

THE SOCIAL CREDITER

FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

Vol. 9. No. 23.

Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper
Postage (home and abroad) 1d.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1943.

6d. Weekly.

The "Land for the (Chosen) People" Racket (X)

by C. H. DOUGLAS

A few weeks ago, one of the most famous herds of Pedigree Shorthorn cattle in the world, domiciled in the South of Scotland, developed some cases of Foot-and-Mouth disease. Money values really mean very little in connection with unique specimens, but the herd was conservatively valued at about £20,000.

It had been formed by an owner who was an acknowledged authority. His whole life's work and interest was bound up with his cattle.

Every possible argument was brought to bear upon the Board of Agriculture, without effect. Every animal, sick or well, was slaughtered. The owner died of a broken heart a few days later.

Although comment was stifled, it was not wholly prevented, and several disinterested persons with cognate experience obtained publicity for the expression of grave doubts as to the justification for this rigid policy. One lady, a member of a family with a long hereditary experience of cattle breeding, but with no interest to serve but that of farmers, claimed, not only to have a cure, but to have demonstrated it beyond any possibility of refutation. The Ministry of Agriculture was not even interested, and refused reasonable facilities for a re-demonstration. It will be remembered that the Duke of Westminster expressed disbelief in the official policy some time ago, and as a large landowner in probably the most famous dairy county, Cheshire, he was doubtless drawing upon first class information.

There is in this policy evidence of that soulless crudity which many people have come to recognise in Marxian ideology. If it were justified by results, it would still be suspect as containing the seed of further trouble. But it is grossly ineffective. Information as to the number of head of cattle in the United Kingdom in 1942 is not available to me. It seems highly probable that it is far less than at the beginning of the war. But the outbreaks of foot-and-mouth were 99 in 1939; 160 in 1940; 264 in 1941; and 670, or nearly seven times as many, in 1942. The number of cattle slaughtered under the Order was 12,029 in 1939; 19,058 in 1940; 27,128 in 1941; and 56,515 in 1942. Comment would appear to be superfluous.

Many persons who have taken up this matter do not hesitate to give their opinion on it. They say that there is some vested interest involved. In the sense in which this

is usually meant, I can offer no special view, since I am not closely in touch with the problem. But I should, *a priori*, be much more inclined to regard it as the policy of a philosophy. Israel Zangwill, the Zionist leader, was profoundly right, and was no doubt speaking from inner information, when he said at the "Hands off Russia" Meeting at the Albert Hall on February 8, 1919:—"The British Government is only Bolshevism in embryo, and Bolshevism is only Socialism in a hurry." It does not require much imagination to see that the type of mind which regards mass slaughter of cattle as the least troublesome way in which to deal with a curable disease is the same type of mind which regards the mass liquidation of millions of Russian farmers as the easiest way to stamp out opposition to collective farming. I hope no reader of these lines will miss the implication of them.

Perhaps at this point I may be permitted to emphasise once again the evident collapse of the episodic view of events. Our sense of realities has become so perverted that we only see with difficulty the direct connection between the murder of millions of Russians in 1919, and the mass killing of unknown millions of Russians, as well as other nationalities in 1942. The pseudo-scientists of dialectical materialism appear to be determined to distract attention from the first Law of genuine science:—Action and reaction are equal, and opposite. Still less, therefore, do we see that, in allowing these mass, collective, 'remedies' to become familiarised, we are preparing a psychology which can only have appalling results.

To anyone who is not wilfully blind, it must be obvious that man's interference with nature, if it is not to be catastrophic, must be inspired by something very different from the rigid formalism of a Government Department. The modern Government Department has its roots in the departmentalised pseudo-science of the Encyclopaedist fore-runners of the French Revolution and its lineal descendant, Russian Bolshevism. The curious, shallow, and largely bogus generalisations of Russian intellectuals (*e.g.* that all human behaviour is derived from four "conditioned reflexes") have the same unhealthy phosphorescence. No sane individual would contend, I should suppose, that either genuine scientific research or its application within the sphere in which it can be controlled—inorganic—is in itself undesirable. Only megalomaniacs could claim that we have accumulated sufficient knowledge in about one hundred years to warrant us in undertaking the modest task of rectifying on a grand scale the errors of a Life Process which has evolved in untold milleniums. Nor does the initial result of our activities appear to justify the mass application of our theories. We have begun to Plan the animals; and the Big Idea is Death.

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To be continued.

FROM WEEK TO WEEK

It is daily becoming more obvious that there is very, very Big Money behind the agitation in the United States against the British Empire and particularly against British control of India. And anyone who remembers the part played by German-American-Jewish bankers, until they were bought off by an undisclosed bargain in 1917, will have no difficulty in locating its origin.

