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FROM WEEK TO WEEK

Before the beginning of this phase of the World War, Russia, the United States and potentially, Germany, were the worst Governments in the world, in about the order quoted, which is about the order of collectivity. Russia was incomparably worse governed than in the time of the Czars, and the judicial murders between 1917 and 1937 exceeded in number those of a century of Czardom, which was not distinguished by undue clemency. Probably the best Governments were those of Switzerland and the small Scandinavian countries.

Every revolution in history, not excluding the English Civil War, has set back civilisation, in some cases for a long period. In Russia, the one idea of the revolutionaries was to make reform and progress impossible, so that grievances would form a background for the seizure of power.

By common consent, the primary demand of human beings is security. If security means anything at all, it means stability of tenure. The Socialists, without a shred of justification, pretend to represent the interests of the common man. Their method of providing him with security is to attack his national security by refusing to re-arm, and then shouting for war against a re-armed Germany, to attack his economic security by penal taxation and predatory legislation, to attack his personal security by Regulations such as 18B which remove the safe-guards won by centuries of effort, and to attack his culture by placing his education, housing, "information," and "amusement" under the direction of an alien-minded bureaucracy.

But there is another meaning to the parent verb "To secure." It also means "to gain possession of." In this sense, Socialism is a great "securer."

A generation of Englishmen not bemused by miseducation and alien propaganda would have, and did, see through the fallacy of supposing that an attack on rights of any kind, whether of property or person, could mean anything but an attack on security for the purpose of "gaining possession of," *i.e.*, robbery. Pay temporary attention to what a man says; pay permanent attention to what he does.

There is a curious tendency, suggestive of an aberration of the mental faculties, for Socialists of the Fabian type to argue that because the scope of achievement by a first class individual is made much greater by the achievements of his predecessors, which have become a social inheritance, the achievements of the individual are the *result* of social environment. The argument is exactly equivalent to saying that James Watt was a Scott, there is a great deal of water

in Scotland, water makes steam, therefore Watt invented the steam-engine.

It is becoming clearer every day that the use made of environment depends more on heredity than on any other one ascertainable factor. Why didn't the Red Indians invent the telephone? Race is more important, if possible, than ever it was, and the inspirers of the London School of Economics, the Fabian Society, and P.E.P. know it. That is why it is systematically ridiculed, and why every effort is made to propagate the virtues of "the melting pot"—Federal Union, abrogation of State rights *etc.*

But not in Palestine.

"I felt through 1926 up to 1929, that we [U.S.A.—*Ed.*] as a people could not stand corn. We were arrogant, we were materialistic, we laid down the law at home and abroad, we assumed an intelligence far superior to that of other nations and demonstrated that intelligence in no uncertain terms." — *Diplomat between Wars* by HUGH WILSON; p.232.

"A series of very ancient fossils has been found which attest the fact that the modern Englishman, so far as his anatomy goes, extends backward into the past to a time when in other countries, man was distinguishable with difficulty from the ape."
— PROFESSOR WOOLLARD, F.R.S. in *The Antiquity of Recent Man*.

No, Clarence, the fossils were *not* found near N'Yark.

The Government's decision to form a Palestine regiment with Jewish and Arab battalions is said to have been welcomed by Hebrew newspapers as a first step towards the fulfilment of Jewish wishes to fight with the United Nations as an equal ally.

Scots nationalists do not find the existence of Scots regiments equally encouraging. From where, then, do the Jewish papers derive their resilient hope?

Canada's twelve million people, of whom considerably less than half are income earners, are ordered to find nearly \$4,000 million (about £800 million) during the period before the next budget. This works out at more than \$330 (about £66) per head of the population. Thus the average family of father, mother and four children is being held responsible for nearly \$2,000 (about £400) in the next year. The average income of a Canadian family is nowhere near that figure.

Mr. William Aberhart, Prime Minister of Alberta, commented on the budget:—

"The new federal budget—the largest wartime and

peacetime budget in the history of Canada—almost staggers the imagination with its demands on the Canadian taxpayers to meet the cost of war.

“The astronomical figures presented by Finance Minister Ilsley to the House of Commons. . . will do more than anything else to make the people of this dominion realise the critical emergency we are facing in our fight with the Axis; we will be forced to dig down deeper in a pocketbook which for many people is becoming slimmer and slimmer.

“Under our present financial set-up this system of taxation to balance a war budget is, in the opinion of the federal government, the only system which can be adopted to meet the rising cost of the war.

