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MODERN SCIENCE (VII)

Anyone who has reflected upon the differences between the present and the earlier phase of the World War must have been struck by the fact that the mental reactions of individuals concerned in the war of 1914-18 were entirely of a different order from those which have marked the present episode. Despite the terrible experiences of many cities at home and the reports of 'infernos' abroad arising from the delivery of 'thousands of tons' of bombs in a few concentrated bursts, despite the sympathetic preoccupations of fighting troops living, during active periods of fighting, under more or less constant aerial bombardment, the element of terror (unless the shocking internal disruption of civil life in, for example, Berlin brings it rapidly to the forefront of the war picture) has been lacking. The Wellsian forecasts of panic-stricken multitudes driven to madness by the sounds and sights of 'total' war did not materialise. The insane asylums (now called Mental Hospitals in deference to the change-over from restraints partly physical, partly moral, to ubiquitous chemical drugging), overcrowded when the war started, have not constituted a problem of such proportions as to have been brought to public notice. "Let us be gay," said Mr. Herbert into the microphone; but there did not seem to be much need. Irritation caused by official ineptitude and fatigue, much of which probably arises from the same cause (always assuming, which is a large assumption, that official skill was not directed even chiefly, to minimising these sinks of personal efficiency) has had a wider public display than any of the signs of psychological breakdown. Whatever harm the young have suffered (and quite possibly it is both immense and irreparable) has not been due to the horrors of war as usually understood. The suggestion that in a mad world there is less occasion for discrimination between different brands of alienation of mind than in a world only half-mad is not helpful. Anyone who has lived for any length of time among insane people is subject to a more deeply-rooted conviction than otherwise on that account that insanity is an intensely real, if an obscure phenomenon. It is no less real now than it was in 1918. I read of Ernesto Lugaro, formerly Professor Extraordinary of Neuropathology and Psychiatry in the University of Modena, that he "realises that the organ whose functions and diseases he is discussing is the acme and the object of the evolutionary process in Nature, and has in it qualities, risks, and defects which are related to every biological, physiological, and pathological fact and law in Nature." I am afraid I do not recognise the object of the processes in Nature in Dr. Clouston's phrase; but otherwise the catholicity of Lugaro's outlook does not seem to me to be too grandly represented. However, the war was fought and 'won,' and a

tradition of steady investigation, which may have yielded all too little, and much of that yield may have been of little account, was submerged by the torrent which had been gathering. Freud and shell-shock came into their own, damned impudence and conceit were buried under the gentle mantle of an 'inferiority complex,' and the inferior began to be moulded to fit the awkward society they had to live in. This process, satirised by a witty Irishman under the guise of a people who consented to the amputation of their legs, their feet being reattached at their knees instead of at their ankles, in order to make life tolerable in houses built to too small a size, is still in the ascendancy. On this ground of the *objective* alone, quite apart from its subversive features, Freud's teaching is suspect.

Unless all the preparations which are being made are being made to meet contingencies already past, which I do not believe, it strikes me as odd that there is suddenly launched upon us a campaign to 'psychologise' the doctors.

In the light of the observation that "history is crystallised politics," this little piece of modern history seems to call for some examination. A Pro-Chancellor and Treasurer of the University of Liverpool, Lieut.-Colonel Vere Egerton Cotton (Rathbone Bros. and Company, Maritime Insurance Company Limited, Barclay's Bank Limited) has just been foretelling a "ruthless elimination of people not benefiting from their university education" in a post-war period in which "the universities of this country would face the greatest crisis of their history." He is reported to have said in addition that the universities "must not be dragooned by popular clamour, nor cajoled by financial inducements to a lower standard." (*Liverpool Daily Post*, November 27.) Colonel Cotton succeeded Lord Woolton as University Treasurer since war broke out. Substitute food for education, is there wide divergence of style and content between the two? There must be "no unplanned development." Very well. Then the developments which ensue will all be 'planned' developments? If so, it is as reasonable both to look forward to see where present tendencies (and that is to say present momenta, generated by past and present forces) are leading us, and to identify these forces. What might be the significance of the 'psychologising' of medicine at the end of the present phase of the world war, comparable with the 'chemicalising' of medicine at the close of the earlier phase? Freudian psychology produced scarcely a ripple on medical teaching during the period when everyone was alleged to be suffering from neuroses and psychoses. The universities then went 'all chemical.' Shall we soon see Psychology replacing Chemistry and its 43 per cent. popularity in the School Certificate? This is not by any means impossible. Freud's

