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From Week to Week

"Disclosures of Cabinet discussions can be made only with the permission of the Sovereign, and, to quote Anson, 'it is the practice that this permission should be obtained through the intervention of the Prime Minister, and that the disclosure should be strictly limited by the terms of the permission granted.'"

In the second part, *The Times* quotes Anson correctly.* The first part, too, is Anson's—but Anson wrote: "Disclosures of Cabinet discussions are never now made without the permission of the Sovereign." Anson says the obligation does not always seem to have been regarded as binding. "The obligation and its reasons are clearly stated by Lord Melbourne, in remonstrating with William IV for having, as he supposed, permitted Lord John Russell to disclose the purport of discussions in the Cabinet. 'What Minister will ever hereafter give his opinion freely and unreservedly upon the matters before him if he feels that he is liable, at any distance of time, to have these opinions brought to light, and to be himself arraigned at the bar of the public for having held them; . . .'"

But, if a Minister, why not a Member? We must redouble our efforts to gain a secret ballot for Members—albeit, we are not admiring the discretion of Ministers, which doubtless is better than the valour of Members; but looking merely to some of its consequences. Doubtless corruption in high places has now gone farther than mere detection could repair; but, in the Members' case detection by *the whips* (not by the public) may be what determines behaviour against the public interest.

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Truth, without apparently great hopes of a hearing, has been ventilating the suggestion that the House of Commons might be reduced in number to 200. Why not reduce it to two?—Mr. Churchill and Mr. Churchill?

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It would be an odd coincidence if the signator, David Colville, to a letter to *The Scotsman* of August 4 were unconnected with the famous steel company, David Colville & Sons, Ltd. We print the letter in full:—

IRON AND STEEL MAKING UNITS

"Sir,—Considering international competition in steel production, the size of unit of control most suitable to modern speeds of communication and transport may well be a

national unit rather than one works, or a group of works.

"One objection to 'nationalised' manufacture is that the whole population makes uninterested extravagant shareholders, and keen enterprise and competitive spirit are lost. But give the men who are interested vitally in the making and use of steel the feeling that their efforts can really increase efficiency and national strength, and a chance of making money in return for risks taken, then their control of a national unit could make it a workable size, and an enterprising business.

"When the Socialists nationalised steel it is well known that only £10,000,000 was paid for modern works that could not be built today for £50,000,000. We do not want the finance groups in London to pick out the plums, and slice margins and percentages from the new possible value of modern works.

"Too clever ways seem to exist of creating an apparent terrible shortage of money, and then, when an offer of shares is made to the public, it is oversubscribed many times, and clever sharks holding the original 'underwritten' bargain cash out.

"That will not increase steel production.—I am *etc.*

"DAVID COLVILLE."

Whatever may be said concerning the optimum size of a steel producing business, it is the last sentences which seem to us significant. Anyone today who focusses attention upon the wide difference between financial and real wealth is doing a potential public service—though only a potential service. There are "too clever ways" of preventing purchasing power from reaching the consumer as well as the producer. Financial credit which, on its way from the source of "oversubscription," falls short of the consumption market leaves the community in debt for its own real wealth. Costs are (or are not) recoverable from consumers. If consumers are short of purchasing power, something goes unpurchased. The argument that no one wants to purchase it means both that there is no good reason for producing it and that no one owes any money on the score of its production. The complacency of *The Times* in the face of the re-election of Mr. Manning's Government announced seventy-nine minutes after the close of the polls on August 5 (41 out of 61 seats) may not be wholly due to that newspaper's tardy discovery that "the theories of Major Douglas have never yet been tested." The tendency of the "Social Credit" movements which have "risen to power" is towards producer-control of production not towards consumer-control of production, which is the characteristic of Social Credit. Producer-control is Socialism.

*2nd Edition, 1896. Pt. II. p. 122.

"Letters from England"

By ROBERT SOUTHEY

(Continued)

Jews in England

LETTER LXIII (continued). It may well be supposed that when Bonaparte was in Syria his movements were anxiously watched by the Jews. There was a great stir among them, and it is probable that if he had invited them by proclamation, and promised to give them Palestine, armies would have been raised to take and keep possession of that Holy Land, to which they look, individually and collectively, as their destined gathering place. Individually, I say, because it is taught by many Rabbis, that the children of Israel, wherever buried, can rise again at the coming of the Messiah, nowhere except in the Promised Land; and they, therefore, who are interred in any other part of the world, will have to make their way there through the caverns of the earth; a long and painful journey, the difficulty and fatigue of which are equivalent to purgatory. I know not whether this is believed by the English Rabbis; but that the English Jews attach as devout a reverence to the very soil of Jerusalem as we do to the Holy Sepulchre itself, is certain. One of the wealthiest among them, in late times, made a pilgrimage there, and brought back with him boxes full of the earth to line his grave. Unhappy people! whose error is the more inveterate because it is mingled with the noblest feelings and whose obstinate hope and heroic perseverance we must condemn while we admire.