There are two marked characteristics of the American general public—we are not referring to the peculiar populations of New York and Washington, or even Chicago, but to the great mass of farmers and artisans who make up probably one hundred out of the hundred and thirty millions who call themselves Americans. The first of these is abysmal ignorance of world affairs combined with both lack of interest in them and a strong desire not to be mixed up in them. And the second is a sublime belief in their divine mission to point out their neighbour's sins. These two characteristics can be worked upon, and are being worked upon, to provide an instrument of blackmail, just as Great Britain, in 1917, was blackmailed. Not one Middle West American in a million would do one serious day's work to implement his infantile views on the correct policy to pursue in regard to India, but he can be roused quite easily to 'barrack' anyone who is engaged on the problem—in fact, his idea of a game is an organised opportunity to hurl abuse at the players.

We have received from a Californian address what purports to be a reprint of an article by Frances Gunther in a magazine called *Common Sense*. The title of the article is significant—*If India loses, We lose*. Who is "we"?

Amongst the usual mass of distortions, half-truths, and plain lies, the following remarkable paragraph occurs:—*"Anyone with an inkling of Anglo-Russian, and Anglo-Chinese relations for the past 150 years must realise that the elimination of English domination from India is and will remain [our italics] a vital factor in the national policies of both Russia and China."* If that sentence means anything at all, it means that Indian affairs must be dominated by Russian and Chinese policy, in place of British.

We have no doubt that "appropriate official circles" in this country have seen this poisonous and dangerous rubbish, which reached us uncensored through the mail. We are making sure of it, however.

"The newspapers here [New York] give the impression that the war is being fought by France and Canada. At a popular theatre, one of the scenes depicted nightly is of Canadian troops returning from the battlefield to their meals, which are being cooked for them by British soldiers."

No, Clarence, that is not a report of the winning of the Battle of Egypt. It is an extract from a cable to Sir Edward Grey by Lord Northcliffe, on September 1, 1917.

The Debate on Economic Policy in the House of Commons on February 2 showed, nesting together in the minds of M.P.s, (1) the determination to make Full Employment for All the explicit objective of the State; and (2) the realisation that war stimulates the development of industrial

processes to greater efficiency and production both at home and in countries which formerly imported manufactured goods.

Little birds in their nests don't always agree: one of these notions may cuckoo the other out. Which?

Sir Kingsley Wood's 'constructive' suggestions were:—

(1) "First we need a policy of expansion so that employment is maintained and production serves the ends of consumption...."

(2) "Secondly, we need a strong effort to prevent those disastrous swings in the prices of the raw materials and primary products of the world...."

(3) "Thirdly, we need an international monetary mechanism which will serve the requirements of international trade and avoid any need for unilateral action in competitive exchange depreciation."

(4) "Fourthly...there is another phase of international economic co-operation.... which we hope will be of increasing importance—the work of the International Labour Office...."

(5) "Finally, as the world begins to settle down after the war.... we may well need some international organisation for assisting the direction of international investments for development."

International, anyway.

Alberta Debt Adjustment Act before the Privy Council

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, in dismissing an appeal by the Attorney-General of Alberta from a majority judgment of the Supreme Court of Canada, held that the Debt Adjustment Act, 1937, of Alberta, as amended to 1941, was *ultra vires* the Legislature of Alberta.

The Act, *inter alia*, constituted a Debt Adjustment Board, with powers to make inquiries with regard to the property of any resident debtor or resident farmer, and provided that, with certain exceptions, actions, suits, and proceedings to enforce payment against resident debtors in respect of debts created before July 1, 1936, should not be begun or continued without a permit issued by or on behalf of the board. The board was also empowered, on request, to conduct negotiations to bring about agreements between resident debtors and their creditors with the object of reducing debts so as to bear some relation to the debtors' ability to pay. Further, a resident farmer, who was in default on a proposal formulated and confirmed under the Farmers' Creditors Arrangement Act, 1934 (a Dominion Act), could not be proceeded against by his creditor without a permit from the board.

Mr. Wilfrid Barton, K.C., and Mr. J. Leonard Stone appeared for the appellant; and Mr. D. N. Pritt, K.C., and Mr. Frank Gahan; Mr. J. W. Estey*, K.C., and Mr. F. W. Wallace; Mr. Charles Romer, K.C., and Mr. J. Leonard Stone; and Mr. C. F. H. Carson, K.C., for various respondents and interveners.

*Mr. Estey is Attorney General for Saskatchewan. It was reported in the Alberta press that representatives of Manitoba, Ontario and New Brunswick would also support the appeal.

JUDGMENT

Lord Maugham, giving the judgment of their Lordships, said that distress of a very serious nature was rife in Alberta and the adjoining prairie Provinces from at any rate the year 1920, and the Act now under consideration was the last of a series of legislative attempts to relieve the distress of resident farmers and others, while keeping within the legislative powers of the Province as laid down in the British North America Act, 1867, as amended. The question before their Lordships, however, was not as to the expediency, still less the wisdom, of the present Act—the Debt Adjustment Act 1937; it was as to the power of the Province to pass it.