works were rarely seen in the hands of medical students until quite recently. A small minority of (I think it is generally agreed) inferior students unable to sustain the rigour of more concrete subjects—students who required anything but “something craggy to bite their minds upon” in Byron’s phrase—bothered about him. The rest left him to the little misses proceeding to a diploma in pedagogy, and to others who are now assisting Mr. Bevin in his man (and woman) hunt.

A psychology wave might be bad for I.C.I.? Not at all! Our state medical service can soon be relieved of most of its dosing and drugging. Indeed, once ‘private’ practice is superseded, it need not be long before a large proportion of medical practice is dispensed with altogether. We are supposed to be arriving at the Age of the Masses. Well, it’s easy to treat masses: all eat bread! Replacement of universities by the “B”.B.C. has been proposed during the past fortnight. And, after all, does the international chemical interest really exist to distribute a product any more than to distribute a dividend? If so, its markets will, in any case be much steadier and much cheaper to secure by long term contract with ‘services’ (or millers) than through a host of small traders.

At this rate, the whole system would ‘run-out’? Probably, though not inevitably, or quickly. While any considerable portion of mankind remains ‘unconditioned,’ in mind or body, a certain blanket complexity masking the satanic simplicity of organisation must be preserved.

“History is crystallised politics.”

“The appalling thing in the French Revolution is not the tumult but the design. Through all the fire and the smoke we perceive the evidence of calculating organisation. The managers remained studiously concealed and masked; but there is no doubt of their presence from the first.” Lord Acton was still able to say that at Cambridge twenty-eight years after the reformation of the university attempted by the Prince Consort. “The Queen went up to Cambridge to see Albert confer honorary degrees on distinguished people, and he read an address of welcome to her and after dinner they walked through the courts of Trinity in a state of high romance. Then he set to work to examine the educational curriculum of the ancient University, for he never allowed any office that he held to be a sinecure to him, and found it to be deplorably narrow. Classics and mathematics seemed to be the only subjects taught there: it was a place of darkness rather than enlightenment, and not a patch on the Universities of his Fatherland. Within a year’s time he had worked out a scheme for comprehensive reform, introducing into his programme such subjects as chemistry, psychology...”*

Yes, both!

TUDOR JONES.

(To be continued.)

His Majesty’s Government

Sir Herbert Williams, M.P., counts 80 Members of this Parliament who are at present in His Majesty’s Government compared with 56 at the corresponding date in 1939, when the war was on.

*E. F. Benson: *Queen Victoria*.

The Meeting of the Wise

In the introduction to his HISTORY OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS, Francis Palgrave, in order to describe the Saxon State legislature with greater clarity, imagines himself in the Hall of Edward the Confessor explaining the assembled notabilities to Haco, a Norwegian stranger of the time. He concludes as follows:—

“Haco, you well know how we call this assembly? A *Micel getheahht*, or great thought—a *Witena-gemot*, or Meeting of the Wise—and at present it well deserves its name. Our *redes-men* or counsellors, the members of the legislature, ponder much before they come together, say little, and write less. All the dooms or statutes which have been enacted since the days of King Ethelbert, would not fill four-and-twenty leaves of that brass-bound missal, which Thorold, the acolyte, has dropped amongst the rushes on the floor. Hence, our common people know the laws and respect them; and, what is of much greater importance, they respect the law-makers—Long may they continue to deserve respect. But I am not without apprehensions for the future. We are strangely fond of novelty. Since the days of King Egbert, we have been accustomed to consider the French as the very patterns of good government and civilisation. And although we have seen king after king expelled, there are numbers amongst us, including some very estimable personages, who continue firm in this delusion. I hear that, amongst the French, they designate such legislative assemblies as ours, by the name of a *colloquium*, or, as we should say, a talk—which they render in their corrupted Romance jargon, by the word *Parlement*; and, should our *Witena-gemot*, our *Micel getheahht*, ever cease to be a meeting of the wise, or great thought, and become a *Parlement*, or great-talk, it will be worse for England than if a myriad of your northern pirates were to ravage the land from sea to sea.