“It has always been my contention that if the Dominion Government is able to issue bonds to meet the cost of the war it is also able to issue bills for the same purpose. The bills have this advantage—that there are no interest charges and no debt is created. The bonds are for the advantage, largely, of the financial corporations which collect usury while the bills function for the welfare of the ordinary citizen.

“The existing situation, as far as the national economy is concerned, presents an anomaly: On the one hand the government has set a price ceiling on the cost of goods to the consumer; on the other huge increases in taxation will have a tendency to force an increase in prices.

“But there is nothing we can do about it under our present system of financing the country's needs. This budget should do more to bring home to the people the dire consequences of the present financial system.”

‘Uniformity’ of Taxation in Australia

The Australian High Court, in a recent majority judgment, dismissed the application by the Governments of Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia for a decree invalidating the Commonwealth Government's uniform income-tax legislation as ultra vires the Commonwealth constitution, holding that the Acts were valid in their entirety.

The following is the substance of a talk on this subject broadcast in April (before the judgment was given) by JAMES GUTHRIE from Hobart, Tasmania, and here reprinted from “The New Times”:—

During your lifetime you have seen many changes come over this country; you may or may not have noticed that these changes have been more or less in the same general direction—that is, life has become more organised and more uniform.

Our organisations have become larger and more powerful: Insurance Companies, Private Banks, Breweries, Newspapers, Tax-Collecting Offices, Trade Unions and Political Parties, etc., all have become bigger and more powerful; and bigger and more powerful by gradually destroying or swallowing the smaller organisations.

We also find that these organisations are interlocked one with the other; we cannot attack the one without attacking the lot. There is a bond of union between them which is most impressive.

This bond of union is only between the heads of the

various organisations; it is not shared by the private members who pay the expenses of these organisations. But modern organisations being very complicated affairs, their control rests necessarily in the hands of the permanent officials. The legal process required to bring about any change is so complex, difficult and expensive, and requires the expenditure of such an enormous amount of energy, that the ordinary man who comes out of our schools has neither the equipment nor the desire to tackle such jobs. The result is that the men in power find their power daily increasing.

Men in power are in power because they want to have power, or because they are especially chosen by others because they can be easily used by men in power. We find, therefore, that men in power never in any circumstances desire to reduce their power; on the contrary, we find from experience that they always desire to add to their power.

I shall go further and state emphatically that there is no statesman in power to-day in any country who does not wish to increase the power of the central organisation at the expense of destroying the power of every other organisation.

I will go further and state that no man, however talented, has any remote possibility of reaching the seats of power unless he adheres strictly to the policy of centralising all power in the hands of a few men.

We see in Germany the “perfect” case of organised political and economic power. We see seventy million people educated, disciplined and mesmerised by the leaders of the National Socialist Party, backed from the first by financial help from abroad and assisted by powerful Jewish support from within. Hitler was supported in preference to other men because he was willing to carry out the policy his own party objected to—the centralisation of all power in Berlin; that is, the power to raise taxes over the whole of Europe; forcing people to pay taxes being the modern method of making servile races work for the ruling caste in power.

In Japan, we see the same influence at work; we see a nation organised by a few men; we see the people changed in two generations from an easy-going peasantry to hard-working wage-slaves of a harsh industrial system. We see a few men disciplining a nation of forty million souls and using it for purposes which the people neither know nor understand, but for which they had to pay in blood and sweat and ever-increasing taxation.

That is what comes of centralising power in the hands of a few men.

No man should have unrestricted power over a million men, or a hundred men, or even over one man. Where there is a really democratic community consisting of voluntary organisations, then the power of one man to persecute others does not exist. Conscripted labour is never satisfactory; it is never efficient and it cannot hold its own against voluntary labour. It is only tolerated where results do not count, where corruption and inefficiency does not matter.

A dictator builds a great scheme at the cost of two million lives and the loss of all personal freedom; we are asked by ignorant fanatics to applaud the grandeur and efficiency of this wonderful scheme. But surely there are other ways of building great structures.

One Prime Minister of Australia said that if he gave

profitable prices to farmers they would flood the country with their produce. He let the cat out of the bag. If sufficient inducement is given anything can be accomplished. . . .

