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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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## Blind Stagers

By C. H. DOUGLAS

Mark Twain had a story, doubtless apocryphal, of an occasion on which he broke a leg in a lonely mountain district, and there were only two medical practitioners who could be reached. One was a Christian Scientist who (at the urgent request of the Editor) will not be further mentioned in this article. The second was a horse doctor, who sent a message that the patient was to drink two gallons of hot turpentine, into which two pounds of bran had been mixed, and he would be along presently. When he did arrive, Mark, who had delayed the preliminary treatment, enquired as to its utility as a cure for broken legs. "Waal," said

the expert, "I ain't so much of a leg healer, but that thar mixer would a' give you blind stagers, and I kin cure that."

This simple narrative contains, I think, the Big Idea of the World Planners. "Only," said Mr. Israel Moses Sieff, hopefully, "in war, or under threat of war will the Government engage in large scale planning."

Similarly, the anonymous broadcaster with the slightly nasal accent who paints a picture of the combined conveyor-belt factory and Sankey and Moody conventicle which is to be the Heaven after the War, and then enjoins us to lift up our hearts just before breakfast, evidently grasps the drift of things. A few more years shall roll, a few more bombs shall drop, and we shall be in Muscovy, with the Jew right up on top.

Now the simple fact is that the world does not want large scale planning, and does not need large scale planning in the sense the planners want it. There never in history has been a greater swindle than the propaganda which has been poured out to suggest (a) "The world must have more economic efficiency"; (b) "The inevitable trend of evolution is to larger and larger units." The object of this propaganda has nothing to do with what the world wants or needs, still less with what the *individual* wants and needs. It is precisely similar in origin, nature and object to the idea behind a comment made to me 20 years ago in New York by one of the leaders of Big Business who had not quite grasped my views: "What we need to do is to squeeze out all these little fellows, and then we can run things as we want them, and make some real profits." "Profits" is a word which

can have a wide meaning.

There is one cure, and one cure only, for the pestilence which afflicts the world, and will continue to afflict the world until it is adopted. "Every man shall sit under *his own* (not 'the Government's') vine and fig tree, and none shall make him afraid."

For my own part, I am satisfied that the economic chaos in Europe during the last twenty years is deliberate in nature, and specifically designed to mislead populations as to its cause, to reconcile them to a quack "cure" and in particular to create a situation which would destroy the free initiative of Great Britain.

And no one in this country has yet been shot for it. And you notice that the Riom War Guilt Trial, in France, has not taken place.

## TRADE DISPUTES ACT

Announcement that the Trade Disputes Act may be amended was made recently by Mr. W. J. Brown, general secretary of the Civil Service Clerical Association.

Mr. Brown said they had been told that one of the amendments offered was the repeal of the clause which prohibits Civil Service organisations from associating with outside bodies.

"If this is correct it does not necessarily follow automatically that this union will re-affiliate to the T.U.C.," Mr. Brown added.

"I am not sure, however, that it is not the prelude to legislation ordering us into the T.U.C. as the safest place where any live body can be buried."

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As K.R.P. Publications have lost their records through enemy action it will be necessary to assume that all subscriptions to *The Social Crediter* have expired by June 28, 1941, except those of which expiry dates have been notified to us and those which have been renewed since May 3.

All subscribers are asked to confirm by post card the date of expiry of their subscriptions.

## Lord Kindersley's Kindergarten

Speaking at East Grinstead recently Lord Kindersley is reported by a Sussex paper to have said that those who left saving to others were traitors to their country. "Money has become something in the nature of a sacred trust for the winning of the war, and when it is spent unnecessarily it becomes tainted with the blood of those defending us."

The Americans have a word for this kind of kindergarten stuff. "Ballyhoo" is the word. "B.S." is its picturesque variant preferred by the "rough-necks" in the "wild and woolly west."

One hopes, but does not expect, that more precision of speech should come from a man now become a peer for his work as President of the National Savings Movement. For, as usual, the noble lord makes no distinction between the contribution made by a private citizen and that by a Bank to a local War Weapons Week. With Pecksniffian indignation he piously preaches that

money has become "something" of a sacred trust for winning the war; and denounces the "traitors" who leave saving to others.

But behind the smoke-screen created by such "patriotic" platitudes his lordship tactfully hides the racket being run by the Banks and the Insurance Companies, which have been officially invited to "bump up the total." He knows only too well, though he discreetly mentions it neither on a platform nor on the air, that when a Bank subscribes say £5,000 for National War Bonds during War Weapons Week in a small town, that Bank is doing a clever business-as-usual deal for itself. It is substituting Treasury Deposit receipts bearing interest at  $1\frac{1}{8}$  per cent. by Bonds yielding interest at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

A profit on "Patriotism" of 135 per cent.

"Money . . . something of a sacred trust"!

Moreover, the private citizen has first to "earn" whatever "savings" he may invest in War Bonds; whereas the Banks create their contribution "out of the blue" ink on their desks by writing figures in books at the cost of almost nothing.

Thus to paraphrase our noble oracle's dictum. When ink-well money, that "sacred trust," is used "unnecessarily" by the Banks to increase their own profit by 135 per cent. under the guise of Patriotism, it becomes "tainted with the blood of those defending us."

Not much "blood and sweat," as the Premier promised us, is required to draw money out of ink-wells. Indeed, one is left wondering if Banks replacing the lower interest-bearing securities by the higher should be considered as great "traitors to their country" as any Quisling.

WILLIAM BELL.

## Common Sense about the Australian National Debt

The following is from the *Sydney Sun* of Australia:—

"If the war lasted another three years, the Australian public debt might increase by £750,000,000, said Mr. Spooner, M.H.R., recently.

"Direct cost of the war to Australia might be £1,500,000,000.

"Giving this estimate in a luncheon address recently, Mr. Spooner based it on an average annual war cost to Australia of £250,000,000 a year for the next three years, plus cost of repatriation and post-war reconstruction.

"Mr. Spooner included in his total the cost of the war to the end of the present financial year.

"At June 30, 1939, the public debt of Commonwealth and States was £1,300,000,000, he said. It was possible that even with present heavy taxation rates a four-years war might leave us with a public debt of £2,000,000,000.

"Interest and sinking fund payments on £2,000,000,000 would entail cost to the Budgets of all Australian Governments of about £100,000,000 a year.

"Those who say that the public debt will never be repaid are indulging

in another form of defeatism," said Mr. Spooner.