“Haco, mark my words—if our witan ever enter into long debates, consequences most ruinous to the State must inevitably ensue—they will begin by contradicting one another, and end by contradicting themselves. Constantly raising expectations which they never can fulfil; each party systematically decrying the acts of the other; the soc-men and churls, who compose the great body of the people, will at last fancy that the witan are no wiser than the rest of the community. They will suppose that the art of government requires neither skill nor practice; that it is accessible to the meanest capacity; that it requires nothing but *Parlement*, or great talk; and, leaving their ploughs and their harrows, armed with their flails and pitchforks, they will rush into the hall. They will demolish the throne, and, seizing the sceptre and the sword, they will involve the whole state in unutterable confusion and misery.”

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REGULATION 18B

The Times's parliamentary correspondent reports that Major Manningham-Buller, Mr. Spencer Summers, Squadron Leader Donner, Commander Galbraith, Captain Cobb, Mr. Berry, Sir Douglas Thomson, Major Lloyd, Mr. Snadden and Mr. Kenneth Pickthorn have tabled the following motion:—"That this House is of opinion that the time has come for reconsideration of Regulation 18B and of the practicability of bringing to trial those now in detention on the sole responsibility of the Home Secretary."

OLD AGE PENSIONS DEMAND

In answer to a question in Parliament from Mr. Kirby as to whether the Prime Minister proposed to give time for the consideration of the Petition from 4,090,000 old age pensioners for an increase in payments, and as to what was the Government's policy in regard to it, Mr. Attlee said that there would be opportunities for discussing the question in the course of the forthcoming Session. He did not think it necessary to fix a day for the purpose.

PAST AND FUTURE

"We talk of the past as dead; but there is a very special and definite sense in which the past is always a living thing while the future is a dead thing. We know that the past has moved on living lines; but we can only conceive the future as moving on dead lines—that is on mechanical lines. If we think the future calculable at all, we can only calculate it in a mathematical fashion, by averages and tendencies and consistent curves of change. We can guess the population will increase in such and such a proportion, or mortality in such and such a degree; but we cannot think about the marriages or murders of the future as we do about the marriages and murders of the past. . . .

"The future is dead, because all futurism must be a sort of fatalism. It cannot foresee the free part of human action; it can only foresee the servile part. It is not a question of whether the prediction is optimistic or pessimistic; it is a question of the nature of prediction itself . . . the point about all these patterns [calculating the future] is that they must all be mathematical patterns. None of them can be like artistic pictures. The point of all these lines is that they must all be mathematical lines; none of them can be free lines, like the lines of a draughtsman. It is only in the past that we find the finished picture; for it is only in the past that we find the free line. In other words, when we look at what men did, we are looking at what they freely chose to do. But when we consider what men will do, we cannot consider what they will choose to do. We can only consider what they must do. Unless it be something they cannot avoid, it is something we cannot predict. And so our prediction, whether it is true or not, will only be dealing with human society on its servile side. In so far as the next generation is free, it is free to frustrate our prophecy."

—G. K. CHESTERTON in *Generally Speaking*.

Points From Parliament

House of Commons: November 23, 1943.

SIR OSWALD AND LADY MOSLEY (Release)

The Home Secretary's statement on this subject was widely published. We reproduce the discussions which followed:—

Mr. Ivor Thomas: Is it not clear that if a statement on those lines had been issued at the same time as the release of Sir Oswald Mosley the public would have got a very different impression of the whole matter; and is it not the case that the news was released to the public in the manner most prejudicial to the interests of the right hon. Gentleman's own Department?

Mr. Morrison: I caused to be issued at the time a statement in which there were two points. One concerned the health grounds, and the other was that proper security restrictions would have to be put on him. If people did not believe me, I cannot help it. Secondly, if ever there was a power exercised by a Minister, which is both exceptional and on which Parliament has a primary responsibility for seeing that the Minister does his job well, this is that power, and as the House was meeting within a few days I thought—and I hope I was not wrong—that my first duty and my first obligation were to Parliament.