In the opinion of their Lordships there could be no doubt as to the pith and substance of the Act. It was legislation in relation to insolvency, that was, in relation to a class of subject within the exclusive legislative authority of the Parliament of Canada under section 91 of the British North America Act, 1867. Its plain purpose was to relieve persons resident in the Province and their estates from an enforceable liability to pay debts incurred before July 1, 1936, and in many cases to compel the creditors to accept compositions approved by the board. That was effected by precluding persons from any access to the Courts of Alberta to enforce their rights against any persons resident in the Province without the permission of the board, which might never be obtained.

Their Lordships had come to the conclusion, in agreement with the Supreme Court, on the one hand, that the Act as a whole constituted a serious and substantial invasion of the exclusive legislative powers of the Parliament in Canada in relation to bankruptcy and insolvency, and, on the other hand, that it obstructed and interfered with the actual legislation of that Parliament on those matters.

The case was tried before Lord Maugham, Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Macmillan, Lord Romer and Lord Clauson.

An American View of World Federation

"Should a Federal World Government be established?" was the title of a discussion broadcast in the United States on November 12, 1942.

It was opposed by Mr. DAVID H. WILLS, a director of the information division of the British Supply Council in Washington, D.C., and Mr. MALCOLM BINGAY, editorial director of the "Detroit Free Press," whose address is reprinted below.

Mr. Bingay said:—

I speak as an American only. I am against a world government at this time for these reasons:

One hundred and fifty years ago the greatest experiment in government in the history of the human race began. It is still an experiment. Now the hour of trial is at hand. Can this nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, long endure?

The first half of our 150 years was spent in dodging the issue of moral slavery, of human slavery. Having refused to solve this question through political action, we fought the bloodiest civil war in history. The marks of that are still upon the nation.

For the next fifty years we kept right on moving away from our governmental problems in our expansion. Twenty-five years later, the World War started. We have been living through that with no chance of concentrating on our own domestic problems. But, we did keep alive the spirit of political liberty. As long as we can do that, we will be able to cure the economic, social, and cultural maladjustments we have so long neglected. The time has come now when we can no longer move away from them. We again have our choice of solving them by political action or by civil war. These are the only two alternatives known to history.

Before the first war, we were beginning to be conscious of them. Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson made issues of them, but they were lost in the deluge. After the Armistice there came the years of disillusionment and lost faith. Cynical, angry youth turned to communism, socialism, planned economy, and the other allurements of totalitarianism. Democracy, they said, had failed. Economic security was the answer. That could come, they said, only through regimentation and not through the free play of political action. They forgot that only by liberty of thought can we settle these questions peacefully. It must be by electioneering or by mutual slaughter. And now, with a war on again, it is proposed that we organise a world government.

We are asked to move away once more from the domestic questions vital to our destinies. Having failed to solve our own differences, we will now solve the problems of the universe.

Good government, however, begins at home. If we can develop honest and efficient municipal, state, and federal law in the United States, then we can solve, through democracy, the questions that now cry for settlement. Having done that, we can rightfully lead the world out of the chaos it now is in by the power of might, justice, and precepts. When the United States was established, Count Metternich, reactionary genius of Austria, cried out, "Democracy is the gangrene of the body politic. It will never touch the shores of Europe. We will burn it out with a white-hot iron."

He knew what that meant—the implanting of an explosive idea in the mass mind of mankind. The Metternichs of the world have protested ever since. Once it was only the Tories. Now it is on the soapboxes of Union Square. It is the cry of those who contend that the politician must rule the people rather than the people the politician. It is a throwback to the ancient order of absolutism under monarchy. It is significant that most of those advocating a regimented America under some form of socialism are also advocating a new world order under some international plan of planned economy.

We cannot master our own vital issues if we surrender our sovereignty to a world federation, most of which will be made up of people who have not the slightest idea of what we mean by political democracy, let alone an economic democracy. It must be our task when the war is won to maintain law and order with the help of our Allies. That will be a form of martial law until sanity is restored. This may take years, and a peace conference should not be called until then. Then, we should insist upon a world order just as a good citizen insists upon peace in his neighbourhood, but that does not mean that he wants his neighbours to move into his home and to become a part of his family.

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This journal expresses and supports the policy of the Social Credit Secretariat, which is a non-party, non-class organisation neither connected with nor supporting any political party, Social Credit or otherwise.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: *Home and abroad, post free:*
 One year 30/-; Six months 15/-; Three months 7s. 6d.
 Offices: (Editorial and Business) 49, PRINCE ALFRED ROAD,
 LIVERPOOL, 15, Telephone: Wavertree 435.

Vol. 9. No. 23.

Saturday, February 13, 1943.

LET 'EM WORK!

The Economist, which has abandoned at last the doctrine that nations may be better off *because* of wars, and even professes to believe that "we can nevertheless be better off after the war, if," etc., etc., etc., publishes a 'first' article called *Let the People Work*.