The taxation methods used in Australia and England seem to me to be designed to one end—to discourage all human effort. If men work late, then they have to pay extra tax for it. It is not fair to pretend to pay them extra and then take it away again. But whether it is fair or reasonable or just is not of much importance in war-time—the important fact is that it doesn't work, and that is an end to all argument.

If there were a pressing need for the Commonwealth Government to find money to pay for war expenses then we would just have to grin and bear it; but the Commonwealth Government can create all the monies necessary.

At the present time, all industry is supplied with credit, created by the private banks; the banks create all the means of payment out of nothing by means of cheque money. The Commonwealth Government has to pay interest on this fake money, which, according to the Australian Constitution, is illegal money, and to pay this interest the Government has to tax the people more heavily each year.

It is quite beyond all dispute to say that the Commonwealth Government can create all the necessary monies to pay for this war without taxing the people one single penny.

The Government need not be held up for anything through lack of money.

It is also beyond dispute that the Commonwealth Government can prevent any unnecessary rise in prices if it so desires. Also, most of the rise in price has been caused by the indirect taxes imposed by the Commonwealth Government.

For example, a small packet of cigarettes costs 8d. The tax collected by the Government is 5½d., the retailer gets 1d. The wholesaler, the manufacturer and the tobacco grower get between them 1½d. Yet Mr. Curtin and Professor Copland solemnly assure us that they are going to watch carefully over this 1½d. What we want is somebody to watch over the 5½d.

Now the Commonwealth Government is going to try to push the State Governments entirely out of the field of taxation. The States, of course, only pay for the education of the children, pay for hospitals and roads and bridges; pay for interest on all public buildings and for the unemployed.

The Commonwealth Government wants to collect all taxes—why? To decrease them? Certainly not. It wants to increase them. It wants to unify all taxes throughout Australia. Why? Because we want uniform taxes? No. Because it will be better able to raise all taxes to that of the highest paid in any State.

This is no good reason at all. Firstly, because the Commonwealth Government is not short of money. Secondly, because the State Governments are more competent to look after their own States than a few men sitting in Canberra. And, thirdly, because each State has different conditions (there is no similarity between Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania), there is no need for uniformity.

This idea of uniformity is something that needs to be watched with the utmost care. The only uniformity we

are likely to get by concentrating all taxing powers at Canberra is uniform and steady increase in taxation year after year.

When the various States federated under the name of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, the promoters told the people of Australia that the cost of federation would not be more than the cost of a dog-licence. Since federation the people have paid £1000 million in interest alone; have paid more than their debts and still their debt increases every year. Last war, special taxes were raised, but these taxes still remain. In 1914, the taxes were £4/14/6 per head; in 1920 they were more than doubled and became £10/9/- per head; during the depression they still went up and were £13/12/- per head. In 1939, before this war, they were £15 per head; now they are about double that and they are going to be increased, or, as Mr. Fadden and Mr. Scullin suggest—made uniform.

It is suggested that a uniform scheme of taxation operated from Canberra would save a quarter of a million pounds a year and the labour of 1000 men. I don't believe this. I suggest to you that a year from now, if they unify taxation, not only will they not save anything, but that there will be more men in the taxation offices than there are to-day.

The Federal Government has very much more on its hands than it can tackle at the present time; to try to put more on the Federal Government is just like giving a man a bigger job because he has failed to do a small job.

The chief task of the Federal Government is to look after the war and to co-ordinate the work of the State Governments. The chief task of the State Governments is to co-ordinate the work of the municipal governments; the chief task of the municipal governments is to co-ordinate the work of individuals living together in a small community.

The only community that has the remotest possibility of being democratic is the small community. There is no such thing as a large democratic State. Personally, I do not believe that there is a remote possibility of making a large State democratic. That is why experienced political thinkers say the basis of democratic government is municipal government.

The further the seat of government is removed from the people who are governed, the less chance there is of efficient government. The history of absentee management is the history of incompetence, disruption and revolt. Any person who suggests that Australia should be run by one Government at Canberra is merely a political babe. The proper place for the Government of Tasmania is Tasmania, and by Tasmanians. If there is to be only one taxing authority the proper people to collect the taxes is the Tasmanian Government.

We may not have much control over the Tasmanian Government, but what control will Tasmanians have over a taxing authority sitting in Canberra?

If there is to be only one taxing authority, all money required by the Federal Government should be given as a grant by the States for the maintenance of the army, etc. If any uniformity is desired it can be based on the lowest-taxed State, taking as a basis the year 1914. If the Federal Government can't find men capable of doing this, I can find the men who can, but they won't be Mr. Fadden or Mr. Chifley.