Mr. Lipson: May I ask whether the decision to release Sir Oswald and Lady Mosley was made on the right hon. Gentleman's own individual responsibility or whether the Cabinet was consulted before it was done?

Mr. Morrison: The responsibility is mine. The Regulation places the responsibility fairly on me. This is one of the awkward jobs that go with the office of Home Secretary. Any Home Secretary contemplating this decision would have been most foolish if he did not inform his Cabinet colleagues and consult them about it, and I did so.

Commander Locker-Lampson: May I ask my right hon. Friend whether Sir Oswald Mosley is not Enemy No. 1; and whether he would have been released if he had not been a millionaire; and may I also ask my right hon. Friend whether he will allow five doctors from this House to examine Sir Oswald Mosley?

Mr. Morrison: If I may say so, that Question, with the insulting implication in the middle, is hardly worthy of an answer.

Dr. Haden Guest: In view of my right hon. Friend's statement, which shows quite clearly that there was no immediate urgency for a few days about the release of Sir Oswald Mosley, may I ask him why he did not wait until Parliament was in session, in order that he might make a preliminary statement to Parliament instead of, as it appears, flouting the House of Commons?

Mr. Morrison: I have often been attacked on this side of the House for being unwilling, in effect, to transfer my responsibility, either to a Committee of this House, or to a committee outside. This responsibility is placed upon me, and just as I could not transfer my responsibility to Parliament for my action, if I keep people in, so I cannot do so

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FROM WEEK TO WEEK

To the careful and objective-minded student, it must be obvious that the World State, World Wars and Dictatorships over the Proletariat are the Policy of the Philosophy of Monotheism on the mundane plane. It was against this idea that the Mediaeval Church fought—a fight which has been as grossly misrepresented as the history of the English Civil War. The fundamental idea that there are certain fields of human rights with which the State has neither the competence nor the authority (in the pragmatic sense) to deal, has been caricatured in the phrase "temporal power." It is to the capture of these fields, that international free-masonry devotes itself.

It was the fashion in the mid-nineteenth century to ridicule the Athanasian creed as an example of ecclesiastical superstition and intolerance. We recommend it as a study in profound and fundamental political philosophy, and as an instance of the necessity for severe mental discipline before attempting to attach importance to every-day conceptions of monotheism. "The letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive."

England, and shortly afterwards, Scotland embarked upon a radically unsound political course when Henry VIII broke off relations with the Catholic Church because the Bishop of Rome refused him a divorce from Catherine of Aragon, and the consequences are obvious in both countries at the present day. The fact that the Roman Church was corrupt and grossly in need of reform, or indeed any question of dogma or ritual, is quite beside the point, and it is significant that the original ritual of the Church of England differed hardly at all from the pre-reformation pattern. What was new, certainly *de jure*, if not entirely *de facto* was the centralisation of power over cultural, educational, and theological aspects of life.

Henry's opportunity was of course created for him by the impossible Wolsey.

The Church in England became the Church of England, which fundamentally is very much the same thing as talking about the electricity of England rather than electricity in England. You can have local administration; but you can't get your electricity from the gas-works.

The same fundamental assertion is contained in more modern, but not much simpler form, in Rudolf Steiner's *Threefold Commonwealth*. If the Archbishop of Canterbury,

instead of attempting to interfere in an aspect of political trinitarianism with which he is obviously unfamiliar, and to which he is temperamentally unsuited, would give serious thought to the practical meaning of the Athanasian Creed in its relation to the demarcation of the realm of temporal law, he might stand out as the saviour of his country, and through it, the world. But we fear that the Archbishop is a States' man.

It will be realised that, in these pages at least, our interest in a sound fundamental philosophy of society is not so much to get to heaven as to arrest the clear prospect of arriving in hell, here and now. The myth of majority rule is demonstrably becoming a process of using the scum of society as a threat to the passive majority that if they don't agree to surrender all their rights of action to an international bureaucracy controlled by a hidden oligarchy, the scum will be let loose on them. During the past twenty-five years we have demonstrated, in England by way of the Labour Party Report on the Mining Scheme, in Canada by the determined opposition not merely of the so-called Liberal Premier MacKenzie King, but by the refusal of both the Communist-Socialist C.C.F. and the Canadian Labour Party to assist Mr. Aberhart, and in New Zealand by alliance of the "Labour Socialists" Nash and Fraser with the Bank of "England," that the Left Wing parties are everywhere the closest friends and most trusted allies of the international financier and their leaders merely concerned to use a manufactured social grievance which it would be fatal to them to redress to obtain positions of power in a world tyranny. We make no apology for again referring to the deputations and demonstrations against the release of Sir Oswald and Lady Mosley. In our opinion, they are the worst symptoms of a dangerous, perhaps fatal, national decadence which the present crisis has exposed, not because of their intrinsic importance but because they have not been greeted, as they should have been, by a unanimous blast of execration.

