

In our view that is not democracy, for reasons which we believe to be good, sound Parliamentary reasons. In the first place, we would venture to remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that whatever else their mandate might allow them to do, it was not a mandate to destroy the fundamental freedom of our Parliamentary institutions. Their mandate to nationalise the steel industry, or whatever industry might be under discussion, was a mandate to propose to this House of Commons, in accordance with existing usage, Measures for discussion in this House. Our view of Parliamentary institutions is that discussions of this House should be real discussions and not sham discussions. If we should, by the exercise of reason and argument, prevail upon some mind not utterly closed on the benches opposite to see that we and not they happen to be right, they should not, at any rate in advance, declare their inability to accept reasons of that kind.

We think, therefore, that the doctrine of mandate does not support the view which hon. Members opposite seek to put upon it. Moreover, in the nature of a Measure of this kind, it was utterly impossible for the people of this country, in the heated weeks of a General Election, to have known either the details or even the broad principles of the schemes of nationalisation which were put before them. They could not have known the details or the principles of the Government's Measure for the nationalisation of coal, but of the principles of this nationalisation Measure they could have known still less, since we well know that they were arrived at as a result of some sort of internal compromise in comparatively recent months. And to be told, as we are now told, that the Government, although they will graciously allow us to exercise the comparatively useless function of speaking, are not going to allow us to use the only weapon worth using, of seeking to impose even to a small extent a delay, is, in my submission, a gross violation of the real principles of Parliamentary government.

If we do believe in government by discussion, then I submit that Motions of this kind must be utterly repulsive, unless they are actually necessitated by the positive misconduct of some section of the House. They must always be repulsive for the very simple reason that whenever they have been introduced, whether by Liberal, Conservative or Socialist Governments, they have always resulted in a large proportion of the Measure to which they were applied going through this House undiscussed altogether. I am utterly unimpressed by the naive argument from the benches opposite that we on these benches are always to blame for any prolongation of discussion. Even if it were true, I should regard the argument as irrelevant.

If we really believe in government by discussion, and not government by the overriding dominance of force and power, we should be prepared to spend a little time in our evenings, and even a long time, to see that each one of the Measures which we propose and pass through this House should be fully discussed in each one of its sections and parts. I would say to hon. Members opposite that even if there is that degree of urgency which they claim for the Measures they put forward, it would be better for the country, better for Socialism, better for the Government, that they should pass

two or three nationalisation Measures properly discussed than six of which only half had ever been discussed by this House as a representative Chamber.

I do not believe that a want of discussion is, in the long run, really in the interests either of the people or the party opposite. . . .

There is something which is to me almost repulsively naive about the argument suggested from the benches opposite that these Motions are either necessitated or justified by Opposition obstruction. I have tried to take an intelligent interest in public life since 1922, when I was hardly mature. During that time, I have known a series of Governments and a series of Oppositions. So far as my researches go into the Governments and Oppositions which preceded these, both of those which I have known and those of which I have read, this one proposition can be said to be universal. There never has been a Government or a Parliamentary majority in this country which has not accused its contemporary Opposition of obstruction.

There never has been a Parliamentary majority which has not thought that the arguments of the contemporary Opposition had far better not have been presented at all. It may have been that each successive Government was always right. It may have been that they were sometimes right. But more probably the House may think, on more philosophical reflection, that the case is that it is in the nature of any Opposition to anger the Government, and if it does not anger the Government and impress it with its mischievousness, irresponsibility and obstruction, it is not fulfilling its proper part as an Opposition. I venture to say that the fact is that government by discussion really consists in and involves a certain measure of delay which, of its very nature, must be antipathetic to those in the majority who, if the matter were brought to an immediate vote without discussion, could have their way more completely.

It is impossible to discuss Measures of first-class importance except at very considerable length which must necessarily annoy and antagonise those who could get them through very much more easily by the exercise of a majority without discussion. But I must add that if in fact this House is to embark upon a policy which I have always opposed—namely, the sending of Bills up to a Standing Committee instead of dealing with them on the Floor of the House—it becomes all the more important not to attach to them a timetable of this kind and all the more important that if a timetable of this kind is to be attached to the Committee stage, the discussion on the Report stage should be of very much greater length than has hitherto been contemplated or considered usual. . . .