We are all for it. The deterrent *par excellence* from working is non-availability of "the permission to make and to use things," which is a fairly comprehensive definition of "money" in our economy. With money, a man *may* (and if he doesn't while otherwise fit to do so in such circumstances, he can scarcely blame anyone else but himself for the consequences) feed himself from available stocks and employ himself upon materials also available to produce consumable or capital goods in just proportion, so that he is neither over capitalised and starving in front of his gigantic but half-finished labour-saving machine, nor over-worked because of his avoidance of 'improved' methods. By such just apportionment of time, labour and materials, communities before the advent of steam and electricity did, indubitably, grow 'rich,' without breeding classes greatly depressed below the level of average prosperity, and they did so *not only* in England during the period of freedom from Jewish exploitation, but practically all over the habitable globe.

Yes, Let the People Work, by all means! And, of course, let them exchange their products without taxing the exchange beyond the burden of just payment for the service rendered in providing and correctly regulating to the desired end the means of exchange. As everyone knows, these consist in money again; so that the demand 'Let the People Work' is one rightly addressed to the banking community. *The Economist*, owned by The Economist Newspaper Limited, over which that renowned financier Sir Henry Strakosch presides, has apparently not quite this idea in its mind. Pushed hard, however, by events, the last ditch of the defenders of the citadel of the power-maniacs is in sight. Indeed it is not impossible that many of the bankers' picked troops are already consciously occupying it. From the dogma that we must necessarily be poverty-stricken for at least a generation *because* of the war, to the frank admission that "There is no excuse for pessimism. War wastes or destroys to-day's output, not to-morrow's" is a retreat comparable with other spectacular retreats of this amazing war, and carries *The Economist* right back to the last defence-line of the present economic dictatorship. "Full employment

means more work... It means the fullest and most productive employment for capital as well as labour, for plant as well as workers." The attachment of workers to plant is so tenuous (!) that this does seem difficult! The issue, *The Economist* decides, is not "Planning versus *Laissez-faire*." Oh no! It is *Laissez-faire* versus *Laissez-faire*. There is, it seems, a new brand of *Laissez-faire*, "the *laissez-faire* of the economists' vision" (*vide* W. H. Hutt and *The Economist*). And this new brand of the 'economists' vision' is really "*laissez travailler, laissez créer*." Yes, "Let the people work"; don't let the people make: certainly don't let the people make for themselves! T.J.

Food Control in New Zealand

A New Zealand correspondent writes:

"Potatoes are practically unobtainable for civilians... the latest *Hansard* to hand gives a statement by the Minister of Supply, the Hon. D. G. Sullivan, to the effect that the tons of potatoes that have rotted have not been due to the Internal Marketing Board's control but to other causes such as rough handling. So Clarence must be more careful with his fork. Anyway, we are being pretty roughly handled and I suppose the same could be said of apples, oranges, etc... A wide variety of subsidies is given but they appear to be applied where they will safeguard the issuers of credit rather than where they will benefit the consumer of the ultimate product. It is interesting to note in what a wide variety of ways a simple proposition like say the Just Price can be perverted so that those consumers who should benefit are frustrated and made to pay.

"We have just concluded a Christian Crusade week with the usual spate of words about New Orders, etc., but with mighty little information as to who is going to give the orders and whose job it will be to obey them. That point appears to me to be fundamental to any consideration of the matter, Christian or otherwise."

Australian Intellectuals

Extract from a letter from Australia:

"Except for volunteers for the operation there seems to be no dearth of support for a second front in Europe, a most peculiar attitude for Australian communists and intellectuals who find English the most difficult language in the world to speak and understand, and who are apparently prepared to disregard the menace of the Japanese soldiers—who are fed by the grace and fish of Russia, conveyed by vehicles fed by Russian oil—to save Russians with a second front to be opened in Europe by someone else so that she can go on feeding Japanese soldiers... Could the Gods (prior to their purpose of destruction) make anyone madder than this tribe or sect?"

Personal

Dr. Tudor Jones, the Deputy Chairman of the Social Credit Secretariat, is not the author, Tudor J. Jones, of a book advertised by a London publisher for publication in March. Dr. Tudor Jones's full name is Tudor Jenkyn Jones, and personal details concerning him may be found, if desired, in the *Medical Directory* (published annually) from 1923 onwards.

“INSULARITY”

“This policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection . . . or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection and above it. A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper and confined views.”

—EDMUND BURKE, on the British Constitution.

In attempting to analyse that frame of mind known as Dialectical Materialism, it is borne in on me with renewed force that we Anglo-Saxons are an insular crowd! And that this fact has a very profound significance indeed. For as a race we have never actually marched in the Rationalist procession. Socialism, as it is called, is a world-wide movement, and we have perforce been hustled along with the rest. But we have never been *of* it; never actually joined in and carried a banner. Of that I begin to feel sure.