CREDIT ON THE MISSISSIPI

"Complaint is made that the planter remains grouty toward the former slave, since the war; will have nothing but a chill business relation with him, no sentiment permitted to intrude; will not keep a 'store' himself and supply the negro's wants and thus protect the negro's pocket and make him able and willing to stay on the place and an advantage to him to do it, but lets that privilege to some thrifty Israelite, who encourages the thoughtless negro and his wife to buy all sorts of things which they could do without—buy on credit, at big prices, month after month, credit based on the negro's share of the growing crop; and at the end of the season, the negro's share belongs to the Israelite, the negro is in debt besides, is discouraged, dissatisfied, restless, and both he and the planter are injured; for he will take steamboat and migrate, and the planter must get a stranger in his place who does not know him, does not care for him, will fatten the Israelite a season, and follow his predecessor per steamboat."

— MARK TWAIN in *Life on the Mississippi*.

The above was written in 1882, a mere decade and a half after the close of the American civil war, alleged, before, during and after that war, to have been fought to "free" the slaves.

POST WAR

The Federated Churches of America are proposing a course of what they call "conditioning" for German youth after the war. One would have thought "re-conditioning" would have been nearer the mark. No doubt some attempt will have to be made to humanise a generation brought up in an inhuman system, granted the post-war situation permits of anything of the kind, which is not by any means certain. Yet it does no harm to point out the very grave dangers that exist in any such attempt, which inevitably tends to cast our old friend Beezlebub for the role of exorcist.

What *was* the trouble in pre-war Europe? To go no deeper, was it not Germany's warlike preparation, plus a phenomenal growth of heavy industrialism in the Donetz Basin and (generally quite unknown) in the Urals? What made the German "guns-rather-than-butter" programme feasible was the long course of mental "conditioning" on the *Herrenvolk* idea and its forceful imposition, to which the nation had been subjected. The point arises then, was it the fact of the propaganda, or the fact of the idea of world domination, that precipitated the result? Ninety out of a hundred people would say it was the idea—of military world domination—and not the method of its propagation. But that does not prove the other ten *per cent.* wrong.

The point is important, and has vital post-war implications, when those who hold the belief happen to be at the head of big and highly centralised nations such as the U.S.A. and/or the U.S.S.R. Communists aver that there is nothing against this process of forceful "conditioning," as such (a view with which apparently the Federated Churches of America agree), granted that it is in the right hands, or rather, that the brains behind the hands have got hold of the "right" idea (ideology). But is it at all likely that the F.Cs. of A. (to employ the modern symbolism) and the Russians (whoever they are) would also agree on this important point of ideology? And if they don't, are we not going to have the F.Cs. of A. and the Russian authorities fighting it out in post-war Germany, just as Hitler's National Socialists and the Russian Communists fought it out in pre-war Germany in the Thirties, when Hitler won out?

Such an approach to the post-war problem does appear rather bleak and unpromising. But suppose we turn our attention away from the opinions and theories of Church Americans and No-Church "Russians" and to the thing they both advocate—this process behind the term "conditioning," with its unpleasing stock-breeding associations, and consider the principle upon which it is based. If we do, I think it will be found that it is it which is fundamentally at fault; that it is really wrong (not in a moral sense, but in a natural sense) to control information and knowledge, which is what all propaganda is concerned to do. There can, in fact, be nothing more "wrong" than the censorship of facts, for besides a lot of other un-natural anomalies, it involves a complete centralising of power as a primary condition, which is, in itself, a forcible reversal of natural process.