. . . That leads me to one other reflection. If we are to have government by discussion, which I take it is the basis and object of Parliamentary democracy, discussion cannot be planned. How often have we known Debates take place in which it was utterly impossible to foretell whether this or that particular point would be the point which would interest hon. Members at the time? Sometimes things which one considers of the very greatest importance are passed by with a few sentences and no one seems to object. Sometimes the Debate centres around some relatively small point. I submit to the House that very often it is none the less valuable for that. Discussion and reason—as I think it was Plato said—takes us along like the wind, and, to quote from

(Continued on page 7.)

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From Week to Week

"The main lesson of the Gaullist success is addressed to the MRP, which has slumped almost out of existence. It testifies that the electors were tired of the ineffectual half-way collectivism of the Christian Socialists."—*Human Events*, November 17, 1948.

If the Conservative Central Office, which we understand is run by Mr. Cohen, were to drop its determination to foster half-way un-Christian collectivism, perhaps better known as Mond-Turner Monopoly, there might be more hope for us.

Much of the earlier effort to circulate the concepts which have since become known as Social Credit was devoted to establishing the proposition that the object of production in a sane world would be the consumption of it by individuals and that therefore the proper locus of production control is the consumer (see *The Control and Distribution of Production*). It is increasingly clear that the Public Enemy understands perfectly, not merely the implications of this concept, but that it leads to a Trinitarian concept of Society as the reflection of the Christian concept of Man.

A significant instance of the method by which attention is diverted from the truth transpired in the House of Commons on November 8, and was reprinted from *Hansard* in *The Social Crediter* of November 27. The occasion was a question by Lord Hinchinbrooke on the Nuffield-Austin merger, a monopoly which, as might be expected, was upheld by two Labour Members (one Minister of Supply) bearing the good old Anglo-Saxon names of Strauss and Edelman, respectively. It is the interpolation of the latter to which we would direct attention:

"Mr. Edelman: Is my right hon. Friend aware that *all informed opinion in the motor industry* strongly approves the standardisation of the components which is likely to accrue?" (our emphasis).

It will be noticed, first, that the interpolation has nothing whatever to do with Lord Hinchinbrooke's question. Of course the "motor industry", whatever that is, approves monopoly, and standardisation is the great step to monopoly. Any part of "the motor industry" which didn't approve, couldn't be called "informed." And it assumes that "the motor industry" should be heard *first*. It is notorious that there is almost a complete monopoly of the accessories of British cars; that most of the breakdowns are not in the car, but in the accessories; and that the absurdly high home price of British cars, where it is not merely intended

to bleed the country-white by exports, is due to the accessories which are fitted.

Russia received nearly twice as much rubber from British Malaya in October as did "Britain" and the United States got three times as much. The exact figures are 17,332, 9,973 and 28,524 tons respectively. You will now understand why Mr. Attlee renounced the National Order, and Sir Stafford Cripps says that the break-up of the British Empire is essential to Socialism. We just do the fighting and the paying, and Russia and the U.S. get the goods.

"New support for the National Liberal Party by the Ontario Social Credit League yesterday was indicated, when the League went on record severing its connections with the Union of Electors of Quebec Province."—*Edmonton (Alta.) Bulletin*, November 9, 1948.

Now, where have we heard that name "National Liberal"? Did anyone say Marconi? Or was it Isaacs?

INFORMATION SHEET.

"The Social Credit Government went in under William Aberhart (or Bible Bill as he was called) with a tremendous majority, which was the result of the tremendous upsurge against R. B. Bennett's corrupt administration (Conservatives) and the personal scandal exposed by the Liberal Party leader. . . ."—*New English Weekly*.

COMMENT.

Well, for crying out loud!

[Viscount (R. B.) Bennett was Prime Minister of *Canada* and had no official connection whatever with the *Alberta* Legislature. He was *Federal* M.P. for Calgary, and a close friend of Mr. Aberhart. The Government of Alberta which was displaced by Mr. Aberhart's victory was that of Mr. R. G. Reid, the United Farmers of Alberta, which had no connection with any Liberal Party, Provincial or otherwise.—Ed., T.S.C.]