Anglo-Saxon culture is “island” culture, even if it has spread over most of the globe; because we are somehow, *in ourselves*, insular—“set in a silver sea” as Warwickshire Will so neatly puts it. A sea of self-sufficiency, I expect our detractors would say—of individualism. But neither of those qualities are bad in themselves. *Insulated*—I never really appreciated that word before, and I do so now with almost a prick of conscience as I realise in reviewing this book* the prostrating extent of this sickness of Dialectical Materialism (self-conscious Paganism) on the Continent of Europe. We have seen its effects on ourselves in the Industrial Revolution, and particularly in the policy of inter-war Britain, and God knows, they have been bad enough! But compared with what has raged across the English Channel it was no more than a pale reflection of the real thing.

I am impressed repeatedly in reading Mr. Chakotin's book with the fact that Professor Pavlov, whose Objective Psychology forms its basis, was definitely, and in a very special sense, part of this sickness. Popular university education affords most of us a bowing acquaintance at least with Pavlov's experiments in physiology—the reactions of dogs and other animals to external stimuli, such as salivation at the sight of food, and trembling before a stick, and so on. The ingenuity and exhaustiveness of his experiments are beyond praise. It should be fairly obvious that the physical body is a material structure, and that it must react to an apparently predominant extent to external material events according to physical laws. But to suggest that such experiments do really comprehend “life” as a whole and therefore supply the formula for a “way of life” seems a very unwarranted, not to say unbalanced, conclusion. Yet it is the conclusion come to by Professor Pavlov and Mr. Chakotin and a great many others—Mr. H. G. Wells and Professor Hogben, to name a prominent couple this side of the Channel.

Pavlov's now famous experiments on what he called “conditioned reflexes,” where the arbitrary association of naturally unrelated sensations (the association of luminous discs, for instance, with food; producing salivation in dogs to luminous discs, after sufficient repetition, as freely as to mutton chops) have to them a positive, an absolute value. In other words it appears to prove to them that for the dog (or human being) so “conditioned,” a plate of luminous discs is every bit as satisfactory as one of Irish Stew. Of

course this is a mistake, as any kennel-boy could tell them, arising from the confusion of their own laboratory objective, which is saliva, with the dog's desire and need for nourishment, to which saliva is only a means. I have a feeling that Mr. Chakotin would be unable to understand me if I said that though I, too, found these experiments valuable, I did so negatively—as a warning signal against the chaotic danger of arbitrariness—and most especially, cultivated (theoretical) arbitrariness.

To Mr. Chakotin and his great collaborator these results seemed to demonstrate what you *can* do. What you *can't* do was hidden from them by what I call their sickness, Dialectical Materialism or the mechanistic view of things, which intervenes between them and reality. No doubt Mr. Chakotin would regard my attitude as arising from my insularity; from the fact that I live in a group of once-great islands, now a bit behind the times. Britain is so philosophically negative, he must feel; so full of the things you *can't* do—that aren't cricket, in fact, things against which the door that Europe believes itself to have found the key to, is locked. Whereas, to my way of thinking, if poor Europe has found the key to anything it is quite literally to the door of hell.

Leaving out the question of Russia for the moment, on Mr. Chakotin's own showing Nazi Germany is the direct outcome of the systematic application of Objective Psychology—the very fruit of Pavlov's tree. The roots, of course, stretch far further, back to Paganism and, who knows, the primeval slime. But the methods by which National-Socialism was established, all clearly enunciated in *Mein Kampf* and freely quoted by Mr. Chakotin, are taken from the extensive literature built up primarily round Pavlov's work on “conditioned reflexes,” which constitutes, to quote Mr. Chakotin, “. . . the practical science of the direction of other people through the action of influences designed with reference to their physical mechanism.” [My italics.] Stripped of its scientific language, and to go no further back, this is just our old comrade Mesmer—who, incidentally, came from Germany.

According to this science there are four primary instincts common to the animal world from the amoeba up to yours truly, upon which “conditioned reflexes,” or groups of these, can be built up. In an ascending scale of power and importance, they are:—(4) Maternity, embracing Christianity, and strangely enough, Science; and (3) Sexuality, which is shared between Freud with his Oedipus-complex, and Art. We have passed through the eras of the predominance of these two stages, and are actually emerging from (2) Nutrition (Capitalism and Economics represented by Karl Marx, who mistook it for the dominant instinct), and with the help of Lenin and Hitler, “the two greatest propagandists of our time,” have entered (1) Struggle (some struggle!) and Domination, primacy of which over all the other instincts is proved by the fact that salivation in animals at the sight of food stops instantly at the threat to life.