It is "right" (naturally correct) for the human individual to *look out* upon his environment—that is what is meant by objectivity—instead of having his environment

crammed in on him. Only so can he fulfil his biological destiny and "have dominion over the earth."

Only by understanding one's environment and perceiving its underlying reality, can one control it. And you can only get that understanding by looking outwards on life with an eye as truly individual and "single" as circumstances will permit, and a mind as little deflected and confused as possible by outside opinion and pressure.

Looking out on Life is equivalent to seeing oneself in a correct relation to one's environment. It seems unreasonable to suppose that there can be any such thing as knowledge that does not comprehend and include this relationship, either directly or by implication. What we call "things" are composites, not lumps of matter (whatever *it* is), but associations of factors. And the greatest "thing" of all is human consciousness, primarily composed, as it would seem, of three factors—one's own inner impulse (of the origin of which we know nothing) and its aspirations, together with our physical identity and its needs, and thirdly, our environment, composed of the collective impulses and identities and physical needs of our fellows. When a modern Scientific-Management expert states that even engineering is only ten per cent. mechanical technique and ninety per cent. psychology, he is groping to express this concept of the relative reality of "things."

From this may be gathered that control of environment—a condition that is to be realised through the best balance (compromise) obtainable between the three factors comprising consciousness as cited above—is something to be achieved collectively, but experienced and initiated individually and most fully where there are as few artificially interposed restrictions as possible.

All these elementary requirements are denied by those who advocate what is implied by the term "conditioning." What the propagandist asserts in effect is that an objective can be achieved by a direct violation of them all granted the objective is the "right" one—in other words, the end can be made to justify the means, if only you can concentrate (centralise) intensely enough. This attitude, of course, lays all the stress on opinion and ideology, making the "Party" one belongs to the most important matter; and since the opinions held respectively by *both* sides to a dispute are bound to be "right," in the sense of being those *you* hold, not only the elements, but the justification for war exist from the word go. Whereas, the truth is that opinion matters hardly at all. There is, in fact, no question whatsoever of "right" or "wrong" in any conceivable opinion or policy that anyone proposes to *force* on you; no need to trouble yourself for a moment as to its intrinsic merits, whether it derives from the Federated Churches of America, or from the Third International, or the Nazis, or, for that matter, from the "British" Fabians. For the propagandist, the forceful "conditioner" of anyone but himself, and his ideas along with him stands self-condemned by the mere fact that he believes he has, or can have the right to force his ideas on you.

The thing that will matter in the post-war settlement (and matter greatly) at all round-table conferences, in Moscow or anywhere else, is going to be the influence exercised by the spirit of tolerance for individuals. How is it going to be represented, and by whom? And that

speculation leads on to others. For instance, as to the Anglo-Saxon culture and its destiny in the post-war world, and what part it will play in the scramble for chairs that will inevitably take place when the "music of guns" ceases in Europe.

N. F. W.

PARLIAMENT

(Continued from Page Three)

if I let people out. Parliament has its remedy if it is dissatisfied. It can always get rid of a Minister. That is open to Parliament, but as long as I am discharging this function, I shall discharge it judicially, on my responsibility, and answer for my actions in the House.

Sir Alfred Beit: May I ask a question which may appear somewhat technical? Is it not a fact that phlebitis in its various forms needs absolute quiet and rest; and how can it be said that a person suffering from that illness must have greater freedom of movement and opportunities for exercise?

Mr. Morrison: I am not a doctor, but I understood that it requires both things—rest, and also vigorous exercise. I can only say that it is not for me to pronounce a medical opinion. It was for me either to accept this formidable body of medical opinion, or to take the responsibility of saying that these medical men were not telling the truth or were not competent. I did not feel that I could do that.

Mr. Ellis Smith: I understood my right hon. Friend to say that he received representations. Has he at any time received representations with regard to this man, apart from the medical representations?

Mr. Morrison: I have received representations about all sorts of people, and my hon. Friend would be surprised at where some of the representations come from.

Mr. Gallacher: Following the highly unsatisfactory reply which the right hon. Gentleman has given, I want to ask him whether there is another case in this country, where such medical attention and such concern and care have been shown to anyone as in this case? Was such attention ever shown to Terence MacSwiney or Mr. Gandhi?