"They forget the immense possibilities for Australian development in the post-war era. The people should have complete confidence in the nation not only to win the war, but to honour all obligations that arise out of the war effort."

"I think it probable that there will be a complete reorganisation of the indebtedness and that some form of consolidation will take place with the aid of an expanded Central Banking system."

"We are indebted to Mr. Spooner for drawing Australia's attention to the certainty of a huge war debt. We've been trying to do this for some time.

"Mr. Spooner breaks down badly, however, when he attempts to deal with problem which arises from it.

"This paper is not defeatist, but we number ourselves among those who affirm that *the public debt cannot be repaid while the present financial policy operates.*

"It is not the least bit of good Mr.

Spooner pointing to the 'immense possibilities for Australian development in the post-war era.' Unless financial policy is changed from a social debt to a social credit policy, all post-war development will be done with borrowed money. Debt will be piled upon debt in the time-dishonoured way.

"The resultant development may possibly help us to carry the interest burden—which even Mr. Spooner anticipates will be twice as much as it is to-day—but it won't help us to pay the National Debt.

"The 'immense development' will certainly not be for the enjoyment of the Australian people. The banks and all the big corporations hand in glove with them will have a pawnbroker's lien over it and all the fruits of it. The people will be nothing more than abject debt-slaves working on a treadmill of debt to satisfy the claims of bankers and big bond-holders.

"The complete vacuity of the orthodox mind, confronted with a problem of this nature, is revealed in the last paragraph of Mr. Spooner's statement quoted above."

## From Week to Week

### F.U. IN BRADFORD

A Bradford correspondent writes of a Federal Union Meeting on May 22, which was addressed by Mr. Cyril Moore:

"As far as I know this was the first attempt to 'put over' Federal Union in Bradford. There were about 30 people present. The speaker made many contradictory statements but never mentioned democracy. He declared that in order to obtain freedom we must relinquish our sovereign power to the international government. For this we should reap many advantages, the first and chief one being freedom from war, the second, a return to the gold standard and the third, that there would be no armed forces except the international police. When question time came the audience, though small, was very keen. . . One gentleman commenced to ask about the U.S.S.R., but the chairman ruled that out as being *too controversial*. Another asked if we would be able to withdraw supposing we didn't like Federal Union? The answer was emphatically 'No.' My question—Canada has been mentioned as an example to follow. Should we follow the example of a country where the Federal Government has for years been obstructing the efforts of the provincial Government of Alberta to improve the conditions of the people?"

"Answer: Major Douglas went to Canada to start Social Credit in Alberta. This monetary change upset and was to the detriment of the other provinces. Social Credit didn't work.

"Questioner: That answer is a lie. The Federal Government prevented the Provincial Government from trying the reforms for which the people had voted.

"The speaker here seemed confused and it is probable that he did not know the truth, or perhaps I had erred from the strict rules of the game. He said something to the effect that a Federal Union Government would never of course resort to arms against a Federated state. To which I retorted that there had been veiled threats against Alberta before the war, which many people interpreted as a threat of arms. The chairman seemed astounded and incredulous at this and said that if what I said was true then it was a very serious matter. Here others asked questions,

but the change was noticeable. Several people expressed doubts as to whether Federal Union would work. . .

"Mr. Moore implied that this government would be in America, so I referred him to the controversy in Parliament about Mr. MacDonald and asked would he call such a government democratic or the strongest dictatorship that ever existed on this earth? I asked this question first and reminded him at the end that he had never answered it—and he didn't."

• • •

"If America gives effective aid to Britain, America will dominate what happens afterward. . ."

—MR. WENDELL WILKIE to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, quoted in *The Saturday Evening Post*, March 22, 1941.

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### Mr. SIEFF and Mr. ELMHIRST

*The following is from a Dartington Hall News-sheet of May, 1941.*

"We have received news that Mr. Elmhirst will be back in England very shortly and we should like to take this opportunity of printing some extracts of letters from America.

"From Israel Sieff, New York, April 9, 1941: ' . . . I'm writing to tell you a little of what Leonard has been doing because I'm not so sure that anyone in England is getting an adequate report of the incalculably important and valuable work he is doing in this country for the British people. He is worth a whole host of expert propagandists and publicists. His value lies in the fact that he has got deep roots in a phase of life which in this country is of dominant importance. The fact that he is Chairman of the International Agricultural Conference gives him authority to discuss this activity. Wherever he goes he is welcomed. . . because he is speaking to them about the farm and land upon which is founded the whole economy of this country. Everybody wants to know what is happening in England, and most of all the farmers and land workers. The newspapers, of course, are full of information of a kind, but I know that sincere people, anxious to learn the truth, want to hear somebody quietly and conversationally tell of what is hap-

pening. . . The success of Leonard is that the maximum number of people are provoked to think by the ferment of his ideas. I think that his journeys to the State Colleges and farming communities is a kind of consummation. There is nothing so important, not merely during the war period but in the post war world, as a better understanding between the British and American peoples. Leonard, I believe, has pioneered a road which will later be one of the threads producing the binding chord between two peoples. It has resembled giving water to a thirsty man—this exposition of British farming during war period to the farmers of this country.'

"From Bruce Bliven, Editor of the *New Republic*: 'There has been a good deal of misunderstanding of England's general position and policies in this country. In that connection the two most useful people in America, in my judgment, have been Israel Sieff and Leonard. They have the enormous advantage of being here for other legitimate reasons and not as propagandists.'

"From M. L. Wilson, Director of Extension Work, U.S. Department of Agriculture: 'I want to express to you our deep appreciation of the very important service rendered to American agriculture by Mr. Leonard Elmhirst in connection with his recent trip during which he discussed important problems at the agricultural colleges in the western and midwestern States. . . We are so organised that the agricultural colleges and the extension services, through their educational and organisational relationships, exert a great influence on American farmers. Mr. Elmhirst, because of his work as founder and leader in the International Institute of Agricultural Economists, is widely known and most highly respected by the faculties of our agricultural colleges. I do not believe there is anybody anywhere who could perform the service which has been performed by Mr. Elmhirst.'

"We understand that Michael Straight\* applied for permission to come to London in the service of the new American Ambassador. His request was refused because it was felt by the authorities in Washington that he was more urgently needed there."

\*Mrs. Elmhirst's son by her first marriage.

## Defence Regulations: Writ of *Habeas Corpus*

On May 27, a Divisional Court ordered the release of Captain Charles Henry Bentinck Budd, R.E., on his application for a writ of *habeas corpus*. Captain Budd claimed that he had been unlawfully detained under regulation 18 (B) of the Defence Regulations.