No particular dress is enjoined them by law, nor indeed is any such mark of distinction necessary: they are sufficiently distinguished by a cast of complexion and features, which, with leave of our neighbours, I will call a Portuguese look. (Note by Editor. This is not the only instance in which the author discovers a disposition to sneer at the Portuguese, with the same kind of illiberality in which the English too frequently indulge themselves against the Scotch.)—Some of the lowest order let their beards grow, and wear a sort of black tunic with a girdle; the chief ostensible trade of this class is in old clothes, but they deal also in stolen goods, and not unfrequently in coining. A race of Hebrew lads who infest you in the streets with oranges and red slippers, or tempt school-boys to dip in a bag for gingerbread nuts, are the great agents in uttering base silver; when it is worn too bare to circulate any longer they buy it up at a low price, whiten the brass again, and again send it abroad. You meet Jew pedlars everywhere, travelling with boxes of haberdashery at their backs, cuckoo clocks, sealing wax, quills, weather glasses, green spectacles clumsy figures in plaster of Paris, which you see over the chimney of an alehouse parlour in the country, or miserable prints of the king and queen, the four seasons, the cardinal virtues, the last naval victory, the prodigal son, and such like subjects, even the Nativity and the Crucifixion; but when they meet with a likely chapman, they produce others of the most obscene and mischievous kind. Anything for money, in contempt of their own law as well as of the law of the country;—the pork-butchers are commonly Jews. All these low classes have a shibboleth of their own, as remarkable as their physiognomy; and in some parts of the city they are so numerous, that when I

strayed into their precincts one day, and saw so many Hebrew inscriptions in the shop windows, and so many long beards in the streets, I began to fancy that I had discovered the ten tribes.

Some few of the wealthiest merchants are of this persuasion; you meet with none among the middle order of trademen, except sometimes a silversmith, or watchmaker; ordinary profits do not content them. Hence they are great stock-jobbers, and the business of stock-broking is very much in their hands. One of these Jew brokers was in a coffee-house during the time of the mutiny in the fleet, when tidings arrived that the sailors had seized Admiral Colpoys, and had actually hanged him. (Note. This was during the mutiny at Spithead in 1797. Vice-Admiral Colpoys was not in fact hanged by the mutineers, though for a short time, on 7-8 May, his life was in grave danger.) The news (which afterwards proved to be false) thunderstruck all present. If it were true, and so it was believed to be, all hopes of accommodation were at an end; the mutineers could only be suppressed by force, and what force would be able to suppress them? While they were silent in such reflections, the Jew was calculating his own loss from the effect it would produce upon the funds, and he broke the silence by exclaiming in Hebrew-English *My Gott! de stokes* articulated with a deep sigh, and accompanied with a shrug of the shoulders, and an elevation of eyebrows as emphatic as the exclamation.

England has been called the hell of horses, the purgatory of servants, and the paradise of women: it may be added that it is the heaven of the Jews—alas they have no other heaven to expect!

LETTER LXIV. (*Infidelity—Its Growth in England and Little Extent . . .*) From Jew to Infidel—an easy transition, after the example of Acosta and Spinosa. When the barriers of religion had been broken down by the schism, a way was opened for every kind of impiety. Infidelity was suspected to exist at the court of the accursed Elizabeth; it was avowed at her successor's by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, a man unfortunate in this deadly error, but otherwise for his genius and valour and high feelings of honour, worthy to have lived in a happier age and country. His brother was a religious poet, famous in his day [George Herbert (1593-1633)]. [Note. Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648) was not an "infidel." He believed in God, preferred Christianity to any other religion, and conformed willingly to the Anglican Church. But he speculated boldly on the fundamental issues of religion and was naturally taken for an atheist.]

From the time of the Revolution in 1688, the Deists became bolder, and ventured to attack Christianity from the press. They did it, indeed, covertly and with decency.

The infidelity of these writers bears no resemblance to the irreligious profligacy of Charles's courtiers in whom disbelief was the effect of a vicious heart.