Mr. Morrison: There have been other cases, both of 18B British subjects and enemy aliens, who have been released on health grounds, and who would not otherwise have been released.

Mr. Gallacher: But did they get such medical attention?

Mr. Morrison: But the medical attention is not wholly mine. As far as the prison doctor is concerned, certainly they all get the same medical attention. Let me remind the hon. Member, who is very indignant about this, that in the early days of the war there were very similar arguments against the war, both by his friends and—[*Interruption*].

Several Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: While I am on my feet hon. Members will please sit down. This is becoming a Debate, and I do not think it should go any further.

Mr. Shinwell: Is it not clear that this matter cannot be properly discussed by process of question and answer, and may I ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether, in all the circumstances and for the purpose of clarification, it

would not be more appropriate to have a Debate on this matter?

Mr. Attlee: If there is a general desire in the House for a Debate on this matter, time can be provided...

[Further discussion, in the form of question and answer, took place as to the most appropriate occasion (whether as a Motion on the Adjournment or otherwise) on which Mr. Morrison's statement might have been made.]

POLICE POWERS AND DUTIES

Sir Herbert Williams asked the Home Secretary what steps he proposes to take to prevent the police acting in future as *agents provocateurs*, as they did in the case against Dr. Goldsmith, which was heard at the North London Police Court on 16th November?

Mr. Peake: The limits within which the police are justified in giving opportunities to a person to commit an offence in order to obtain evidence against him are set out in the report of the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Duties, which recognised that there are certain types of case in which it would be impossible for the police to carry out their duty of enforcing the law without the adoption of such methods. The police are, however, well aware that the Courts will always scrutinise most narrowly the evidence of any witness who can be represented as having encouraged or procured an offence which would not otherwise have been committed, and no action on the part of my right hon. Friend is required to remind the police of the great care which must be taken in cases of this kind. I may, perhaps, add that I am not aware of anything in the case to which my hon. Friend refers which need cause anxiety to a doctor who accepts in good faith a statement made to him by one of his patients.

Sir H. Williams: In this case were not three men encouraged by the police to go to a doctor and make a statement which they and the police knew to be false? Is not this a most undesirable procedure?

Mr. Peake: I think there is a clear distinction, which is well understood by the police, between incitement to commit an offence, which is wholly wrong and which is a disciplinary offence, and the employment of subterfuges in order to obtain evidence where habitual offences are reasonably suspected and there are no other means available to the police of procuring the necessary evidence.

Sir H. Williams: Does my right hon. Friend think that the action of the police in this case was justified?

Mr. Peake: We have noted the view of the learned magistrate, and any necessary action will be taken.

Dr. Haden Guest: Does the right hon. Gentleman really think it is necessary to employ these offensive Gestapo methods against anyone in the medical profession? Does he not know that it is intensely resented that this should be done and that it is possible to find out what a doctor is doing otherwise than by this unfortunate procedure?

Commander Sir Archibald Southby: Has my right hon. Friend's attention been called to the remarks of the learned magistrate who tried the case, and does he not think it most

unfair to the police themselves that they should have to take this kind of action?

Mr. Peake: I have said that we have taken note of the remarks of the learned magistrate and that any necessary action will be taken.

Mr. Levy: Are we to understand that the Government recognise the employment of *agents provocateurs* in these cases, because that is what they are doing in a number of instances, and provoking the very evils which we are endeavouring to avoid?

Mr. Peake: I have made it quite clear that the police would not countenance the employment of *agents provocateurs*. It is not a case where there was incitement to commit an offence.

MEDICAL POLICY ASSOCIATION (BULLETIN)

*Dr. Morgan** asked the Home Secretary whether his attention has been called to the anti-Semitic propaganda carried on by the Medical Policy Association, London; and whether, in view of their effect on the war effort of this country, he has considered the desirability of a prosecution?

Mr. H. Morrison: I have seen the first bulletin issued by this association which I assume my hon. Friend has in mind. This document appears to introduce, quite gratuitously, certain arguments which may be regarded as having an anti-Semitic bias, but it affords no ground for prosecution or for any other action on my part.