Sir John Boyd Orr

" . . . Sir John Boyd Orr is a man of wisdom and experience, but he seems to have lapsed strangely from his normal objectivity in some public references he made this week to Russia. "Let us try a new approach," he suggested, "and say 'you did great things in the war. We are delighted to help you. Will you come and play with us?' I believe there is a great chance of Russia coming in." What fantastic illusion is this? Has Russia never been invited to come in and play with us? Was she never invited to accept the benefits of the European Recovery plan? Has she never been importuned to join with the Western powers in administering Germany on the basis of the Potsdam agreement? Has she never been pressed to join Sir John Boyd Orr's own Food and Agriculture Organisation? Has her co-operation in almost every field not been solicited till the process has become a humiliation to the solicitors themselves? Was she ready even to play with us over the soldiers wives? No. There is not a man in this country who is not anxious to see normal relations with Russia established, but the distortion of facts, plain or implicit, does no good to anyone, and the suggestion that Russia is standing aloof because no one has asked her to come and play is as colossal a distortion as the human imagination could well devise."—*The Spectator*, December 3.

States, Actual, Real and Potential

(The substance of an address by Dr. Tudor Jones to the Speke Discussion Group on December 7).

When your secretary wrote to me, he asked if I would speak on the subject of "The Ideal State, or a topic of somewhat similar substance." Whether or not he would agree that the subject I have chosen lies within the limits he suggested, I should like to explain why it is that I did not adopt the shorter title but proposed one in which there is no reference to ideas or ideals, and one which has, moreover, the considerable disadvantage that what attractiveness it may have lies by no means on the surface. Generally, people are impatient of qualifications, and particularly qualifications which require to be thought about. They are disposed, they say, to call a spade a spade (not even, in this case, an ideal spade), and then, they think, we all know where we are. I must confess to a considerable sympathy with that attitude in some circumstances; but not in all circumstances. I was rather perplexed the other day because a man who had been told that his stomach was the seat of the pain which troubled him showed great relief, almost amounting to recovery, when he heard that the trouble was confined to his gastric stomach. If we are talking about serious matters we should, I think, be quite clear, in the first place, what we are talking about. I have never lived in an ideal state. I do not know anyone who has ever lived in an ideal state. I can imagine if not an infinite number a very large number of ideal states; but not one of them would be of the slightest use to anybody. Their very nature is such that they can't be lived in. The lowest form of state you can live in, or be in, is an actual state, one objectively present in operation.

If I have made that clear, namely that the dominating interest of man lies in the realisation of ideas, by which a thing ceases to be merely an idea and becomes something quite different, an Incarnation of the idea (the Word made Flesh), I may, perhaps, point out that this word, 'Flesh' which I have just used is in many ways of a far finer and more satisfactory kind than the word 'State.' We talk a lot of nonsense about the State, and confuse it, and become ourselves increasingly confused in so doing, with many things which it would be much better for us to consider directly instead of, as it were, by a side-door. Queen Elizabeth would have been amazed to hear anyone say that something was good or bad 'for the State.' She would promptly have asked what her subject was talking about, whose state, his own state or hers? The idea of the State of Society is very complex and very elusive. By contrast, the idea of Government is an idea of something concrete. A Government is something which makes many people, perhaps very many people, do what they would greatly prefer not to do, e.g. go without food, clothes, houses, fight wars, pay over to it most of the money they earn, refrain from actions which, if carried out would relieve feelings, bring satisfaction to the doer, etc., etc. At present, many people, of all political parties, would avoid doing some of these things which they are made to do, if they could. Force is constantly being exhibited, suggested or actually used. Someone has the power to use this force, to concentrate it, to safeguard it, and few or none have the power to resist it except at the price of removing themselves altogether from the struggle in the process. Life in continual opposition to the Government is intolerable. He who wishes to live, surrenders. He knows so little what is due to him, that he rarely knows what it is he does surrender. The bird he has in hand is his partially satisfactory

life, complicated, doubtful or hopeful; and what birds there are in the bush which he is precluded from exploring he does not know.

I have said that the state of society in which we live today is one in which greater and greater power seems to be concentrated in fewer and fewer hands.