. . . Voltaire infected this island as he did the continent—of all authors the most mischievous and the most detestable. His predecessors had disbelieved Christianity, but he hated Christ; their writings were addressed to studious men; he wrote for the crowd, for women and boys, addressing himself to their vilest and basest passions, corrupting their morals that he might destroy their faith. Yet notwithstanding

the circulation of his worst works on dirty paper and in worn types by travelling auctioneers and at country fairs; notwithstanding the atheism with which the Scotch universities have spawned since the days of Hume; and notwithstanding the union between infidelity and sedition during the late war, which ruined the democratic party, it is remarkable how trifling an effect has been produced. . . .

. . . Where every man is allowed to have a faith of his own, you will not wonder if the most ludicrous opinions should sometimes be started, if any opinions in so important a matter may be called ludicrous without impiety. . . .

PARLIAMENT

House of Commons: July 8, 1952.

Potato Harvest (Children)

Mr. Hamilton asked the Secretary of State for Scotland for an estimate of the number of schoolchildren who will be employed in the gathering of potatoes during the coming harvest; and what measures he intends to take to ensure adequate teacher supervision of these children.

Mr. J. Stuart: About 50,000. I have again asked education authorities to ensure that every facility is given to teachers to offer their services.

Mr. Hamilton: Is the Minister aware that the response last year, according to the Report, was not very encouraging and that non-teacher supervisors had therefore to be employed? Will the Minister give an assurance that whoever is employed in the supervisory capacity, it will be full and complete supervision so as to ensure that no farmer exploits the position and that every farmer fully observes all the conditions of the scheme?

Mr. Stuart: I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman. We certainly agree that farmers should not be allowed to exploit the position.

Mr. Woodburn: Would the right hon. Gentleman make a further appeal to teachers? For some reason or another there seems to be an effort to discourage teachers from taking part in this work. There is a great deal of educational opportunity in the field, apart altogether from the time spent on potato lifting, for nature and natural things can be taught to children in a way which is not possible in the schools. I think teachers are missing a great opportunity of helping children when they do not take full part in this work.

Mr. Stuart: I agree entirely with the right hon. Gentleman's remarks, and I may say that the education authorities have been asked to ensure that every facility is given to teachers who are willing to take part.

Herring Industry, Western Isles

Mr. M. MacMillan asked the Secretary of State for Scotland what action is being taken by the Herring Industry Board and by his Department to revive and develop the fishing industry in the Isles of Barra, the Uists and Harris; and what is the estimated cost of Government assistance for this purpose in the present year.

Mr. J. Stuart: I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him on 13th May. As much of the assistance is being provided under general schemes for the benefit of the herring industry, I regret that the answer to the second part of the Question is not available.

Mr. MacMillan: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in these islands there used to be a very flourishing herring fishing industry giving employment to many of the people in the area and that today there is virtually no herring fishing? Cannot the right hon. Gentleman put some pressure on the Herring Industry Board to set up a processing plant in the area of Barra and South Uist in order to enable the men to land fish for processing in their own islands without making the work uneconomic through having to transport their catch across the Minch every time?

Mr. Stuart: My information is that, unfortunately, to a great degree the herring have departed from Barra and South Uist. The scientists do not know the reason, and I am afraid I cannot say what it is.

Mr. MacMillan: Is the Minister aware that it is the Herring Industry Board and the Scottish Office that have deserted Barra and the Uists and not just the herring?

Jet Fighter Pilot (Training Cost)

Mr. Wigg asked the Secretary of State for War the basis on which he assessed the cost of training a jet fighter pilot; and whether he consulted the Secretary of State for Air before he announced the result of his assessment.

Mr. Head: I gave the figure of £98,000 to illustrate the cost to the State of the training and flying experience of a highly qualified pilot, a squadron leader of some five or six years' experience. This estimate included some £15,000 for his training as a jet fighter pilot and £70,000 for the cost of subsequent operational flying: the remaining sum covers pay, allowances, etc.

I am sure that the hon. Member will be glad to know that this particular figure was given to me by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Air long before I mentioned it on 6th June.

Civil Servants (Signing of Letters)

Mr. Drayson asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury if he will consider giving instructions to Government Departments that, in future, when civil servants have occasion to write to business concerns or private individuals, they should sign themselves, "Your obedient servant," instead of, "Yours faithfully."

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: No. The form used in particular letters must be appropriate to all the circumstances of the case.

National Insurance (Staff Economies)

Mr. J. Freeman asked the Minister of National Insurance the number of temporary assistant inspectors in his Department currently being declared redundant; the grounds for

(continued on page 6.)

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Saturday, August 16, 1952.

Full Employment

There is one policy, and perhaps one policy only, which is common to all political parties and all Governments today, and which is endorsed by all shades of opinion amongst the electorate. All unite to demand that unemployment shall be permanently abolished, and to proclaim that it is the first duty of the State and the economic system to provide work, and to "create employment" more abundantly.