Mr. Justice Humphreys, in giving judgment, said that the applicant was a professional soldier before the beginning of the last War. He was severely wounded in 1915 and was discharged from the Army in 1919, being granted a 75 per cent. disability pension for life. Just before the outbreak of the present war he offered his services, which the War Office accepted. He served with his unit until his arrest.

In an affidavit the applicant said that, when the Army authorities accepted his offer of service, they were well aware that he had been associated with the British Union of Fascists. He had joined that organisation in 1933, but ceased to take any part in its activities after joining the Army in 1939.

By regulation 18 (B) (1) of the Defence Regulations great and unprecedented powers had been entrusted to a Secretary of State to deprive a subject of his liberty without trial. That Court was the traditional guardian of the liberties of the subject and it was entitled to demand that every safeguard conferred on the subject by the regulations should be observed and preserved, and to expect the utmost care and accuracy on the part of those acting for the Secretary of State. In particular, a person who was detained under regulation 18 (B) was entitled to know at the outset the precise grounds of his detention. The order made by the Home Secretary in the present case might be described as an omnibus order authorising the detention of 25 different people there named, including the applicant, and it was therefore necessarily in the most vague and general terms possible.

Regulation 18 B (1) (A) provided that a member of an organisation of a particular character might be detained, or any person who had been at any time a member of such an organisation, or who had been active in the furtherance of the objects of such an organisation. The regulation also provided that the Home Secretary must be satisfied that it was necessary to exercise control over such a person. When he (his Lordship)

looked at the order by which the applicant was detained, he found that there was no mention whatever of the necessity to exercise control over Captain Budd.

He (his Lordship) asked himself the question whether he was satisfied that the Home Secretary had applied his mind not only to the question whether Captain Budd had at one time been a member of the Fascist organisation but also whether it was necessary to exercise control over him. If so, why did not that appear in the order? When the order was made by the Home Secretary the original of it remained in the Home Office and three copies were made, one being handed on his arrest to the person detained. Looking at the document given to Captain Budd, it was found that it was not a copy of anything which the Home Secretary had ordered. It was not the least like it. There was no question of there being a technical mistake. It was a totally different document and no one, no schoolboy, looking at the two things could pretend that one was a copy of the other. It was stated that the applicant was a person of hostile associations (which had never been alleged), by reason of which it was necessary to exercise control over him. How it came that somebody in the Home Office, having a perfectly plain document before him, came to make out that entirely different document he (his Lordship) did not know. What was the result? It seemed to him that, *prima facie*, Captain Budd had been detained for 11 months on a document purporting to emanate from the Home Secretary which never emanated from him, which he knew nothing about, and which he disowned.

Continuing, his Lordship said that he preferred to place his judgment on the unsatisfactory nature of the document relied on by the Crown—that was, the order which the Home Secretary actually made. He had already referred to several respects in which that document was unsatisfactory. It entirely omitted to state one of the matters which he regarded as essential, and he had already mentioned the practice, if it were one, of including 25 persons in one order of detention. In his judgment the applicant was entitled to be released, because a writ of *habeas corpus* was a discretionary writ and because, in his opinion, no sufficient care and attention were paid

to Captain Budd's individual case by the Home Secretary. He was quite unable to say on the evidence that the Secretary of State had reasonable cause to believe that it was necessary to exercise control over Captain Budd, and on that ground he thought that he should be released.

Mr. Justice Singleton and Mr. Justice Tucker delivered judgments in which they agreed that the writ should be granted and the applicant released.

Mr. Justice Singleton said that this was not the first case that had come before the court of late where there had been mistakes by the Home Office.

"When a person is detained, he is entitled plainly to know the ground for that detention that he may deal with it. When I see the complete mistake that has occurred here and there is no explanation I am lost in amazement."

Matters arising out of this case are to be the subject of questions in the House of Commons after the recess.

Mr. Stokes is to ask the Home Secretary

whether he will give the names of the other 24 persons listed on the detention order, dated June 1, 1940, which included Captain C. H. B. Budd recently released by writ of *habeas corpus*.

Sir Irving will ask the same Minister whether, in view of the observations made by the Judges in two recent *habeas corpus* actions arising out of detentions under Regulation 18 (B), he is now prepared to recommend any safeguards.

## THE PENSIONER'S PSALM

The Politician is my shepherd; I am in want.

He maketh me to lie down in misery: he leadeth me beside the still factories.

He disturbeth my soul: he leadeth me in the path of destruction for his Party's sake.

His policies frighten me: he taxeth my food in the presence of mine enemies.

He anointeth my pension with means tests: my expense runneth over.

Surely poverty shall follow me all the days of my life: I shall dwell in a mortgaged state for ever.

—from *The Old Age Pensioner*, June 1941.



## “BLITZ-KRIEG”

By N. F. W.

Seen from eight hundred feet up, where the road rounds the bluff of the hill before it descends steeply, the city looks very imposing in the bright Spring sunshine. It lies spread out over the whole valley floor, its details hidden by the faint industrial smoke-haze that wraps it. Dotted everywhere with true Victorian indiscrimination are the spires of religion and industry—the latter predominating, though not as much as might be expected—flanked by immense areas of dwelling houses. High hills surround it, and the blue inlet of the sea runs up to the great port, and the ship-building gantries.

Distance, sunshine, situation, help this picture that includes everything the present day counts as success—at once the sum and flower of centralisation. Year by year the city has grown, unhindered by good trade or bad, not so much by its own effort as by simple attraction. And life in the country has largely withered and dried up; its spirit charmed and sucked from it. All eyes look to the city, if their owners do not already live there.

And yet, in spite of everything, which means because of everything, comes war. Notwithstanding all her wit and predominance and vitality, the city is as helpless to do anything about it as the country; indeed more so. With the demands which war always makes, individuals in town and country go to it, as they always will if there is a want and a reward. In the city the workless are absorbed into the big plants, and under the spring sunshine the countryside presents a new liveliness,—a picture of brown, tilled earth, and cultivation, and sowing.

Then one night comes the Blitzkrieg—German for Tip and Run. The city has made great efforts to prepare against attack by air, but nevertheless the efforts are half-hearted and imperfect; inadequately imagined and carried out, as their authors dimly feel, because they are against something not willed or aimed at. And when the attack comes they largely fail, as human plans are apt to fail in a crisis, and leave the individual to meet the situation on the stimulus and inspiration of the event.