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The Stars and the Stripes

If there be any doubt left in respect of the charge that the British race is rapidly coming under alien influence it should be removed by the recent passing in one day of the U.S.A. (Visiting Forces) Bill by our rabbit M.P.s. Under the Bill, which has been kept secret from the House of Commons and the public, while the demands of the U.S. have been considered in letters between Mr. Eden and Mr. Winant the American Ambassador, American troops committing crimes in this country will be tried by an American Military Court and according to the American laws. In the words of Mr. Morrison, "This Bill ousted British Courts from jurisdiction in regard to criminal offences..." The American authorities had pressed the point of view "that it was most expedient, and from the constitutional point of view right, that any offences on the part of members of their armed forces should be tried by their own military courts."

A few M.P.s protested against the indecent haste with which the Bill was introduced as well as against the fact of its being presented to Parliament as a *fait accompli*. So far as *The Times* account of the debate reflects the view of Parliament, there was some concern respecting the manner of the Bill's presentation, but nothing hard should be said about our American cousins who are helping us to win the war!

Lord Atkin's letter to *The Times* is important for what its writer manages to say. Laymen may think that the potential criminal in the U.S.A. forces doesn't care a damn about what kind of court he has to be tried under, so long as there may be decent opportunities presented for him to escape punishment, or delay conviction, which are notorious features of American legal proceedings.

Mr. Morrison's solicitude for the American point of view ignored the rights of the British victims of a crime perpetrated by an American soldier. The soldier will claim and be tried by an American Military court, but has not the victim, or the relatives of a victim, a fundamental right to be protected by a British Court of justice?

Our conscientious Home Secretary and the Attorney General claimed that our military courts in France in the last war had similar powers. To adduce the condition of France in 1914-1918 as an argument for the imposition of a second legal Government in this country is childish. The Attorney General supported his claim by the extraordinary plea that the number of U.S.A. troops were large and would probably grow. What in heaven's name has the number of individuals got to do with a matter of law, unless it is that a great number of law breakers can render the law ineffective? Whether it be one alien or many, the traditional practice of British Courts is to apply the legal code, which in theory

at any rate, distinguishes not between the one and the many. It is evident that this incursion into the field of British justice is actuated more from motives of an experimental nature in the long term plan to control Britain, rather than control the impulses of the American armed forces.

The record of Morrison and others in the suspension of Habeas Corpus and other restrictive agencies operating on the lives of the British citizen is too familiar for repetition here, and our supine M.P.s seem to have committed suicide at the waving of the stars and stripes.

The act would appear in place only if Britain were a defeated country in American occupation. But isn't it?
 — E.J.P.

It was reported in the press on August 10 that the first American court-martial under the United States of America (Visiting Forces) Act, which received Royal Assent on August 6, was to be held on that day, when charges were to be held against two American soldiers. It was understood that one would be charged with rape, and the other with manslaughter.

TAXATION AND SLAVERY

"What is a slave? For, let us not be amused by a name; but look well into the matter. A slave is, in the first place, a man who has no property; and property means something that he has, and that nobody can take from him without his leave, or consent. Whatever man, no matter what he call himself or anybody else may call him, can have his money or his goods taken from him by force, by virtue of an order, or ordinance, or law, which he has had no hand in making; and to which he has not given his assent, has no property, and is merely a depository of the goods from his master. A slave has no property in his labour; and any man who is compelled to give up the fruit of his labour to another, at the arbitrary will of that other, has no property in his labour, and is, therefore, a slave, whether the fruit of his labour be taken from him directly or indirectly. If it be said, that he gives up this fruit of his labour by his own will, and that it is not forced from him, I answer, To be sure he may avoid eating and drinking and may go naked; but, then he must die, and on this condition, and this condition only, can he refuse to give up the fruit of his labour. 'Die wretch, or surrender as much of your income, or the fruit of your labour, as your masters choose to take.' This is, in fact, the language of the rulers to every man who is refused to have a share in the making of the laws to which he is forced to submit. But, some may say, slaves are private property, and may be bought and sold, out and out, like cattle. And, what is it to the slave, whether he be property of one or of many; or, what matter it to him, whether he pass from master to master by a sale for an indefinite term, or be let to hire by the year, month, or week? It is, in no case, the flesh and blood and bones that are sold, but the labour; and, if you actually sell the labour of man, is not that man a slave, though you sell it for only a short time at once? And, as to the principle, so ostentatiously displayed in the case of the black slave-trade, that 'man ought not to have a property in man;' it is even an advantage to the slave to be private property, because the owner has then a clear and powerful interest in the preservation of his life, health and strength, and will, therefore, furnish him amply with the food and raiment necessary for these ends."