I know that question immediately arises when this obvious feature of our political development is mentioned. It does not come from the political experts of any colour, from the historians, or from the patient sufferers under the various regimes which succeed one another with ever greater rapidity. It is from the inexperienced, from the politicians climbing frantically to power and from their dupes. Here is a typical statement of the fact by a French writer on Law (L. Duguit):—"By a fiction, or, as some would say, by an abstraction, it is claimed that the General Will, which in reality emanates from the persons invested with political power, emanates from a collective being, the Nation, of which the rulers are nothing more than the instruments; and the rulers are always anxious to drive this idea into the heads of their peoples. They well understand its usefulness to them in making their power or their tyranny acceptable." Refresh your memories of past governments in this country, watch the present government of this country, and you will see how true it is that there is in the political circles of a modern Society a "wide complicity in the extension of power." You may say, "Ah! an extension of power", thinking that what you hope for is occurring, that is, a dispersion of power, a distribution of power, so that each has more power. There has never been a more fantastic illusion. Even the Socialists admit the process, and are reconciled to its operation only because their objective is not to smash "the instrument of oppression" but to get hold of it and to use it. If the first Lord Acton was right, as I believe he was, when he said that "All power tends to corrupt; and absolute power corrupts absolutely", you will see how important is this factor in the historical development of Society, and how inevitable it is that the more absolute power becomes, the more corrupted will be all that it controls. Remember that control of education "from the village school to the university", adult education through broadcasting and the press and all avenues of publicity, and all reputation upon which the acceptability of opinions is based, are not merely the coveted objectives of modern power, but actually rather than virtually already in its grasp. So the discussion of these matters is itself corrupted, and we shall have to be very careful indeed if we are to come to just and useful conclusions about such a topic as ours tonight, true conclusions.

I start, at all events from this premise: that the concentration of power in Society has increased, is increasing and ought to be diminished. This is curiously the same charge as was brought by the representatives of feudal Society against those who were trying to destroy the feudal system, and the Barons who dictated Magna Charta at Runnymede were animated by exactly the same idea. "We object," they said, "to changes in the Laws of England"—*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari*. The Laws to which reference was made were the Common or Customary Laws, to which the King himself had to bow. Custom has always been a surer protection of the individual than changes in custom by law. One has the sanction of long experience and is enforced by common consent; the other is enforced almost always against common consent, and the narrower the consent it receives the

greater the force necessary to support it. If anyone is surprised that the most famous of the documents associated with the claim by the subject to liberty, the best known historical assertion of the Rights of individuals, should be of this nature, I can only suggest that it may be a case of the mis-representation of history now rampant among us. "Absolute power corrupts absolutely." The modern claim to the supremacy of Parliament is a claim to a supremacy to which all must bow but Parliament. When Kipling advised us to "Suffer not the Old King, under any name," he was warning us against the consolidation of Absolute, irresistible, power masquerading as Liberty: against the absurdity that we could establish our individual power by surrendering it to an oligarchy acting as one man, and he hidden from sight and immune from detection or attack. The actual state in which men and women in this and other countries have been living is one in which power has been concentrating.

Now, what I want to ask is whether, at any time, there has been a break in the continuity of this process; whether at any time a solution seemed to be in sight; whether at any time, enough was done to show us the lines on which a community must be run if general satisfaction is to result; if so, what were the essential features of the structure of the Society which was envisaged or actually attained. If this universe can truly be said to have any Laws, our success in handling problems which beset us will be in proportion to our ability to formulate those laws more or less clearly, and I for one can see no reason why the laws governing human Society should not be as clearly understood as the laws of bridge-building. And so have thought the great Christian thinkers down the centuries, and so thought the Founder of Christianity Himself. They thought, that is to say, that they knew enough about the nature of the universe to counsel men how they might live (which means live in society) so as to increase Life, to have "Life more abundantly." If and in so far as men have applied that counsel (and assuming the Christian counsel to have had 'Authority'—*i.e.* to have been a true reflection of the Creation: to have been 'right') the society to which they attained would, in my opinion, merit the title of a *Real Order of Society*, an Order rooted in Reality. If they did not realise this Real, or Right, Order of Society, but nevertheless produced results which were progressively satisfactory, results which ceased as and when their concept of Reality was exchanged for another concept (a wrong, or, as they would have said, an 'heretical' concept), then I should call their Real Order potential, *i.e.* demonstrated but unrealised. At all times what Order (or Disorder) of Society exists, it is Actual: it is what is done; but if what is done is wrong, it will pass away. When it is also unreal, it is so because it is discordant with Reality, with The Law. Man-made laws cannot displace Law, despite the recent absurd declaration of a Minister of the present Government in the House of Commons, that Parliament, and he meant the House of Commons, could make a man a woman if it so decided. This fiction of modern statecraft must be exposed and all that arises from it must be overturned. It is impious, wrong in conception and effect, Unconstitutional. The Order of Society to which I mean to draw attention as being both Actual at one time and essentially though not permanently Real is the Order which arose from the development of the Constitution which the present Government seems finally to have shattered. It was essentially Christian in structure. It reflected faithfully the concept of God and the universe characteristic of Christian