Out in the country, where a pale

spring moon shines from cloudless night sky upon the first green of the most forward trees and the curlews call to one another in the marshy ground across the river, the conflict is clearly visible. At first the sky above the dark, shoulder-ing hills that edge the valley where the city lies, grows faintly bright, and then rapidly redder and inflamed. Then, by the light of the fires the real bombardment starts, only just audible at twenty miles, though the windows rattle constantly and every now and again the whole house shakes as if to a high wind.

Wave after wave of planes fly overhead followed at the appropriate interval by the flash in the south-eastern sky of the exploding bombs and the starlike bursts of the anti-aircraft fire. There are casualties among the attackers; but mainly the planes have their will, and the supine city is their almost unresisting victim.

An hour before dawn the attack is over—before cock-crow the ill-omened flyers must be back in their own domain. The city is left under the pall of its own glowing smoke, a stricken and bewildered ant-heap.

Out in the country the day comes in just as it did yesterday and the day before. The trees throw long shadows on the just-frosted grass, and the birds sing jubilantly, as they always do in a Spring dawn. There is nothing to spoil the visible freshness but a dirty cloud of smoke showing above the line of the hills. Except for this grimy signal of distress there is no sign from the wounded city; she is too bewildered still. She remains alone with her sores. Outside help is not wanted, is only a hindrance.

And so the day wears on; back into the long-neglected countryside flow some descendants of all those sons and daughters of whom the city has robbed her in the last hundred or so years. And the country, in almost all cases kindly and without a thought, absorbs them. Its capacity for absorption seems almost endless—though it really cannot be so. But there is a healthy resiliency in the decentralised country way of living, and in the way she receives back her erring children. By the time that traffic assumes normal proportions again, there is no outward sign in the smiling land-

scape of what has taken place.

Meanwhile the city is gradually losing its likeness to a disturbed ant-hill. The individual, outraged in his manner of going is making immense efforts to get back to normality, i.e. the way he was living before it all happened. The streets are cleared and tottering walls demolished, and the services—transport, water, electricity—are resumed. What is known as “ordinary life” appears again, and tends to close up round the areas of destruction, much as the protecting bark of a tree creeps in from all sides on a wound in the trunk. “Business as usual,” is the motto, and if it is not very uplifting, still it is sound and healthy under the circumstances.

If only men’s determination to think were the equal of their determination to live! Or if they only realised that the two were one and the same! Then in these days they might grasp the valuable truth that centralisation, like everything else, and for all its manifest advantages, has very definite limits; that there is nothing known to man of which excess is not bad. Whether it be of gregariousness or isolation or any other thing, excess tends to separate the individual and his thinking and way of life from Reality, which is balance, enough—the Greek ideal. The end of Life is unknown, but balanced living must surely be our immediate objective! The normality of an unbalanced life is in reality abnormal.

So the city gets back as nearly as possible to its normal. From the edge of the valley its charred areas are scarcely discernible and it seems again to smile in the Spring sunshine. But it has been proved that as an entity it is vulnerable, defenceless. Its only hope of survival lies in its individual members.

And soon, in the course of war, the inevitable night comes when the sirens go again, and enemy propellers drone through the air. And the watcher in the silent country sees the sky beyond the hills redden again to a repetition of the whole cruel, unequal, inevitable business. And by the evening of the next day the scum from the newly-inflicted wounds begins to stream out again in all directions. Of a certainty, sickness is an ugly thing!

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## Canaris

"It is very difficult," says the writer of the June issue of the Imperial Policy Group's *Review of World Affairs*, "without a MAGIC insight into the SECRET mind of Hitler, and perhaps that of one or two highly-placed General Staff officers, to discover the exact and precise reasons for Hess's extraordinary departure from Germany and arrival in Britain."

Curiously-chosen words. If, then, the writer of the review has a magic insight into this secret mind, the reader may expect to learn something of the affair, in which case Hitler's mind would cease to be secret; whereas, if the author (or his informant) has no such insight, enlightenment could come only inconsequentially. Whatever value may be attached to them, two statements are notable:—"Unless, therefore, Hess can be proved a rebel or a madman (*and the enemy has very cleverly got us to deny the latter*), this prisoner of war may prove troublesome unless carefully handled as one of the major problems of the war." i.e. Hess is 'one of the major problems of the war.' Why? Because, if not insane, he is here "to express an opinion which must be held by very powerful forces within the German Reich, and it may be part of Hitler's plan to force us into a silence, of which he can later make use, or into a statement which might prove highly dangerous."

Of even greater interest than this remark is the statement:—

"The one man in all Europe who certainly knows the innermost details of the whole business is Admiral Canaris, head of the most secret of all Germany's secret services, more powerful than Himmler, and, in his particular line, than

Hitler himself. There is nothing which happens in Germany of which the Admiral does not know, and no secret the details of which do not come into his possession within a very short time. Supported by the great authority of the German forces, and possessed of an unrivalled knowledge of contemporary Germanic affairs, this man and his agents are of the highest importance."

A perfect Kshatriya, in short. But 'Canaris,' even if spelled 'Canarese,' is not a German name.

T.J.

### 1941 COMMITTEE AND B.B.C.

Accompanying (it seems) a leaflet on Planning and one on 'Siege Economics' a typed note from the 1941 Committee, dated May, 1941, thanks the original recipient for writing to Mr. Priestley, and states that there is no charge for the literature.

Of the two leaflets, that on Siege Economics advocates 'comprehensive planning' *cum* standardisation of consumption, *cum* pooling of workers, plants and managements, *cum* compulsory 'welfare,' *cum* centralised control, and (for transport and mining) community ownership.

Nevertheless, it is less interesting, and probably less important than the leaflet on 'Planning and Freedom' (with a sub-title: *The Need for Vigilance*), which says:—"... Again, to demand nationalisation where monopoly is established may be worth while, but it may not, even when conceded, make a great deal of difference; for example, railways might be nationalised on terms which would give permanent security to the

shareholders, whilst thrusting all the responsibilities and risks on the tax-payers." An England in which even shareholders enjoyed 'permanent security' *might* be quite a good place to live in, for others besides shareholders, unless the security were shared by bankers and elder statesmen and/or incidental to the permanent security of these gentry. 'Risks' is surely a quite inappropriate term to use about citizens and taxpayers? A 'risk' is the name given to something which *might* happen; not something which happens with unfailing regularity, e.g. dissatisfaction with the results of all the systems of which living human beings have any practical experience.