Now all of this, while it is most ingeniously elaborated, strikes me as rather theoretical. That it works—in a manner, and up to a point, must be admitted as proved by the stark fact of Nazi Germany to-day, which one must conclude gives satisfaction to somebody since it persists. That somebody is apparently not Mr. Chakotin (or, if we are to believe them, the Bhoys of the “B”.B.C.), who refuses to accept Nazi Germany as proof of anything but the innate (absolute)

**The Rape of the Masses* by SERGE CHAKOTIN.

depravity of Hitler and National Socialism. This refusal appears on the face of it unreasonable in one who, like Mr. Chakotin, has such faith in the methods employed by Hitler. Would he not even admit their potentiality in the hands of big business corporations bent on planting their mass-produced products on an income-starved world in competition with their kind? To me it looks as though such a "science" would naturally arise, or should we say, become possible, under the necessity to meet, and by some means defeat states of frustration which, arising in the physical world of Supply and Distribution (No. 3, Economics, in Mr. Chakotin's catalogue), are even more terribly reflected in the world of mind (metaphysics), which not surprisingly is omitted altogether from the list.

In spite of his protests, however, it is obvious from this book, that in the hands of Hitler and Goebbels and with the credit backing of men like Fritz Thyssen and institutions such as Kuhn, Loeb and Company, and the Bank of England, the technique worked out on the above formula achieved such wonders in the Germany of the Nineteen Thirties as fill Mr. Chakotin with indignant and almost hysterical admiration. The chapters dealing with the wild political war between Hitler's National Socialists and the Social Democrats, who had the backing of Russia, in the tragic period following the Wall Street Collapse, is very illuminating. Taking place, as it did, among a people whose "reflexes" had been "conditioned" since the days of Frederick the Great, who instituted the goose-step, its success is not perhaps so greatly to be wondered at. The nation would have been reduced by defeat and despair and unemployment (six million there were!) to a state of apathy and paralysed initiative bordering on the cataleptic condition which Pavlov found to be most susceptible to suggestion. Indeed one can pity the poor Germans, with two ardent and bitterly opposed exponents of Experimental Psychology, marching and counter-marching across their dazed emotions.

Here is an extract from a report compiled by one of the most enthusiastic members of the Iron Front, as the Socialists who supported the Social Democrat Party in the elections of 1932 styled themselves. It deals with the election in Hesse. ". . . . Better still were the reports such as this from our agents: 'Since the 'chalk campaign' started everyone here has been transfigured.' ". . . . At last we were able to be seen at full strength." ". . . . A guerilla war of symbols and pictures raged in Hesse, taking the most singular forms. It was only with this development that the enemy began to find means of combating our symbol, destroying it or making fun of it. We replied promptly. In several places they tried to turn our arrows into umbrellas, which were regarded as a middle-class emblem. We barbed them a second time, thus restoring our symbol. They destroyed the effect of the arrows by pointing them at both ends; we changed the new points into feathers, and once more restored our symbol. They drew three broken arrows with a swastika on top of them; we changed their picture to a rain of arrows pouring on the swastika, and again we had the last word. They drew a hand held up against the arrows, writing below it 'Halt!' We lengthened the arrows through the hand and wrote beneath: 'We shall get the better of you anyway!'" And so on, breathlessly. My reaction to it is to recall that they give out chalks in kindergartens to keep the children occupied.

Perusing Mr. Chakotin's earnest, excited pages one is

reminded acutely of Douglas's statement of his conviction that nothing but the Anglo-Saxon character stood between this civilisation and chaos. Is that an arrogant statement? It is simple enough to be true, anyway. Dialectical Materialism appears to me remarkably like disintegration—just loss of character and identity, Anglo-Saxon, or what-have-you. Which suggests that if *some* of us do not discover a reason for hanging together we shall all hang separately.

N.F.W.

Points from Parliament

House of Commons: February 3, 1943

EMERGENCY POWERS (DEFENCE) ACTS (REGULATIONS)

Mr. Levy (Elland): I beg to move,

"That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying that the Order in Council, dated January 13, 1943, made under the Emergency Powers (Defence) Acts, 1939 and 1940, amending Regulation 70 of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, a copy of which was presented to this House on January 19 be annulled."

. . . . This Order is contained in 20 words only. It is an addition to Regulation 7, and it says this:

"for removing or modifying, or for limiting the application of, any prohibitions or restrictions imposed by or under any Act."

What does that mean? "Removing" means virtually asking for power to repeal any Act or Order or Regulation which is made under the Defence Regulation Acts, and until these Emergency Powers Acts are repealed by this House it is asking for the right to become a dictator on everything to do with road traffic throughout the whole of this country. Road traffic affects every man, woman, and child in the country. . . . It means that this House of Commons is definitely abrogating all its legislative powers into the hands of a dictator. We are fighting dictators, and my right hon. Friend is seeking to set himself up as a dictator. The Emergency Powers Act, from which this Order flows, was passed in a time of stress, when there was a greater emergency than to-day. It passed through all the stages and received the Royal Assent in six hours. Members of Parliament were then prepared to pass anything. Since then, the House has without question passed any Order brought before it which would help the effective prosecution of the war. It has willingly passed without question any Order to cover any conceivable emergency for the purposes of the war.