It is difficult to imagine a more ruinously silly idea, or one fraught with more disastrous consequences. It is not too much to say that the peace and freedom of the individual depend upon a reversal of this policy, and that most of the shadows gathering upon the world today can be traced to its adoption.

It is a plain elementary fact of common observation that any ordinary man with a task to perform for himself, does it with as little expenditure of time, energy, and material as he can contrive. And for the past hundred years at least, the efforts of scientists and inventors have been directed, with an accelerating success, to reducing the human time and energy required for any given programme of production. These men have been busy "creating unemployment" and yet have been rightly regarded as benefactors; they have worked in the belief that by reducing the man-hours and man-energy required to run at least the civilised portions of this planet they were increasing the sum total of human freedom. We are therefore attempting the impossible feat of regarding unemployment as a good and as an evil simultaneously.

The fact is that, in biological language, a change has taken place which calls for an adaptation in human habits, and we are not reacting successfully to our new environment—a very serious and dangerous matter, as the history of evolution shows. It has become increasingly possible to supply human wants with a decreasing call upon the available human labour. Access to the *increasing* supplies depends upon a money income, and the money-incomes of the community (wages, salaries, and dividends) depend upon the amount of labour required, which is *decreasing*. The rational solution would be to arrange for a supplementary flow of money dependent, not upon current labour pay-rolls, but upon the existence of the goods which are otherwise unpurchasable. The reaction in fact has been to devise methods of limiting production and increasing the labour requirements. In other words, a refusal to adapt, and an attempt to restore the vanished environment.

When, in spite of sabotage by trade union action, quota systems and the like, huge surpluses of consumer goods periodically appeared, no realistic adjustment of the system

of distribution was demanded. Instead of welcoming the freedom from toil made possible by the existence of the surpluses, these were regarded as a positive menace, and in many cases were wilfully destroyed. It was apparently concluded by everyone that a civilised economy could function only under conditions of near-scarcity.

A great deal of thought has been given to methods of preserving such conditions—no easy task in a world of technological wonders. The older methods of restriction or sabotage of output, and exporting more goods than were imported (a "favourable" balance of trade) having proved inadequate, and having also caused resentment, modern economists have devised a new technique. As and when consumer goods show any sign of piling up within the productive system, man-power and materials are diverted to the production of capital goods—whether necessary or not. The money paid out to finance these operations takes consumer goods off the market, the diversion of men and materials reduces their future flow, and everyone is kept in employment—and possibly even on a rationing system. The same effect is obtained by increasing the army of bureaucrats required to direct such diversions, operate State-run services, and the like. The process is, and must be, accompanied by an accelerating and astronomical increase in public debt, the burden of which falls on the taxpayer.

It should be clear that a mandate for all of these policies can plausibly be made out as long as employment is demanded as a first duty of Government. If employment is really what is wanted (instead of being merely something to be accepted as and when necessary, as a means to a fuller life) then we have no right to complain of the only methods that will secure it. But it is time that we took serious stock of our position.

Gainful employment, instead of being regarded as merely a functional activity of the human being, has become, if not the end for which man exists, at least the method by which he can best be controlled, and issued with a living only upon terms. Death duties, high taxation, and a steady fall in the value of money, make it necessary for almost everyone to secure a job—which depends more and more upon the goodwill of the bureaucrat or the Trade Union official. The demand for full and perpetual employment is becoming a demand for complete and permanent regimentation, while the constant drive for export markets and "spheres of influence," in competition with other industrial nations, all labouring under the same false philosophy, is the main cause of modern war. And, in the last resort, war itself is only the grand and all-embracing solution to "the problem of unemployment"—the logical result of a demand for employment for its own sake and at any price.

R.L.N.

Mr. R. Earl Ansley

Of the three 'rebel' Social Credit members of the last Alberta legislature, Mr. R. Earl Ansley, displaced Minister for Education, won his election on August 5 as an Independent Social Crediter in a three cornered contest against the official Social Credit candidate and a C.C.F. nominee. Mr. Arthur Wray and Mr. A. V. Bourcier, also independents, were defeated. The *Vancouver Sun* states that "The government, which has reverted from the radical dividends-for-all platform of 1935 to orthodox financing today, campaigned on its record."

Recriminations

By H. SWABEY.

Among the numerous books of protest from the deluded—those who foresaw the Plan's treachery are not so numerous—we may note *Great Mistakes of the War* by Hanson W. Baldwin, and *I Accuse de Gaulle* by Henri de Verillis.