In any case, The 1941 Committee has become alive to the desirability "to keep alive and to extend the democratic safeguards," and is immediately confronted with the question, "But who is to do it?" The answer (which we can only hope will soon come up for that "complete rethinking of problems—which is one of the purposes of The 1941 Committee") is interesting.

The Trade Unions? NO: "There is the consumer... to be considered."

The Press? Hardly, despite the continued existence of some 'independent' papers, editors and writers; the rest are in the hands of a few monopolists.

Parliament? Well, No. "To-day, patronage, that is, Government appointment, is again undermining the independence of Parliament."

"MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, MEN IN THE STREET, WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS, BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER GROUPS MUST BE VIGILANT AND MUST WIELD WHATEVER INFLUENCE THEY POSSESS."

It is to be hoped that all of these will note with special interest that the ONE agency named by The 1941 Committee whose mention is followed by a 'yes' of approval is—

The B.B.C.

But isn't Lady Violet Bonham-Carter (daughter of the late Lord Asquith) a member of The 1941 Committee? Is her appointment recently to the direction of the B.B.C. the 'considerable triumph' of democratic ideas referred to by the Committee?

If either of these questions is to be answered in the affirmative (or both), the curious antics of The 1941 Committee should in future be easier to 'place.'

T.J.

## Selling the Idea

By B. M. PALMER

At the moment of writing, May 29, there seems to be a greater disparity than usual between one's own apprehension of reality and the war situation as presented by the Press and Radio. It is difficult to draw a definite line between reason and imagination, perhaps useless to try to do so; but it would seem that the eye of the storm had passed, that though there might be much rough weather to come, it would before long be marked by a steadily rising barometer. This is the spirit that breathes through that collection of individuals known as the public. It can only be felt, not put into words. It is the spirit of September, 1940, but steadier and more resolute. Thus far have we come—shall anything deter us now?

The storm is still raging in Crete—Mr. Churchill's promise that whatever happens that struggle will always take its place in the annals of glory (as if that mattered) seems to foreshadow even a third Dunkirk—but the navy is supreme and we have learnt that, thanks to the R.A.F. the worst air raid hells that Hitler can devise can be surmounted and need make little difference to our Fighting forces. Perfect love is said to cast out fear. Perfect love has yet to be defined, but thousands have lost their fears, even of invasion, though the reason may be far to seek.

Into this atmosphere, more easily felt than described, came Mr. Roosevelt's speech of May 28. The first reaction was, "Why are you trying to panic us. Why have you waited the best part of a month, instead of speaking as soon as you knew Greece could not be held? What were you waiting for? We are almost in June; weeks ago, Mr. Ernest Bevin, your stout ally, declared that if we could hold on until the end of July the worst would be over." The speech has much significance from the viewpoint of the individual American. It is admitted by all that the President now wields absolute power in his own country except in regard to actual declaration of war, which must come from Congress itself. A Radio comment was that his power could be used in respect of strikes, since the length of the working day and the extent of wages could be fixed by decree.

It seems then that the American people will live under dictatorship until

the end of the war or Roosevelt's term of office, whichever is the shorter, and even after that, unless they happen to remember that they form a potential democracy.

Some months ago Colonel Knox's report on the strength of American armed forces was distinctly discouraging; unless much has been done since then it does not seem possible that the American fleet could give us much material assistance on the seas—we have managed fairly well without them so far; and as for the second promise "every possible assistance to Britain and to all who with Britain are resisting Hitlerism," well—we have heard that before. That is what we have been expecting for some time.

Four months ago there was a contribution entitled *Thinking Aloud* in *World Review* for February. It was by Edward Hulton and it contained these words:—

"Most Foreign Officials certainly still think exclusively in terms of Sovereign States. One genius talks of setting up an 'Austria, politically and economically independent.'

"Anything approaching European Federation they eschew as crankish. They have not realised that Herr Hitler has at least performed the useful office of abolishing the various state governments of Europe. When Britain and America reconquer Europe, will it be necessary to give these governments sovereign powers again? The idea is at least worth considering."

There is much to be said for telling the truth—nobody believes it. No foreign diplomat believed Bismarck when he declared his intention of conquering Denmark and kicking Austria out of the Federation. Nevertheless he did so, as soon as he was strong enough. To the average reader that paragraph in the *World Review* would be like the giraffe, unbelievable. But suppose we assume that there are a number of people in America and the British Empire who intend it. It would explain much. Herr Hitler is in their view a public benefactor, for he has made a war which, like the Civil War in North America, will make it impossible for a Sovereign State to secede from a United States of Europe—perhaps a United States of the world.

Grammar can be a baffling subject. It would be interesting to ask Mr. Edward Hulton to supply the assumed nominative of the phrase "Will it be necessary to give these governments sovereign powers again?"

WHO IS IT? Who will be acting as World Dictator?

To go back a little further in time, Mr. L. K. Elmhirst, who is on the board of Political and Economic Planning, and who with his American millionairess wife runs the Dartington Hall Estate, paid a visit to the U.S.A. soon after the war started. On his return he gave an address at Dartington in the course of which he spoke of a short interview he had with Roosevelt, when the president said:

"The Americans may be useful for policing a peace settlement, but let us take into account that the peace has still to be won and that a war may always go the wrong way." He also expressed his opinion that there should be, after the war, complete autonomy in local government based upon police powers, with the usual police equipment, but no armaments.

Who is the power behind the police?

In the May 24 number of *Picture Post*, a paper with which Mr. Edward Hulton is closely connected, there was an article on the horrors we should experience during an invasion of England, illustrated with all the ingenuity of the modern press. Even to one armed against propaganda it was a nightmare. But the reaction soon came—the people responsible for this article either *want* it to happen, or they wish to scare us for some purpose of their own. In fact they are selling an idea. This impression was strengthened by the radio comments of the following days, which for almost nerve-wracking bewilderment equalled the September crises of 1938 and 1939.

"This is the most critical period of the war for the democracies"—"the sinking of the Bismarck was the blackest day yet for Hitler"—"the defence of Crete will take its place in the annals of glory"—"before next winter we shall have defeated the night bomber."

And finally Mr. Menzies on President Roosevelt's speech:—

"It will certainly bring tremendous

courage to the British people throughout the world in this, the most critical period of the war."

The correct comment on this last remark, as on all insults to the British race, is probably too Anglo-Saxon to be printable.

According to the *News Chronicle* one Peter Cromwell knows all about selling an idea, and has placed his knowledge at the disposal of the Government in a "little-known magazine called *Horizon*."