Theology. It was Trinitarian. Those who contrived it discerned, or accepted, that the Christian doctrine of the Trinity applied to every aspect of experience, and even particularly to life in human society. But their successes were partial and transitory; for from start to finish they contended with an immensely strong and immensely evil stream of opposition, which in its origin long antedated Christianity. At the present moment that body of opposition is all but triumphant. It has corrupted all that it has touched. The revelations of corruption touching the Administration, the spectacle of vulgarity and degradation which is now arousing disgust even in quarters not distinguished for high ethical standards, or unfamiliar with crooked ways, barely touches the fringe of the falsification of the human account which it has effected, for bribes in money are, in any case, whether proved or merely suspected, merely the top rung of the descending ladder of corruption, and some of the lower stages reached by this Power are surely beyond the imagination of the average elector. I submit that it is time to examine painstakingly and seriously the essential principles of the opposite Order of Society, the Order which was Christian in intention if not completely in execution: the Order of the British Constitution at its highest. When it was at its highest its social success was greatest, life in England was at its best, or the best we know; but its danger was also greatest. It has been brought down. It must be built up.

The essence of the matter seems to me to be this: In all undertakings involving associated effort by a number of people for a common objective, there are three evident factors. First, there are the people, it may be very many people, according to the size of the community and the scale of the undertaking. Without them nothing can be done. It is their brawn and brain in conjunction which achieve the result desired, never mind what it is. Power, in a purely mechanical sense, a physical sense, is inherent in them. Let us suppose that every member of the community is, and is only, a unit of power in this sense. There is absolute equality of status. The community consists, and wholly consists of 'workers.' There is no one who is not a 'worker', and every worker is only a worker. I leave you to imagine what sort of a society that would be, without direction, without special knowledge of any kind, without a clearly formulated aim that was anything more than the unimaginative and scarcely conscious theoretical 'sum' of many individual aims, the aim of this man to lift a stone, the aim of another to spend his energy in another way. The conditions I have supposed exclude any sort of human attainment, in association, that is distinguishable from a chaos of unrelated efforts. The organisation of a herd of animals would be an advance upon it. Such a group (if it could be called a group) would not get very far. A directing power is lacking, and even a pack of wolves has a power of direction subtly constituted.

Now consider the same number of men and women, every one of whom has a sense of direction, knows how best energy should be employed to produce results: a community of Lords. Everyone would know perfectly how to do things, but there would be no one to do them. Such a community would expire within a very short time. The fact that our country seems to be approaching this condition brings me nearer to the point that something more is necessary than even the just co-operation of power and direction, for we have at least a co-operation, if an enforced co-operation, between these two elements now, without any great advance,

so far as I can see, throughout the now many years of my lifetime.

'Efficiency' in the sense of the fruitful application of power to direction may be attained with no visible benefit, or invisible benefit to the majority of the community. Many things might be produced; but there is no necessity that the things desired should be produced, and certainly the long-range effects might be very bad—a war every twenty years, or the reduction to a common level of aimless servility of the mass of the people—a community of 'well-fed slaves': the Servile State. Because knowledge and power can be united in the production of a surfeit of tasteless and indigestible potted-meats (of doubtful origin) or a sufficiency of 'atomic' bombs is no very good reason for employing the energies of everybody in doing these things. Something else has to be satisfied, and that is some judgment, and a Right judgement, of the coherency of the results, in relation to over-riding Law: The Law, which is not man-made but God made. If you don't believe there is such a thing, you may as well give up: you can't build your house on sand, but only on a firm foundation, one which is real and does not change: one which was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. But again, it would be quite useless if we were all solely devoted to assessing the wisdom of non-existent human effort, even in conjunction with perfect direction and control. Not only are these three factors recognised in the British Constitution; but it was at one time—or more than one time—clearly recognised how they should be adjusted and related to one another. The power of the people (called in the Constitution The Commons) was expressed negatively. The Commons could refuse 'supply'—i.e. money. The power of the Lords was legislative. The King had the power of veto. He had Authority, that is to say, he was the channel of communication of the concept of Right. James confused the issue: he thought Right belonged to him: the 'Divine Right' of kings is God's, not the King's. And what does this Right amount to? By whatever means conveyed, it is the highest revelation to man of Law. "For he taught them as one having Authority, and not as the scribes." I picture a Real Order of Society as one in which that voice is constantly accessible to both the other partners in the Constitution. It is a fact of experience that none, not even the King, can have both Power and Authority at the same time, for "All power tends to corrupt." A state of this kind has been within sight of permanent establishment in our country, and our country will not be worth living in until it is so again.