It is, of course, convenient to reprobate F.D.R.'s "hunch" about Stalin, or his Casablanca brainwave that *unconditional surrender* was a phrase to cure the world. Mr. Baldwin has nothing to say about the fauna of New York who were running F.D.R. Mr. Churchill's "conscience" was troubled by the Morgenthau plan, apparently (who said, "I cannot afford a conscience in wartime"?) but not, it seems, by indiscriminate bombing. Liddell Hart is quoted to shew that these policies led to the "complete disappearance of any European balance."

Mr. Baldwin says, "We sought only victory . . . The British looked towards the peace," in connection with British designs on the European underbelly. "The Teheran decision . . . really settled the post war political fate of Eastern Europe." General Marshall and Stimson hurried on this fate, with the hearty concurrence of their Soviet buddies Churchill endorsed Tito, "whom he thought he could control with British gold."

Winant has been blamed for the Berlin fiascos, "but all major instructions . . . emanated primarily from the President and the Secretaries of War and State . . . Eisenhower, Clay and their advisers negotiated against the background of a psychological delusion." Central Europe, Vienna, etc., were handed over.

Mr. Baldwin, then looks East and demolishes the MacArthur legend. 'Dugout Doug' was "wildly over optimistic"; he allowed grounded bombers to be caught napping and destroyed *nine hours after the assault on Pearl Harbour*, and although alerted he sat in the Philippines. (Mr. Baldwin implies that he was "caught with his pants down.")

Yalta, February, 1944, was the "saddest chapter": the President was fuddled with his 'brave new world' schemes, Marshall was convinced that Japan needed invading, "the Russians got their supplies and the United States got nothing . . ." The Russians also obtained the Curzon Line, the Kuriles, and controlling concessions in Manchuria. China was forced to agree, although the restoration of Manchuria to China had been pledged at Cairo.

U.S.A. was "twice guilty" in the matter of the atom bomb, and inherited "the mantle of Ghenghis Khan . . . the use of utter ruthlessness in war . . . our fundamental theory of air war, like the Trenchard School of Britain, coincided, or stemmed from, the Donchat doctrine of destructiveness: the bombardment of enemy cities and peoples." Hiroshima was "arranged so as to inflict the maximum number of civilian casualties. . . . we are now branded with the mark of the beast."

M. de Verillis also writes accusing de Gaulle, from America. He started as "a passionate, enthusiastic De Gaullist." His son was destroyed by the Gestapo. But he concludes that De Gaulle, the radio hero in London, receiving a British scale of pay, directed his activities to-

wards "the seizure of power for his own purposes." Before the end of 1940, de Gaulle claimed to be the French Government, as President of the Fourth Republic: he "ceased to be a soldier." This was very unFrench.

De Gaulle is accused in detail, of removing all competitors and of publishing an anti-American newspaper. He was responsible for "vast resentment" in the French Colonies, and for the Syrian fiasco. In Africa, "Darlan's assassination was carried out by De Gaullists . . . because he was an obstacle to De Gaulle's climb towards the New Power." As for Giraud, "De Gaulle, . . . more than anyone else, stabbed him in the back." They scrapped at Casablanca despite the other august presences there. Jewish opinion in New York was mobilised against Giraud, and Baron Edward de Rothschild wrote to Welles, about Algerian Jews. Giraud was retired and his life attempted. De Gaulle then became "the chief obstacle to the formation of a French army." He also isolated 'legitimacy' by a fake constitution, dominated by his pocket Committee of Liberation.

When France was invaded, de Verillis wondered "what more de Gualle could have done to hamper the Allies." Directly the unprincipled politician had entered Paris, behind an army, he concluded a twenty years alliance with Russia. Incidentally, he refused to meet Roosevelt on his return from Yalta and rejected the Morgenthau plan. He was the tool of an ambiguous organisation known as the Cagoulards, and "will plunge France into communism." In short, a politician. The author was ejected by Mme. Tabouis (another very ambiguous figure) from his New York editorship for expressing his views.

A very different kind of recrimination is made in *A Visiting Card*, the fourth of Ezra Pound's Money Pamphlets which is just to hand and deserves more notice. It is a lucid translation of *Carta di Visita* by John Drummond, illustrated by some non-bank notes, and treats the theme "the word has been betrayed" from several angles. Through this betrayal, Marx denied "both God and nature." The origin of the American War of Independence is traced to 1750 when Pennsylvania was forbidden to issue its own paper money.

Pound stresses that Mazzini recommended the local control of local purchasing power. His reference to "good manners" as a requisite of rulers suggests the question whether manners can be preserved without a hereditary landed aristocracy, devoted to the social graces. They certainly have not been preserved.