"Briefly his thesis is this: Commercial advertising has certain known

principles that have been proved correct. These principles can and should be applied to Government advertising."

"Cromwell says you can sell the idea of Northern and Southern Ireland composing their differences, provided that you set about it in the recognised commercial manner."

Perhaps Peter Cromwell is a little late in the field. These things seem to have been known for some time.

Briefly, the idea to be sold to us seems to be that we can't win either the war or the peace alone; and a brake is to be put on our activities until the

Americans appear to join us. Then we shall be allowed to win. After doing all the dirty work ourselves, the Americans (not the American people who are honest-to-goodness citizens, but the American go-getters) will police the peace, under the pretence that they alone made peace possible.

If this is so the dead hand from above, already cited in Parliament by Commander Bower, must be making itself increasingly felt in the higher command of our fighting forces. Will they tolerate it indefinitely?

The idea is at least worth considering.

## PARLIAMENT

### FIRE SERVICES: NECESSITY FOR OPPOSITION IN COMMONS: FOOD SUPPLIES

May 15.

**Oral Answers** (38 columns)

#### AGRICULTURAL BORROWERS (BANK CHARGES).

*Mr. De la Bère* asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will secure a return from the clearing banks for the period 30th June, 1940, to December, 1940, of the highest and lowest charges that they make to agricultural borrowers?

*The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Captain Crookshank)*: No, Sir. My right hon. Friend does not consider that he would be justified in asking the banks to spend the necessary time and labour in the preparation of such a return.

*Mr. De la Bère*: Is the Financial Secretary aware that it is seldom too early or too late to speak the truth? Is not the real truth that the Treasury do not want to obtain this information for the House of Commons?

*Mr. Stokes*: Is it not a fact that the Treasury have this information and that as the Chancellor has already given an average figure he must know the highest rate? The Treasury do not want to give it.

*Sir I. Albery*: Is it not a fact that Members could obtain the information from their banks?

#### TRADE AND COMMERCE

##### CHAIN STORES

*Mr. De la Bère* asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, arising out of the concentration of production

and the hardships which are imposed on the small manufacturers, both at the present and in the future, he will consider the licensing of chain stores throughout the country for the period of hostilities and for three years afterwards, so as to ensure that no further branches of the existing chain stores are opened which may prevent the future return of small businesses which have had to be closed down as a result of the war, and as a safeguard to those businesses which though adversely affected are just managing to carry on throughout the period of hostilities?

*The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Captain Waterhouse)*: I will bring my hon. Friend's suggestion to the notice of the Committee on Retail Trade, the appointment of which was announced by my right hon. Friend on 13th May.

*Mr. De la Bère*: Does my hon. and gallant Friend fully appreciate the importance of the little man and the little woman and the business the conduct? Is he not aware that they are the backbone of the country and that on Government can hope to go on without their support?

*Captain Waterhouse*: Yes, Sir.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

In a discussion on the BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (3½ columns) Mr. Bevan asked the Prime Minister whether he thought that public anxiety over inefficiency in production would not be best allayed by a Public rather than a Private Session of the House, particularly as many M.P.s wished to collect public pressure to "force or persuade" the

Government to take certain action. The Prime Minister said that in Secret Session the members of the Government were able to make statements which they could not make in Public Session, and basing their reactions on these the members were free to convey the assurance or alarm they felt to the country. He did not think there was much anxiety. He confirmed the suggestion of Sir Irving Albery that the Government only asks the house to go into Secret Session when they wish to make some statement which they cannot make in Public Session. The discussion continued:—

*Sir H. Williams*: Is it not the case that so far no Minister has ever yet told us in Secret Session anything which could not have been said in Public Session?

*The Prime Minister*: I think that observation indirectly reflects upon the decision of the House that reference is not to be made to the character of a Secret Session.

May 20.

#### FIRE SERVICES (EMERGENCY PROVISIONS) BILL

(68 columns)

Order for Second Reading read.

*The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Herbert Morrison)*:

... Fire brigades are administered in the administrative county of London by the London County Council and elsewhere by county boroughs, non-county boroughs, urban and rural district councils. This machinery of administration was decided upon by Parliament, unanimously as recently as 1938... I remember raising among my own friends



the point whether the preservation of 1,400 fire brigade authorities was right, but it was felt that, on the whole, we had better not raise any question as to the number of local authorities concerned as fire brigade authorities. . . Nevertheless, it was the case, as recently as 1938, that Parliament and the Government of the day, having in mind preparation for war conditions, did deliberately preserve 1,400 fire brigade authorities including county boroughs, non-county boroughs and urban and rural districts. . .

. . . Next we had to expand fire prevention as well as fire fighting, and now we have come to the conclusion that we have reached the stage when it is safe and wise radically to change the fire-fighting organisation of the country, because the fundamental difficulty in the present arrangements is the relatively small basic unit upon which the whole fire-fighting machine must be built. It is very necessary for London Members like myself to recognise that the fire-fighting service in the provinces is very different from that in London—totally different. I went to one considerable county borough where there was a regular fire brigade of 30 persons in peace-time, plus a chief officer and a deputy chief officer. . . But it is the rule in the provinces, outside a very few big cities, to have only a limited number of private soldiers, as it were, with a chief officer and, possibly, a deputy chief officer, over them. . .

The operational problem is for these small units of fire-fighting organisations suddenly to absorb very large reinforcements of men and equipment and to find it possible to handle them. That is really the operational case against the smallest or even the biggest local authority being the basic unit of the organisation. It must be remembered that many a provincial town of limited size has had to fight fires which were unrecognisably beyond anything that the fire brigades of the great cities, or of London, had to face before the war. . .

. . . The real weakness of present arrangements is the many small units of administration. The first consequence is that very small plans of operation and mobilisation may involve 20 or 30 separate local authorities and chiefs of fire brigades. That makes it difficult, if not virtually impossible, to secure sufficient unity or breadth of plan for meeting major contingencies. Fire fighting has become a military operation. This situation is something like that of an army with nothing bigger than a squad or a company to handle. Secondly,

it is impossible to secure the best use of the available personnel, especially of the limited number of officers with experience and of proved capacity. . .