PARLIAMENT (continued from page 3.)

another source, the wind bloweth where it listeth.

It is the wind of discussion which makes our institutions free. It is the free wind of discussion which is being interrupted and destroyed by Motions of this kind. . . .

House of Commons: November 26, 1948.

Eire (Relations with Commonwealth)

Sir Ronald Ross (Londonderry): . . . The recent development in the introduction of the Bill repealing the External Relations Act is the culmination of a very long and gradual breaking of the strands of the cable which used to unite Ireland to Great Britain. It has been very gradual and now

the last little strand is snapping. My right hon. Friend the Member for Woodford (Mr. Churchill) said yesterday that it really did not make very much change.

I should like to qualify that because I think this will mark an epoch. It is the end of an epoch. It is the final severance of political association between Eire and the United Kingdom—I repeat, the United Kingdom. The first thing that must strike everybody is that it raises the barrier between Northern Ireland and Eire sky-high. That barrier was pretty stout before. There was no serious possibility—I do not say probability—of its breaking down. Much could have been overcome had the politicians of Eire had the sense and intelligence to suggest, for instance, a Customs Union with the United Kingdom, but instead of that it was always a magnificent red herring to speak about partition so that they had not to speak about the enormously high cost of living, the lack of social services and the frozen wage levels. Partition has, therefore, been emphasised.

The first and most obvious effect of this snapping of the last thread of Constitutional attachment is that it makes so absolute and so permanent the barrier between that part of Ireland which is determined to be united with Great Britain and to live under the Union Jack and that part of Ireland which is determined to be a Republic and to live under the Tricolour of Sinn Fein, that it is impossible to imagine it ever coming to an end.

Throughout the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Queen's University, we have seen a certain irresponsibility and inconsequence in the Government of the Irish Free State, subsequently, Eire. . . .

The present Prime Minister . . . Mr. Costello, is a man of the highest character, as everyone agrees, and of very great repute, and yet, in introducing the Bill, he is turning a political somersault which for acrobatic agility has seldom been equalled. A very large number of those who supported him did so on the basis that his deliberate policy was to remain in the British Commonwealth, as it was then permissible to call it, and not to leave it. It is a most astonishing thing that in so short a time such a rapid change of heart should have occurred. We all know that the Bill has much more to do with internal politics in Eire than people over here have appreciated up to the present. That is, perhaps, the major factor. Of course, in trying to pinch somebody else's thunder that has been a well known device, even in British politics. That is one of the reasons why the Bill is now before the Dail.

The curious and ironic situation is that to deal with the attitude of His Majesty's Government in this House as regards the Bill, the Prime Minister has stated—and stated with an air of benevolence towards Eire—that citizens of Eire will not be aliens in England. The one thing they have been striving to become for generations is aliens in England. They are to remain West Britons. I am called a West Briton as a term of reproach by Mr. de Valera and his friends, and now the citizens of Eire are to suffer the humiliating fate at the hands of the British Government . . . of remaining West Britons in this country. . . .

. . . it is the action of the Government which I am criticising. At all events, it is there, and it seems apparent at the present time that the price which they are paying for this humiliation is a certain material gain, though we are not

fully informed what this material gain is. To use a colloquial expression, in fact, it seems that they expect to get it both ways—to have the glories of independence, and, at the same time, the material benefits of the hated British Commonwealth of Nations. As long ago as July, Mr. McBride, in a forceful passage in the *Dail*, repudiated any suggestion that they could be a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, though he did not seem to repudiate the benefits of that constitutional position with anything like the same heartiness, or, in fact, at all.

It appears to me that they wish to retain the advantages of association with the British Commonwealth, although they consider that they are an independent republic. . . .