There is not much to show that the booklet was first issued in 1942, and Dr. Pound is a critic, not a yes-man, of the Italian régime: "The enemy has been at work during these very twenty years of Fascism that you have lost to him through procrastination. Twenty years at five per cent. . . ." There are many useful quotations, and such bright sharp gems as, ". . . a usurers' headquarters moves on, betraying one nation, one race after another." Vocational Representation dates, perhaps from Numa's reforms (700 B.C.) and challenges ballot-box democracy.

The words of Confucius, asked to what he would first set his mind if appointed head of the government, recall the reader to the main theme of the work: 'To call people and things by their true and proper names.'

PARLIAMENT—

(continued from page 3.)

such redundancy; and to what extent these changes are leading to a reduction in the staff of his Department employed in administering the National Insurance scheme.

Mr. Turton: The answer to the first part of the Question is 58. As the result of recent economies in staff there has been a reduction of over 100 in the executive grade to which these officers belong.

House of Commons: July 17, 1952.

Cost of Living (Old Age Pensioners)

Miss Burton asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that many old age pensioners are unable to take up their rations owing to price increases, and if he will, therefore, consider the possibility of linking old age pensions with the cost of living so that such hardship may be alleviated.

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: No, Sir. In view of the increased Assistance scales now in force, I cannot accept this statement. In any event it has always been recognised as impracticable to arrange for pensions to vary automatically with changes in the cost of living.

Miss Burton: Is the Financial Secretary really saying that he finds it impossible to believe that at present old age pensioners are finding it difficult to take up their full rations? If that is the case, I can only suggest that he sees them himself. If it is possible to link wages with the cost of living, why is it impossible to link old age pensions in the same way?

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: The answer to the second part of the hon. Lady's supplementary question is in part, at any rate, based on the fact that these pensions are part of the general National Insurance scheme and, of course, increased pensions would have as their corollary increased contributions. No one wants contribution rates to fluctuate unduly. With regard to the first point, the hon. Lady's Question contained the statement that old age pensioners were unable to take up their rations.

Mr. T. Brown: Is the hon. Gentleman aware—I believe he is—that the pension increases have not yet been received and do not come into operation until 29th September? The hardships are becoming intensified, and this request is no idle one. Our postbags are full of complaints—made in a reasonable way—that old age pensioners are not in a position to buy their rationed goods. Will not the hon. Gentleman, between now and 29th September, do something towards alleviating the hardships experienced by these people?

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: I am aware of the fact that the increased pension scales will come into effect in the late summer. The body of my answer referred to the increased rates of National Assistance which are already in operation.

Mr. Hamilton: Does the hon. Gentleman realise that many of these old-age pensioners have in the past received considerable help from their sons, daughters and near relatives, and that because of the increased cost of living and increased unemployment that assistance is not now forthcoming; and will he, therefore, regard this matter as one of the very highest priority?

Small Income Groups

Miss Ward asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can announce a date on which he will issue invitations to representative people to serve on a committee to consider the problems of persons known as the small income groups.

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: I would refer my hon. Friend to what I said during the debate on the Adjournment on 27th June, to which I have nothing to add.

Miss Ward: Will my hon. Friend bear in mind, while he is making up his mind, that the problems of these people spread over a variety of Departments and decisions will be needed from a variety of Departments; and will he, in view of the urgency of the matter, hurry up its consideration in order that we may have a satisfactory reply before the House adjourns for the Recess?

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: The matter is, of course, being carefully considered, but I do not fully share my hon. Friend's belief in the overall efficacy of the appointment of a committee.

Mr. Fernyhough: Will the hon. Gentleman see that those receiving unemployment and sickness benefit are represented on this committee when it is set up?

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: I have given no indication that the committee will be set up. The second part of the hon. Gentleman's question, therefore, does not arise.

Egg Sales (Income Tax)

Mr. Dodds asked the Secretary to the Treasury what special steps the Inland Revenue Department is taking to ensure that money received by farmers and poultry keepers as a result of the sale of eggs at black-market prices, is in fact made subject to Income Tax, having regard to the fact that only 45 per cent. of the eggs now produced in this country are passing through packing stations approved by the Ministry of Food.

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: Instructions have been issued to Her Majesty's Inspectors of Taxes that special inquiry is to be made where appropriate with a view to the inclusion in the computation for Income Tax purposes of miscellaneous credits, including receipts from sales of eggs.

Mr. Dodds: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that that will not satisfy the housewife who is getting one egg per ration book when it is known that car owners are getting large numbers and that two can be obtained at one meal in cafes and restaurants? Why has the Inland Revenue not been more active with the farmers and large poultry keepers?

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: I think the hon. Member confuses the functions of the Inland Revenue Department. Their duty is not to supervise the distribution of eggs but to collect the tax.