. . . We have come to the conclusion that the remedy for these situations is not the mere extension of local services. That has been done and has made a very big contribution to the battle. The creation of *ad hoc* authorities is not a clean method. It does not give you the necessary administrative elbow-room or operational elbow-room. The right thing is the transfer to the State, for the duration of hostilities, of the administration and control of the fire-fighting services, to myself in England and Wales, and to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland, in Scotland. This is made possible by this enabling Bill, and it will be seen that Clause 1, Sub-section (1) enables either my right hon. Friend or myself to make regulations for the co-ordination of fire services provided by local authorities, for unification in whole or part of those services, and for the improvement of arrangements for fighting fires. The Schedule, without prejudice to these general powers, which I certainly intend to use, sets out particular matters on which regulations may be made. Under the Bill local fire brigades will cease to exist as such, and all firemen will be transferred to the service of the Crown and put under direct State control. Their pay, conditions of service and discipline will be regulated by the State. . . The State will secure the use of all fire stations, appliances and equipment in the hands of the local authorities, and will bear the peace-time cost of the regular fire brigade, subject to a contribution of 75 per cent. of that cost, that is to say, the local authority will, for the first time, get in respect of the cost of the peace-time fire brigade a grant of 25 per cent. . .

*Mr. Lipson* (Cheltenham): Since the local authorities will still have to pay 75 per cent. of their peace-time expenditure, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether they will have any right to be consulted in an advisory capacity in regard to what is being done about their local brigade?

*Mr. Morrison*: With regard to the local services, I cannot promise that they will be specifically consulted. Naturally, so far as the interests of local authorities are involved, the Regional and sub-Regional organisation will, I think, be wise to keep in touch with them, not only as a favour to them, but because they are authorities likely to be helpful.

It is my intention to set up nationally a consultative body representative of the local authorities so that they can know what we are doing, discuss with us what we propose to do and give us their advice and help. . .

. . . I am sorry that this step should be necessary, but fire fighting is now an operation of war. I will give the House this assurance, which I gave to the local authorities last week. "It is the very definite intention of the Government that this is a war-time expedient only, produced by war conditions, made necessary by a battle, an active fight that is going on day by day." It is certainly my very definite view that after the war the fire-fighting forces should again be a local authority service; that is to say, that they should not be permanently run by the State, but should again become a local authority service. It is only fair that that should be so. The brigades are taken over for a war-time purpose; and I do not think there is any reason why after the war they should not again become a local service, subject to the State then making provision for mobilisation on a national basis in the event of a new emergency. . .

*Rear-Admiral Beamish* (Lewes): . . . Then the Minister said that fewer than 50 fire brigade units—call them what you will—will be set up, and how much better that system would be than the present one, with 1,400 units. I am not so sure about that. I know it is easy enough to criticise, but my own impression is that even 50 fire-fighting units will be too many, a great deal too many. I should like to see the number reduced, so as to fit in with the existing regional commissioners' areas.

I would respectfully remind the House, of what it already knows, that in almost every large conflagration that has taken place the dynamic, or running, water supply has been cut off. Several fires at which I have permitted myself to be an onlooker have been burning away merrily with not a drop of water played on them. The explanation was that high explosives had burst the water mains. Only last Saturday week, when London suffered so badly, there were hundreds of fires, some of them vast fires, burning at large and triumphant because there was no water with which to tackle them. I ask the House to press the Home Secretary to proceed at once with the provision of what I call static water supplies. It might take some time to provide the necessary equipment, but there need not be enormous delay. . .

water supplies. It might take some time to provide the necessary equipment, but there need not be enormous delay. . .

*Mrs. Hardie* (Glasgow, Springburn): No one wishes to criticise unduly a Bill which has for its purpose efficient fire-fighting, but there is a fear among certain local authorities that instead of the Bill making the services more efficient in their particular areas, it may make them less efficient. This might happen in an area where they have spent time and money in building up what they consider to be a very efficient fire service. Apart from the financial arrangements, which are, of course, subject to negotiations, I understand there is a fear that an efficient fire service, by being spread over a big area, may become less efficient in a certain area. . . There is a fear that because other districts have been lax when they ought not to have been, and have not had their fire services properly prepared, the efficient areas may suffer. The city a part of which I represent has the feeling that it has done everything possible to make its fire services efficient, and it fears that some of its equipment may be moved away into other areas where better preparations ought to have been made. . .

*Mr. Kenneth Lindsay* (Kilmarnock): . . . I wish that the Home Secretary would treat criticism in a slightly less sensitive manner. . . Surely he has got this local Regional government question the wrong way. There has been a considerable body of agreement on his old side of the House, and there is no point in introducing a discussion about *Gauleiters*. The point is that there are certain services which can be better done in a larger area. I have served in London local government and have a great respect for it and for the whole democratic process of local government. No one pretends, and he did not, that the best method of fire fighting can be achieved by local units. The Lord President of the Council, when he was Home Secretary, set up a flexible piece of machinery which could be easily moved in any direction. Six months ago I urged him in writing and privately to take action on these lines. I have had the privilege, if it is a privilege, of trying to see at first hand and to endure at first hand several blitzes. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has seen them too. It is not a question of having to rely on officials and of not having information coming up to him as Minister. He has been round himself, and I cannot understand why he has delayed

so long. Has there been any opposition from the local authorities? Have the spokesmen who usually get up representing county councils and local authorities raised any objection?

. . . The Prime Minister said to me to-day that he did not consider a radical change in the present chain of responsibility was necessary or desirable in present circumstances. I have a body of first-hand evidence to show that the position is very different and that the chain responsibility is cut up at a whole series of points. I have had many letters in the past few days from responsible people and from wives of Members of Parliament who are working on the spot. The chain of responsibility as far as fire is concerned has been proved to be inefficient. . .

*Mr. Johnston*: . . . Further, it is not only this country which has this problem. Only in this morning's papers we read of a German military leader, General Milch, pleading with the German people to line up in defence of German cities and towns against the terrible conflagrations which they are experiencing as a result of our air attacks. I endorse every word of what my right hon. Friend said about our local authorities. By and large, they have played their part splendidly. Many members of local authorities have died fighting these flames. I yield to no one in my respect for the local authority system in this country, or in my determination to do everything I can to preserve local democracy against—I rather regret my hon. Friend's remark—the *Gauleiter* system.

*Mr. Lindsay*: I was only referring to what my right hon. Friend had said.

*Mr. Johnston*: I know, but as I understood my hon. Friend, he seemed to say that when you have the *Gauleiter* system—

*Mr. Lindsay*: I must make this clear. Whenever anyone mentions the Regional Commissioners it is said, "You are talking about *Gauleiters*," whereas it is only a question of illustration.