— WILLIAM COBBETT in *Advice to Young Men*.

The United States of America (Visiting Forces) Bill

RUSHED THROUGH IN ONE DAY

The United States of America (Visiting Forces) Bill provides that all criminal offences on the part of members of the Armed Forces of the United States shall be removed from the jurisdiction of the British courts. It is understood, but not stated in the Bill, that they shall be tried by military courts of the United States Armed Forces. The American Forces consider such a measure expedient and right from their own constitutional standpoint: "The American authorities," said Mr. Herbert Morrison in opening the debate in the Commons, "have pressed that point of view upon us with great vigour and earnestness."

The two principal reasons given are that members of the American Forces are familiar with the proceedings and principles of American law; and that were members of American Forces brought into the British Courts by a British authority the American authorities would feel it necessary to provide defence, whereas if they could try them they would have a freer hand to see that the appropriate punishments (which would not be less severe) were inflicted. Mr. Morrison reminded his hearers that in the last war we ourselves made precisely the same claim in the case of the British Forces in France, and continued:—

... The Allied Forces Act, 1940, enabled the Allied Governments generally to set up their own courts to deal with matters of discipline and internal administration within their Armed Forces, and therefore, as far as the internal discipline and administration of their own Armed Forces are concerned, it is already established by law in this country that the law of the Allies applies to them. All that this Bill does is to extend to the very considerable American Forces a similar position in relationship to criminal offences in this country. This, of course, is a matter of very great importance and a very substantial extension, the importance of which I do not wish in any way to under-estimate to the House. The present position is that there is a dual jurisdiction. At the moment the American Armed Forces, through their appropriate military courts and so on, have jurisdiction over those cases and so have the British courts of justice. What this Bill does is to oust the British courts of justice from jurisdiction in cases of criminal offences...

Mr. Morrison continued by drawing attention to the Notes exchanged between the two Governments on this subject, which were set out in a Schedule to the Bill. American military law seemed to cover all the range of criminal offences known to our law, and penalties were as severe. There was a provision in the Bill for a waiver of the exclusive American jurisdiction in particular cases—for instance it might be waived in the case of an offence in distant parts of the United Kingdom where it would be needlessly troublesome for the American authorities to send a court martial.

Mr. Morrison went on:—

... The question has been raised by the Government, as we felt that the House would wish us to do, as to reciprocity on the American side. It is the case that circumstances are very different on the other side, for there are very few British troops in the United States. Therefore as a practical issue it hardly arises. But our American friends have agreed that if and when it becomes a practical issue

the American Government will do all they can to see that appropriate reciprocity is given to us in a similar way. There is machinery existing, which will be developed, for co-operation between ourselves and the American military authorities. Finally, it is intended that the Agreement shall remain in force until six months after the restoration of a state of peace, unless mutual agreement is otherwise reached at the time.

As to the Bill itself, the main provisions are clear, I think, on the face of them... Clause 1, Sub-section (1), provides that no criminal proceedings shall be prosecuted in the United Kingdom before any court of the United Kingdom against a member of the military or naval forces of the United States of America, subject to the proviso to which I have referred. Clause 1, Sub-section (2), makes it clear that the police powers of arrest, search, entry or custody are not affected by the Bill; they continue. Provision is made for establishing machinery for handing over offenders to the United States authorities to be dealt with by the United States Service Tribunals. A similar agreement in principle has been reached and is being implemented, I understand, in the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand. The only other point I would mention is that civil proceedings are in no way affected by this Bill, which is solely directed to criminal offences....

Mr. Clement Davies (Montgomery) protested at the manner in which the matter was brought before the House to be rushed through all its stages in one sitting, and at the way it was brought before the House as a *fait accompli*. He continued:—

... My third protest is against the thing itself. Power has already been given by the Legislature to enable the Forces that have come to this country, who are our welcome guests and who have come here to assist us, to deal with their own affairs, and if further power were necessary, this House would readily give it. If any trouble arises with regard to discipline, if any dispute arises between two soldiers belonging to an Allied nation, that, of course, is a matter in regard to which we will say, "You can deal with it yourselves, we do not want to exercise any jurisdiction, we will take away from our own courts the right to deal with them." But it goes further; it does not even deal only with military offences, but with offences against civilians in this country.