Mr. Nabarro: Is my hon. Friend aware that out of the 55 per cent. of the eggs which do not go through the packing stations millions upon millions are produced by people who keep fewer than 25 hens and that it is perfectly legal for them to dispose of those eggs?

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: That is, I understand, both true

and a matter for my right hon. and gallant Friend the Minister of Food.

Mr. Dodds: Does not the hon. Gentleman understand the elementary point that if the Inland Revenue were getting more money from these farmers, more eggs would be going to the packing stations and helping his right hon. and gallant Friend?

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: The hon. Member should not under-rate the pertinacity and the skill with which the Inland Revenue perform their duties.

National Land Fund

Mr. Chetwynd asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the accumulated balance of the National Land Fund; what properties have been accepted by the National Land Fund; what is the acreage of land in each case; to which bodies they have been transferred; and what changes he proposes to make in the scope of the Fund.

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: The present balance of the National Land Fund, including investments at their value at 31st March, 1952, is £51,812,000.

Miss Burton: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that yesterday in this House the Minister of Food gave details of 186 major cases of black market dealing in eggs, some of them amounting to 17,000 eggs? Will he please have the matter dealt with at once because it will mean a big increase in taxation receipts?

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: The question of the distribution or the allocation of eggs is, as the hon. Lady knows perfectly well, a matter for my right hon. and gallant Friend and not for me. I am concerned solely with the collection of the income.

The number of properties accepted is 27, and I will circulate details in the OFFICIAL REPORT. I have no statement to make about possible changes in the scope of the Fund.

Mr. Chetwynd: Has the hon. Gentleman or his right hon. Gentleman considered using this considerable sum to assist the National Parks Commission in furthering its work by the acquisition of land and buildings?

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter: That is another question.

Following are the details:

NATIONAL LAND FUND

List of properties so far accepted in satisfaction of death duties under the National Land Fund Arrangements (Finance Act, 1946, Part VI)

| Property | Acreage | Transferee |
|---|--------------|---|
| 1. Glanllyn and Traswfyndd Estates (including Lake Bala) and Aberhiraunt Estate (part) Merioneth. | 39,130 | Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. |
| 2. Hartsop Hall Farm, also *Brotherswater, Patterdale, Westmorland ... | 1,805 *49 | } National Trust. |
| 3. Modern seaside residence "Tregonnan," Tregarnon Bay, St. Merryn, Cornwall. | 3 | |
| 4. Cotehele Estate (including mediæval mansion) in Parishes of St. Dominick and Calstock, Cornwall. | 1,277 | National Trust. |
| 5. Town End House and Town End Farm, Troutbeck, Westmorland. ... | 776 | National Trust. |
| 6. Southdown Farm, Owermoigne, Dorset | 273 | National Trust. |
| 7. Rainham Hall, Rainham, Essex | 2 | National Trust. |
| 8. Eaves Wood and Waterslack Wood, Silverdale, Lancashire | 97 | National Trust. |
| 9. Claremont Estate (part), Esher, Surrey | 49 | National Trust. |
| 10. Abinger Hall Estate, Abinger, Surrey | 269 | National Trust. |
| 11. Osterley Park (part), Isleworth, Middlesex | (part only) | National Trust. |
| 12. Four houses, Nos. 14 and 19 North Brink, and Nos. 10 and 12 Chapel Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire and nearby land. | 17 | National Trust. |
| 13. Country residence, "Whissendine Cottage," Oakham, Rutland | 6 | Youth Hostels Association. |
| 14. Rowardennan Estate, including Ben Lomond, a 13 mile stretch of Loch Lomond side, Rowardennan Lodge, Blairvochie House, a farmhouse and 13 cottages. | 12,370 | Secretary of State for Scotland by whom Rowardennan Lodge and grounds subsequently transferred to Scottish Youth Hostels Association. |
| 15. Seaside residence, "Frampton," Dirleton Avenue, North Berwick, East Lothian. | 0.75 | Scottish Youth Hostels Association. |
| 16. Two ruined cottages on Roman Wall, Brampton, Cumberland | — | Minister of Works (Ancient Monuments Directorate). |
| 17. Country residence, "Higham," Bassenthwaite, Cumberland | 5 | Youth Hostels Association. |
| 18. Part of Dorset Estate of 7th Viscount Portman | 3,777 | Commissioners of Crown Lands. |
| 19. Woolacombe Barton Farm, Woolacombe, Devon | 545 | National Trust. |
| 20. Town Farm, Morthoe, Devon | 113 | National Trust. |
| 21. Land "The Warren," Morthoe, Devon | 101 | National Trust. |
| 22. Land "The Kelseys," Cubert, Cornwall | 305 | National Trust. |
| 23. Penrhyn Castle, near Bangor, Cærnarvonshire and grounds | 47 | National Trust. |
| 24. Part of Lord Penrhyn's Estate in Cærnarvonshire and Denbighshire | 40,571 | National Trust. |
| 25. Land at the foot of Box Hill, Surrey, and two nearby cottages | 88 | National Trust. |
| 26. Country residence, "Frog Firle," Alfriston, Sussex | 1 | Youth Hostels Association. |
| 27. Derwent Estate, Yorkshire | 6,489 | National Trust. |