I was rather hoping that the hon. and learned Member for Northampton would have dealt with the legal position of non-alien citizens, because that situation has not arisen up to the present time. According to British law, de Valera and Costello are British subjects, and I should like to know what is the real legal position of non-alien. This is an entirely new conception to the legal mind, and seems to be the civilian equivalent of a non-belligerent—neither an ally nor an enemy—but there is going to be a lot of, I will not say fun, but a lot of discussion in the courts of law before this matter is finally settled on a definite basis. For instance, it is clear that, if a non-alien committed what, in the case of a British subject, would be an act of treason, he could not be properly convicted. I do not make any suggestion that any of these non-alien would take up that attitude, but it would open a field of endeavour to them on much more advantageous terms than are offered to the British subject.

The point which must not be lost sight of is this. In saying that the citizens of Eire shall have the privileges of British citizenship, without its burdens, as I understand it, and, in saying that we are putting a label on the citizens of Eire and declaring that they are not aliens, we are not making any effect on the spirit of the man on whom the label is placed. In future, the loyalty of that man will not be expected to be to the Government of the United Kingdom; he will be in our midst and owing his loyalty to another country. Eire will claim, and has claimed, that it will be another country, an independent Irish Republic, whose people are endeavouring to learn Irish so that they do not even speak the same language as ourselves. I do not think that, by the mere act of putting a label on a man and declaring that he is not an alien, we can change his heart, because what is in the heart of a man is a fact and is not altered by the number or letter which we may pin upon his back. That is a matter with which I do not believe it is possible to deal in the way in which an attempt is now being made to deal with it.

I wonder what obligations the citizens of Eire are going to undertake on our behalf, or on behalf of the community which is giving them certain rights, because they will vastly outnumber the citizens of the United Kingdom who will be in Eire. Are they, for instance, to be liable to military service? . . .

. . . There are many other points on which I could speak on this final step which will take Eire out of the circle of the British Commonwealth of Nations, but I want for a moment to refer to finance. At present, I think the Eire currency has the backing of the Bank of England and of the British Exchequer. It stands at par as a sterling

currency. The coins are different, but they have the same denominations and the same value. We do not know what is the financial position of Eire. All that we do know is that they have not balanced their Budget. In fact, I doubt if they ever have done in the past, and, certainly recently, the adverse balance has been very heavy. The almost frantic appeals of Mr. McBride to Northern Ireland, which he describes as the only solvent part of the United Kingdom, coming from such a source should be regarded as an indication of Eire's desperate financial position.

I do not know, but I should certainly like to know, what is to be the attitude of this country towards the currency of Eire. . . .

Then there is another point of a quasi-financial nature—the question of preferences. At the present time—and it has been reinforced by the recent agreement as regards agricultural produce—Eire enjoys substantial preferences. No other Dominion has any better preferences. Now that Eire is going to cease to be a Dominion, there are British subjects who will cease to be British subjects, and who will become citizens of an independent Republic. That being so, are they to retain the preferences granted to members of the Commonwealth? I do not see how that can be done if we are to keep peace with other countries who export their products to us, and who enjoy what is called the rights of the most-favoured-nation clause. That implies that no other country which does not form part of a political association shall have more advantageous terms as regards their commerce.

It seems to me astonishing that Eire, having repudiated the association with this band of nations which constitute the British Commonwealth, should still continue to enjoy the terms which are appropriate only to members of that Commonwealth. . . .

The Minister of Commonwealth Relations (Mr. Philip Noel-Baker): . . . I think the British Nationality Act, 1948, is perfectly clear on the subject of the rights of those who are not aliens in this country. They will have the rights of British subjects under our statute law. Even aliens in the United Kingdom are liable to be punished for treason, in the same way as British subjects.

Eire citizens who are habitually resident in this country will be liable for military service. . . .

On the question of preferences about which he asked, I would say, first, that the preferences with Eire are not based on the Ottawa Agreement, but on the agreement of 1938 between Eire and this country. . . .

As amended this year, but the basis of the 1948 Agreement is that of the 1938 Agreement. . . .

On the matter of finance and what the Bank of England will now do, I think that is one of the matters on which I should do well to say that I will give the hon. Gentleman a well-considered answer another time. . . .

. . . We have had an unhappy history in the relations between this country and the people of Eire. However much we may regret some things which have happened in the recent past, I submit it is of supreme importance that we should seek to build up friendship and co-operation between the Governments and the peoples of Eire and of this country, and that is what this Government will seek to do.