Earl Winterton: It is extra-territorial rights.

Mr. Davies: Most certainly. The noble Lord can put it the other way if he likes. We are reducing ourselves to the position in which certain countries were put by us under the Capitulation Treaties.

Mr. Silverman: Surely we are not even in such a good position, because under the worst of those Treaties the courts which exercised jurisdiction at least were civil courts?

Mr. Davies: What we are doing is to deprive ourselves of the ancient jurisdiction of which we are so proud, and to hand it over to courts functioning, not in a foreign country, but in our own country. The precedent put forward is that this was done by France. But it was done only when the German invader had occupied a large part of her territory, when the French courts of civil jurisdiction were unable to function, and when there was only French military jurisdiction operating. Very rightly, they said, "You deal with your own cases, and we will deal with ours." That was an entirely different situation from that which exists in this country. I also wish to show that the Bill in the form in

which it has been introduced is of a negative character. It states:

"(1) Subject as hereinafter provided, no criminal proceedings shall be prosecuted in the United Kingdom before any court of the United Kingdom against a member of the military or naval forces of the United States of America."

That is all. There is nothing there to say specifically that jurisdiction shall be exercised over these people by anyone else. It merely deprives our courts of jurisdiction. Having said that there is a precedent in France, the only other point emphasised by the Home Secretary was that the penalties these people would administer would be as severe as those administered in our courts. What the penalty may be is a small matter. What is important is, What is the jurisdiction, how it is exercised and under what rules it is exercised. . . .

Rear Admiral Beamish (Lewes): . . . I have read through the correspondence in the Schedule, and I should like to ask that the previous transactions referred to in the opening lines of the Foreign Secretary's letter to the American Ambassador should be placed in our possession. Our letter, which I have read with great care, reads in the nature of a mild, justifiable and polite protest, with evident fears for possible difficulties that may arise. The 10-line reply of the American Ambassador reads like the last remarks of a polite ultimatum which has already been delivered. I put it in the politest possible words that the House of Commons exists for people to say what they think, and so long as it is not what I should call rude and unfair, one has every right to put forward such a view, but that is how it strikes me in reading it. . . .

Mr. Silverman: . . . To my mind, the most serious aspect of this proposal is that it places the American soldier in this country in a position in which he would not be placed at home and in which the British soldier is not placed. Our system of Government and our way of life, for which millions of people are prepared to die and which perhaps on that account alone might be worthy of some consideration, could not continue except on the basis that the actions of officials, the actions of soldiers, the actions of anybody, are ultimately challengeable in the civil courts and not in the military courts. That is just as true of the American way of life as it is of ours. But in this solitary case, exceptional in American law, exceptional in our own law, the American soldier in England is to be placed above the law, above civil control and answerable to no criminal code. The American soldier is not to be answerable to the American criminal law; he is to be answerable only to American military courts.

I do not want to join in the morbid prognostications of my hon. and learned Friend about some imaginary cases which he believes and hopes will never eventuate in any court, but I would like to put another subject which I believe and hope will never eventuate in any court. There are sometimes occasions of civil strife, civil commotion, civil disturbance, when it happens sometimes that it is necessary to call in soldiers to the aid of the civil power. It is conceivable, to say no more than that, that such an occasion might arise when American soldiers were used either alone or in conjunction with our own. What is the safeguard of democracy in this country on such an occasion? It is this, that whatever the soldier may do on such an occasion, under our law he will ultimately have to answer for it before a civil court and under civil law. But for this our country

might become a military dictatorship. The ultimate sanction is that whatever he may do in an emergency and however the civil arm may ultimately justify what he did, still it is for the civil arm and not for the military court, it is for the civil law and not for the military code, ultimately to determine what was done was rightly done or not. Under this Bill, in such a situation as I have conceived, ultimately British soldiers would be answerable to British law before British courts, and so our constitution would be preserved, our democracy preserved. But under this Bill, to what would the American soldiers be answerable? He would be answerable to an American court-martial for breaches of the American military law, and answerable for nothing else, and it would presumably be a complete defence before such a tribunal that the American soldier obeyed the order of the American officer immediately, or more than immediately, superior to him. All this may be—and I gather that some hon. Members think it is—unnecessarily imaginative. I hope it is, but who knows?