American-Style Comics

Mr. Edelman asked the Secretary for the Home Department whether he has considered the resolution passed by the Coventry Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations on 13th June, 1952, a copy of which has been sent to him, expressing concern at the circulation of sensational American-style comics among British schoolchildren, and urging the Government to follow the example of Canada and Sweden in prohibiting their sale and distribution; and, following this resolution, what action he now proposes to take.

Sir H. Lucas-Tooth: Yes, Sir. The considered view of my right hon. Friend the Minister of Education and my right hon. and learned Friend is that the best hope for a solution to this problem is for parents and teachers to discourage children from reading these magazines and to direct their attention to more suitable reading matter. My right hon. and learned Friend is not satisfied that any action by the Government would be effective short of censorship, which would be unacceptable to public opinion in this country.

Mr. Edelman: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that this type of reading matter, stimulating the appetite for undesirable violence, is proved to have been the favourite reading matter of many juvenile delinquents who have been convicted of crimes of violence? While utterly opposing any form of literary censorship, may I ask whether the Government are not of the view that children should be protected against publications of this kind?

Sir H. Lucas-Tooth: Of course, my hon. and learned Friend would agree with the hon. Gentleman in deploring this type of literature, but it is fair to say that there is no evidence at the moment to show that the reading of these publications helps to cause juvenile delinquency, one way or the other.

Mr. Anthony Greenwood: Would the hon. Gentleman discuss this problem with any juvenile court magistrate to see whether his last remark is not completely at variance with the facts? Will he also discuss with his colleagues proposals for prohibiting the importation of these comics?

Sir H. Lucas-Tooth: I said that we have no evidence. If anyone has evidence I shall be glad to see it and consider it.

Mrs. Mann: Does it cost us dollars to import these comics?

Sir H. Lucas-Tooth: No, Sir, there is no question of dollar expenditure for bulk import from the United States. Nearly all the examples which have come to our notice have been printed either in this country or in other European countries from American material. Since 11th March we have not been allowing bulk imports from European countries either.

Mr. Mikardo: Since the Government proceeds against the dissemination of obscene literature to adults by statutory action rather than by relying on persuading people not to read this stuff but to read something better, how does the hon. Gentleman reconcile that with believing that we should take persuasive action and not effective action with regard to the sale of undesirable literature to children?

Hon. Members: Answer.

Sir H. Lucas-Tooth: I am afraid I do not understand the reference in the earlier part of the hon. Gentleman's supplementary question.

Mr. Edelman: Is not the hon. Gentleman aware that reading matter of this kind, printed in America and exported to this country, is, in fact, on sale in London shops and that I have comics of this kind in my possession—[HON. MEMBERS: "Oh."]—which I have bought in order to establish from my own observation the facts indicated in this Question? In those circumstances will not the hon. Gentleman consult with the President of the Board of Trade and the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view to restricting the importation of this literature?

Sir H. Lucas-Tooth: Of course, I cannot guarantee that individual publications of this kind are not brought into this country. It may be that the hon. Member has seen such examples. If he has any evidence to show that there have been bulk imports from America, I should be glad to have it.

Starlings

Sir H. Williams asked the Minister of Agriculture when he hopes to be able to publish the report of the conference on starlings which he has set up.

Sir T. Dugdale: The investigation into the starling problem is proceeding as rapidly as possible. When the report reaches me I will consider the question of publication.

Scottish Hydro-Electric Board (Steel)

Sir D. Robertson asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he is aware that the cut in the allocation of steel to the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board for the third period of this year will put construction back for one year and delay distribution to Lewis, Perthshire, Angus, Caithness, Kyle, Kintyre and Aberdeenshire, depriving over 5,000 farms of electricity and retarding food production; and if he can state the steps he intends to take to remedy this situation in the next allocation period.

Mr. Henderson Stuart: Owing to the general shortage of steel it has not been possible to meet the full demands of the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board for the current period. This unfortunately means some delay in the Board's programme. The Board's demand for the ensuing period will be given every consideration along with other urgent claims.

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