But the Orders that are laid on the Table give an indication—we complain about ambiguous terms, but if you look into them they do give an indication—of the purposes for which the Minister is asking such powers. Here the Minister is asking powers for some undisclosed, unspecified reason. He says he is asking for these powers to do just as he likes, and the House of Commons may not say a word about any Order which he may make. . . . the country is becoming very disturbed with regard to the bureaucratic control which is to be found under this Order. The Order enables all kinds of Rules and Regulations to be made which are undisclosed, and the people of this country will not know what they are until they are probably charged with some undisclosed crime before a court, when they will have to appeal to their Member and ask him why he allowed such an Order to be passed,

always having regard to the fact that it would have nothing to do with the war effort. It does not help the war effort. The creation of a Gestapo, of inspectors and of all this bureaucratic organisation which this is going to set up has nothing whatever to do with any beneficial effects with regard to winning the war, but it is restricting and controlling the liberty of the subject. . . . May I quote a popular phrase which every hon. Member knows and one which I can commend? It is:

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

We must be eternally vigilant in regard to these Orders, and this Order in particular. . . . This Order can virtually repeal any other Order and Acts, and we should not be able to do anything about it. . . .

[Mr. Levy was pulled up several times by Mr. Deputy-Speaker for going outside the Order. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wakefield (Swindon).]

The Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of War Transport (Mr. Noel Baker): . . . if it were not wearying the House I would gladly read the whole document [the Order]. The powers are very wide. We can remove, or modify, or limit the application of any prohibition or restriction imposed by or under any Act. As my hon. Friends are aware, that is all subject to Section 1 of the Emergency Powers Act. . . . The Order is subject also to the powers which hon. Members are now using, of a Prayer to annul the Order within 28 days. The whole Emergency Powers Act itself lapses every year and must be renewed. At the end of the emergency the whole thing lapses. The Regulation is confined to road traffic. . . . I venture to think that the real guarantee of the House lies in its power to raise at any moment anything which my Noble Friend might do under the powers given to him.

Sir Herbert Williams (Croydon, South): Surely my hon. Friend is totally misinformed. What we are praying against is the general power. If his Noble Friend subsequently made Orders, they would not be laid on the Table of the House.

Mr. Noel-Baker: No, but in the ordinary practice of our democratic method the hon. Member would come here—[HON. MEMBERS: "No!"]—and make a complaint on the Adjournment or on some other occasion—[HON. MEMBERS: "Oh!"]—and if he can make a good case, does he really think that the Government will stand up against it? That surely is the real guarantee. [Interruption.] I venture to suggest with great respect that the two questions hon. Members must ask themselves are whether my Noble Friend is going to do something which is foolish or dangerous, or undemocratic, or detrimental to the public interest; and, secondly, if he does so, how long would it be before this House could get it undone? Under the powers which are sought he might say that the speed limit shall be 100 miles per hour in a built-up area or five miles per hour over the whole country, or that the rule of the road should be that one drives to the right. . . .

What is our purpose? I am very glad to be able to do my best to show why it is necessary to have wider powers than we possessed before. It is not to nationalise the road passenger service industry or road haulage. . . .

We have three objects in view. . . . [(1) To modify speed limits, which at present may be varied by the Minister

downwards from 20 m.p.h. to 15 m.p.h. but not upwards, and particularly to allow certain agricultural vehicles to go faster than 5 m.p.h.; and to allow ambulances, fire brigades, etc., to exceed the speed limits; (2) to allow the towing of articulated vehicles or more than one trailer; and (3) to vary traffic regulations and particularly to get rid of or to reimpose one-way traffic schemes.]

These are the kind of things we have in view. . . . They are fully within the right kind of purposes for which the House has given powers of this kind in the past, but primarily they are concerned with the saving of petrol and rubber, of which the emergency is greater than it was before. . . .

Sir Herbert Williams (Croydon, South): The statement we have heard is profoundly unsatisfactory. The hon. Member tells us he wants to do a number of things and some of them are open to question. Some of his proposals with regard to the speed limit would be very violently opposed. All these things he can do properly by having a Defence Regulation setting out the specific powers he wants. If we did not like them, we could protest. He is going much further. He says that we shall still have our democratic powers, but I will give a recent example under Regulation 55 which gives extensive control over industry in this country. Under that Regulation the Minister of Supply made an Order affecting the paint industry. Owing to the energy of the hon. and gallant Member for Accrington (Major Procter), great efforts were made and ultimately there was a deputation to the Minister in which I took part, as two of the firms were in my constituency. There were about a dozen or more Members of Parliament of all parties, and a number of people in the paint industry and when we got in front of the Minister the whole case for the Ministry was blown sky high and it had to be abandoned. We had written between us hundreds of letters and there were elaborate deputations because the Order was made under Regulation without any proper opportunity given to the House to discuss it. I therefore beseech the hon. Member to withdraw the Order and to replace it by one in which he lays down precisely the powers that the Minister desires. . . .