Commander Sir Archibald Southby, (Epsom): At the same time the House must realise that we are, as many hon. and learned Gentlemen have said during the course of this Debate, doing something which has never before been done in this country. It is a complete departure from constitutional procedure. It has been done presumably at the request of the United States. It is a great pity that more has not been told us about how the request originated. You do not improve the good relationship between the two countries by putting a *fait accompli* on the table and as it were asking this House to agree to what is in fact a "pig in a poke." It does nothing but harm to come to all sorts of agreements and arrangements and then come to the House and say in effect, "You must agree to this. If you do not agree to it, you will endanger relationships between ourselves and the United States. You must not criticise unduly lest that should lead to misunderstanding on the other side of the Atlantic." There has been a great deal too much of that. The cause of Anglo-American friendship is not improved thereby. I have lived and worked and enjoyed a great deal of happiness in the United States, and I am certain that the desire for that sort of thing does not come from there. We have our rights and duties to perform, and so have they. We should all get on a great deal better if this House were consulted before major agreements of all kinds were entered into.

This is only another instance. Recently in the Press there have been announcements about the possibility of the appointment of an American generalissimo. That it not an arrangement which ought to be entered into and then suddenly put before this House and the House asked to agree to it without the matter having been previously discussed by the House. As regards our discussions to-day, it is a great pity that there should not have been more time to consider this very important Bill. If it is important to help the work of those who are responsible for the direction of the American Forces, then by all means let us pass this Measure, but let us make it clear that we realise what we are doing. We want a great deal more information about the code which is going to be operated in the American courts, and it is our duty and our right to ask for that information in the interests of the people whom we represent as Members of the House of Commons. . . .

The Attorney-General (Sir Donald Somervell): . . . The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Garro

Jones) and others asked about the code. The code is the American equivalent for our Army Act, and it is called "The Articles of War." It is an application of American military law to the hypothetical offenders that will be applied by American courts-martial. . . . Under the general Article which the Home Secretary read there is power to treat as an offence against discipline any disregard of any local law or regulation. Take, for instance, anything like a blackout offence. The American authorities assure us not only that they can but that they will deal with matters of that kind as an offence against discipline, as of course they are. . . .

With regard to the code, we will arrange that a copy of this book will be put into the Library. There are not a great many copies in this country, but we will arrange that. . . .

. . . Various Members raised the question of a joint offence—where a British soldier or a British civilian and a United States soldier were jointly concerned in an offence. Let me make it quite clear that a British civilian or a British soldier cannot be taken before an American court—no doubt the matter would be one for discussion between the two authorities. There might be no great disadvantage in having one tried before one court and the other tried before the other court, but, if it were disadvantageous, then it would be a case where the two Governments could discuss what I may call the "waiver," in which case the American soldier could be tried in a British court with the British offender. . . .

I think he [Mr. Silverman] will find, although I must not be dogmatic about this, that under the American code, which is somewhat different from ours, all offences are, in fact, dealt with by courts-martial during war-time, even though there are no actual hostilities in the country. It is really a matter more for the American authorities than for us, but, far from putting a United States soldier in a different position, it substantially puts him in the same position as in his own country, where normally all offences are dealt with by a military court.

Mr. Silverman: I was thinking of the illustration which I gave of the sanction, by which ultimately the act of a soldier is subject to the jurisdiction of a civil court. I was thinking of the calling-out of the military in case of riot or disturbance. Are we to understand that in America the American civil court would not exercise such jurisdiction over American soldiers?

The Attorney-General: I must not be too dogmatic about this. If you take the broad picture, I understand that in war-time at any rate, and also to some extent in peace-time, the whole range of offences are dealt with by courts-martial and not by civil courts. . . .

By C. H. Douglas
THE BIG IDEA
 2/6

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PALESTINE AND ACETONE

There have reached us the following details incorporated in a recent lecture to students:—

Before 1914 a Manchester Quaker named Strange started an organisation for developing new lines of industrial research. Professor Fernbach, of Paris, who was co-operating with him discovered an organism which could ferment starches to form butyl alcohol and acetone. The Strange organisation proposed to place this on an industrial basis for the production of synthetic rubber, presumably from the butyl alcohol.