*Mr. Johnston*: I want to say that there is a fundamental difference between us here. So long as and to the extent that we can preserve local democracy, I propose to do everything I can to preserve it as against the *Gauleiter*, however he is called or with whatever powers he is entrusted. But I agree, and this Bill is evidence of it, that circumstances arise when old shireval and parish boundaries no longer fit the situation, and the Government would be foolish not to recognise that changes in

the fire-fighting system had got to come, and at the earliest possible moment, consistently with carrying with us the almost unanimous consent of the local authorities, because that is vital.

. . . Someone said earlier in this discussion that little had been done; as a matter of fact, a great deal has been done. We have multiplied equipment and personnel 15 to 20 times. . .

### ALLIED POWERS (MARITIME COURTS) BILL

(35 columns)

*Mr. Bevan*: . . . The House of Commons is suffering very badly indeed in its legislation from the absence of an organised Opposition. There is no doubt about that, and it will have to be our duty to scrutinise the Government's legislation more microscopically in future, because the Government obviously cannot be trusted to deal justly with these matters. They treat the House frivolously, draft legislation loosely, without proper regard to the consequences, and it is only when a few hon. Members of the House who are alive to their public duties criticise the Government that we are able, not to evoke a response from the Government, but to stimulate intelligent action outside the House which influences the Government to make concessions which they ought to have made in response to criticism in the House. Why do not the Government understand that there is no body of Members of the House of Commons who oppose them on the general principles of the war effort? Why do they not understand that it is the desire of hon. Members to improve the legislation before the House without in any way affecting the general prestige of the Government? Why do the Government not approach Debates in that spirit and make concessions when it seems desirable, instead of taking up the attitude of a Government which has an Opposition, when in fact there is no Opposition? I submit that the Government have made themselves quite ridiculous. This is a lesson that Members will have to assert against the Government if the House of Commons is to do its duty to the country, and they must scrutinise legislation as it was scrutinised when there was an organised Opposition in the House. I hope that hon. Members will not scruple to vote against the Government, whenever necessary, on such matters as this, which do not necessarily involve the life of the Government or the prestige of the British war effort. . .

May 21.

Oral Answers (24 columns)

## FOOD SUPPLIES

## MEAT PRODUCTS

*Mr. McKinlay* asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food whether these has been any reduction in the price charged to Group I manufacturers for meat used in manufacturing meat products?

*Major Lloyd George:* There have been no substantial changes in the prices charged to Group I manufacturers of meat products. Although there have been minor adjustments in both directions, on balance their effect has not been to reduce the cost to manufacturers.

*Mr. McKinlay:* Is the Parliamentary Secretary aware that on the day following the food Debate in this House recently, Messrs. Lewis, in Glasgow, reduced the price of cooked sausages by 6d. a lb.? Is he prepared to take steps to put an end to the gross profiteering by this organisation in preserved and cooked foods?

*Major Lloyd George:* I cannot accept what the hon. Gentleman says about gross profiteering, but if he will bring any case to my notice, I will have it looked into.

*Mr. McKinlay:* Is it not standing out a mile that if a firm can reduce by 6d. a lb. the price of cooked sausages 24 hours after a Debate, when there has been no reduction in the price of war material, they have obviously charged 6d. more than they ought to have charged

before the date of the Debate?

*Mr. McGovern:* Let us have another Debate.

*Major Lloyd George:* I do not quite see the point about it "standing out a mile," but if the hon. Gentleman will let me have full particulars, I will give them consideration.

Written Answers (7 columns)

## FOOD SUPPLIES

## VEGETABLE PRICES

*Mr. Evelyn Walkden* asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food whether he is aware that wholesale selling prices for English spring produce at Spitalfields Market for the first week in May, 1941, as compared with 1940, have risen in the case of spring onions, per 12 bunches, to 60s. from 8s. 6d. parsnips, per 56-lbs. box to 12s. 6d. from 4s. and beetroot, per bushel box, to 17s. from 3s. 6d.; and will he safeguard, both growers and consumers, by fixing a maximum wholesale selling price for this and other similar produce?

*Major Lloyd George:* My hon. Friend must, I suggest, be aware that comparisons of prices of spring produce, one year with another, such as he makes in his Question, are entirely misleading and liable to cause unnecessary discontent among consumers. At this time of the year the quantity of spring crops available, and therefore the price, depends almost entirely on weather conditions, and the conditions this year are not comparable with those of last year.

I have no reason to think that when the supply becomes equal, prices will be different. Beetroots and parsnips, to which reference is also made in the Question, are nearing the end of their season. The answer to the last part of my hon. Friend's Question is in the negative.

## BRITISH ARMY

## ADMINISTRATION

*Sir J. Mellor* asked the Secretary of State for War whether he will give examples of measures taken during the past six months to reduce paper work in the Army, in view of the fact that no reduction is yet noticeable in company offices?

*Captain Margesson:* Measures to reduce paper work in the Army are the constant concern of the Standing Committee on Army Administration, and, as I have stated on previous occasions, the process of overhaul is a continuous and continuing one. As cases for reform have come to light, they have been promptly examined and dealt with; and I am satisfied that the cumulative effect of the steps already taken has brought relief to unit offices. But I do not think it would be profitable to attempt to give representative examples of the considerable number of measures adopted and in contemplation. Incidentally my hon. Friend will remember that, as I told the House in my Estimates Speech, there is going on in the Northern Command an experiment in decentralisation, which if it proves suitable for general adoption will materially affect the problem.

## Diary of Events

MAY 28: President Roosevelt declared an "unlimited national emergency" in U.S.A. Mr. Winant left England for U.S.A., where he will see Mr. Roosevelt. Extension in food-rationing announced.

MAY 29: In Crete, Canea taken by German forces. German supply ship bombed in Sfax (Tunis) harbour was loaded with munitions; Vichy Government protested against bombing.

MAY 30: In Iraq, rebel government collapsed, Prime Minister Raschid Ali fled to Iran. British forces closing on Baghdad. Germans reinforced in Crete.

MAY 31: Dublin bombed by Germans notwithstanding neutrality. Iraq rebels asked for armistice.

JUNE 1: In Crete British troops evacuated. In Iraq, armistice signed. Clothes rationing introduced in Great Britain.

JUNE 2: Hitler met Mussolini on Brenner Pass for five-hour discussion. Weygand flew from French North Africa to see Pétain. Germans landed in Syria from plane and ship.

JUNE 3: Vichy decided to defend Syria and Tunisia against any British attacks; Weygand in command. Roosevelt met Winant in Washington. Sir G. Campbell, British Minister in Washington, transferred to be Director General, British Information Services in U.S.A.

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