Mr. Ralph Etherton (Stretford): This Order asks for undefined powers for which no case whatever has been made out by the Parliamentary Secretary. In each of the three or four instances which the hon. Gentleman gave to the House he could bring forward an Order defining the specific powers required and the House would then have an opportunity, if it so desired, of discussing those particular points. But to ask, as the hon. Gentleman has done, for wide and undefined powers, is something which, apart from these Regulations, is without precedent. The time has arrived, in my submission, when objection should be taken to the method and the manner in which these Orders are now asked for. It is wrong that Parliament should be deprived of its legislative power and the power to legislate given to a Government Department, or rather to a Minister in a Government Department. That is what this Order does. Regulation 70 already gives the Minister power to do anything with regard to traffic on highways, but what he seeks to do by this Order is to alter and amend legislation, and I submit that is something which should be within the control of the House. It is one thing to take a wide power to regulate traffic on highways, which the Minister already has under Regulation 70; it is quite another matter to take power to alter legislation and to alter Acts of Parliament which have already been passed by

the House. If Acts of Parliament are to be altered they should be altered by the House alone. I hope the Minister will decide to withdraw this Order and to introduce an Order or Orders which give him the precise powers which he says he needs.

Mr. Noel-Baker: It is very plain to everybody that I have not succeeded in convincing the House. . . . I would like to make a proposal to my hon. Friends who put down this Prayer and who have spoken so ably upon it. We want to get on with these powers because we are now in a difficulty. Things are happening which are illegal and which it is very difficult for us to stop, but which it is in the general interests of the country should go on. That is why we ask for the powers. If my hon. Friends see their way to withdraw their Prayer so that we have the powers, then I will undertake that we will consult with my hon. Friends immediately, in order to try to find a narrower and more restricted form of words which would meet their views.

Mr. Pickthorn (Cambridge University): The Parliamentary Secretary does himself less than justice, at any rate as far as I am concerned, when he speaks of his failure to convince, because he has fully convinced me. I came into the House one of his supporters. I am as anxious as anyone that Orders in Council in general should be challenged. I, as much as anyone, think that whenever the House—or anyone in the House—suspects it sees a Minister up a tree, it ought to start barking up that tree, but on this occasion I thought the House was barking up a non-existent tree which would hardly suffice even for the hanging of a junior Minister. But after the explanations we have heard from the Parliamentary Secretary, I am bound to say it seems to me that the House cannot decently part with this Order any longer, because it got worse and worse as it went along. I . . . had supposed that, for instance, when the Order speaks of removing or modifying or limiting prohibitions it was, as indeed the ancient Common Law did, granting an enlarging but not a restricting power. But the Parliamentary Secretary, when he explained this—and I suppose he had the best legal advice—told us he could do all sorts of restricting things under this power. If that legal advice had been right, I think this Order is much more objectionable than on the face of it it has appeared. Secondly, the Parliamentary Secretary told us that the object of the Order is to deal with three specific things, but it was for administrative convenience that he should so define it that it included those three things and a great many other things also. The whole business of the House is to see that the administrative convenience does not control legislation. We are not here for anything else. The convenience of the hon. Gentleman and of Ministers is nothing to us except that he has this terrific engine against us in debate during war-time, that, if we used our powers so as to increase administrative inconvenience to a point which interfered with the waging of the war, we should be not only defeated but damned. We are all aware of that, but the argument has been over-strained to the point where it can be borne no longer.

The hon. Gentleman's final argument was to say, "We are now in difficulties, and we are doing things which are administratively convenient but illegal, and we wish to legalise them in this way." That seems a most condemnatory defence. Nothing could be worse. That sort of argument was rightly used in the first weeks of the war, but we are now in the fourth year of the war, and Ministers ought to have found

ways of dealing with things of this sort. I and others have said that Orders ought to be positive and not negative machinery, but that is always resisted by Ministers.

Mr. Levy: I think it would save the time of the House if I were allowed to make my suggestion now. If the Minister will withdraw the Order and bring in another, specified as we have suggested, the whole thing will be finished. He can bring in the Order in Council with the greatest possible speed, and if the House is satisfied that it will do something to help the prosecution of the war, it will pass it with acclamation.

Hon. Members: Withdraw.

[The debate continued in a lively fashion for some time, it being clear that the Motion, if put, would be carried. Opinion was divided as to whether the Prayer should go through, and the Order thus annulled, or whether the Minister's assurance that the Order would be withdrawn (to be replaced by one drawn more narrowly) should be accepted. The latter course was finally accepted, and Mr. Levy accordingly withdrew the Prayer.]

Others who spoke in favour of the Prayer were Mr. A. Bevan (Ebbw Vale), Lieut-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam (Newcastle-on-Tyne, North), Flight-Lieut. Challen (Hampstead) and Commander Agnew (Camborne), whose speeches restricted space does not allow of publishing. Several other members assisted with interjections.

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