Several years were spent on the initial stages, and apparently great difficulties were encountered, chiefly, it seems, in finding a market for the rubber if it were produced. A factory was acquired at King's Lynn, in the centre of the potato growing district, which would thus provide a cheap form of starch as raw material. Progress, however, seems to have been held up until the outbreak of war in 1914, when an urgent demand sprang up for the other by-product, acetone, both as a solvent in the manufacture of explosives, and as 'dope' for aeroplane fabric.

During this initial period, laboratory work was 'farmed' out to various Universities, the necessary funds to pay the salaries of research assistants being provided by Strange. One of these assistants indirectly employed by Strange under the direction of Professor Perkins was Chaim Weizmann, a young refugee Polish Jew. He was undoubtedly supplied with the bacillus of Fernbach and allowed to experiment with it, but appeared to produce no work of particular note at that time.

With the increasing scale of the war, and the great munitions and aircraft drive, the Government appears to have found itself in a desperate plight for acetone, which was produced in quite insufficient quantities by the old process from coal.

The Strange Organisation was urged, and undertook, to produce it by fermentation. They were, however, involved in great difficulties in transferring the process from the laboratory to large scale production. This was very understandable, as the speaker stressed, for they were attempting something never before undertaken, namely, the carrying out on a large scale of *anaerobic* fermentation. The difficulties were *primary* in nature, and once overcome, they could be overcome by the same technique in any other anaerobic fermentation process. It needed considerable time, and the sinking of large capital in experimental machinery much of which had to be scrapped. The chief problem was the exclusion of air, and of the common aerobic organisms, in fact they had to develop a sterile technique on the factory scale. This was finally overcome by keeping the whole system under steam pressure so that if a leak developed anywhere, no air would enter. An elaborate system of stop-cocks was also necessary.

Fortunately most of the pioneer work had already been done before the war, and in a few months the industrial process was perfected. However, the products of fermentation, which were collected in large vats, had to be separated by the usual method of fractional distillation, which presented no novel difficulties. For some reason which was not explained, although the factory was in all other respects ready for production, and although acetone was one of the most urgent needs and anxieties of the Government, no

acetone could be produced because certain elements of a common type of distilling equipment, which had long been ordered, were not forthcoming. Meanwhile the highly skilled staff who had completed the pioneer work in a hurry were kept kicking their heels in a state of growing exasperation.

At this stage Weizmann, who was now a Lecturer at Manchester University, approached the Admiralty with the statement that he had the secret of acetone production by fermentation.

This claim was accepted at the Admiralty, for Weizmann was taken on the staff of their laboratories, and at first given a commandeered brewery in which to operate his process. He seems to have failed because he had no large-scale experience of the process, and would have had to discover for himself the technique which had taken the Strange Organisation some years to establish. After being offered various factories and equipment, Weizmann asked for the plant at King's Lynn, and this was placed at his disposal.

Strange and his men were displaced, and during war-time were unable to make any effective protest. Weizmann was installed, and very soon received the necessary distilling equipment. As raw material, however, he chose to use imported maize, instead of locally grown potatoes.

The process was successful, and large quantities of acetone were produced by it at King's Lynn, and later, much bigger quantities in America.

The Lecturer, who spoke from personal experience, was chiefly concerned with placing the scientific credit where it belonged. He was, however, cautious in his wording, as, he pointed out, the affair had been the subject of a legal decision.

Immediately after the War, Strange brought an action against Weizmann in which he was defeated, afterwards going bankrupt. The case which was unique at the time, hinged upon the identity of the organisms used by Fernbach and Weizmann, respectively, Weizmann claiming that his was entirely different and more effective. To anyone who knows the variability of such organisms the scientific validity of a legal decision depending upon such a point is doubtful.

In conversation after the lecture, a bacteriologist who was present, made it quite clear that he was familiar with the whole story from different sources from the lecturer's, and added, as if it was an understood thing, that the Balfour Declaration was part of the price paid by the Government for the Acetone Process. The Lecturer agreed.

QUISLING, FASCIST AND FEDERAL-UNIONIST!

The term "quisling" is derived from the Norwegian Fascist leader, Vidkun Quisling, who openly betrayed his country when she was invaded by the Nazis in the spring of 1940. Vidkun Quisling has a strange—and to most people unknown—link with this country, for in the first number of the *British Union Quarterly*, published by the British Union of Fascists, for January/April, 1937, appeared an article entitled *A Nordic World Federation*, by Vidkun Quisling.

—From *Treachery and Anti-Semitism* by JAMES B. LUNN.

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