Dr. Morgan asked the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that Dr. Basil Steele, of Regents Park, employed by the Post Office on medical duties, is the secretary of an anti-Semitic organisation known as the Medical Policy Association; that his father, Dr. Russell V. Steele, practising at the same address, is a local Post Office medical officer, whose duties involve attendance on a capitation agreement to postal employees in his district; and whether, in view of the anti-Semitic views of these two doctors, he will consider allowing Jewish Post Office employees to make alternative medical arrangements?

Captain Crookshank: Dr. Basil Steele is not employed by the Post Office, but assists his brother, Dr. Russell V. Steele, a general practitioner who has been a local Post Office medical officer for nearly 20 years. I have no reason to think that Dr. Russell V. Steele allows whatever political views he may hold to interfere with the proper discharge of his professional duties, and I am not prepared to limit his Post Office duties in the manner suggested by the Hon. Member. As regards my hon. Friend's description of the Medical Policy Association, of which Dr. Basil Steele is stated to be the Secretary, I would refer him to the reply given to-day by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

*Dr. Hyacinth Bernard Wenceslaus Morgan, Labour M.P. for Rochdale since 1940, is Advisory Medical Officer, Union of Post Office Workers, Federation of P.O. Supervisors, and a member of the Council of the British Medical Association.

House of Commons: November 24, 1943.

KING'S SPEECH: DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS

Mr. Tinker (Leigh): . . . I want now to mention a point which arose before the end of last Session. I think it was on 2nd November that a Petition was presented by the hon. Member for Bridgeton (Mr. Maxton) signed by 4,000,000 old age pensioners. Controversy arose whether the signatories could present the Petition at the Bar of the House of Commons. I always understood that the Bill of Rights, passed over 300 years ago, gave to any member of the community the right of approach to His Majesty, and it meant that they could, if sufficient numbers of them signed a Petition, present the Petition at the Bar of the House of Commons. That matter has fallen into disuse, and consequently it is very hard now to get it revived. I am asking the Government to recognise the rights of democracy. If a certain number of people feel so aggrieved on any point that they present a huge Petition to the House of Commons, they ought to have the opportunity of coming to the Bar to let us know exactly how they feel about it. I am on the Select Committee which deals with Petitions, and I was expecting this Petition to be relegated to us to find out what mode of procedure should be adopted by which the attention of the House could be directed to it. Strange to say, nothing has yet come to us, although we have sat since that time. I am of the opinion that the Government are not attending to this important matter, and I want to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is here representing the Government, to examine the point and at least to allow the matter to go to the Select Committee on Petitions to see by what means the ancient right belonging to our people can be revived. . . .

House of Commons: November 25, 1943.

KING'S SPEECH: DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS

Colonel Rayner (Totnes): . . . There are people who say that the soldier is fighting for a brand new Britain. Mostly they are people whom one would not expect to have inside information on that point. Mostly they are people who have not served. Many of them took the greatest care to get safe jobs in the last war. Some of them have foreign names. Some of them speak over the B.B.C. in broken English, and one gentleman, whose family I believe migrated not long ago from Central Europe, to the security and opportunity of England, writes in a book which I read the other day about barricades in post-war Britain. Thus the unwarlike plan for the warlike, the cloistered for the man of action, the un-British for the British, and we do not like it. We listen to a man like Priestley with respect as a regimental officer of the last war, but these other people annoy us. They make us anxious too, for catch-words stick in the mind, whereas the exercise of common sense needs that sort of effort many are unable to make in these strenuous times.

They harp on the great debt that we owe to Russia, a debt that Russia does not claim. We soldiers, more than most, give unstinted admiration to the valour and generalship of Russian arms, but we do not admit that we owe one jot more to Russia than she owes to us. That great land force would not be sweeping the open spaces to-day if we as a

great sea Power had not held the seas and as a new air Power had not harried from the air. It is doubtful if she would be a great Power at all to-day if this Island had not hung on by tooth and claw during those two vital years in which Russia armed herself against attack. It is very necessary to make this clear to those many people in this country who pretend that Russia has done so much better and so much more than we have and therefore we should rebuild our country on Russian lines. If there is anything that the average soldier is not fighting for it is for a Britain built on foreign lines, as all those poignant letters that appear in the Press from time to time, written by soldiers, sailors and airmen who have given their lives, bear witness. We are fighting for the old Britain in which the mass of the people have achieved an ever-improving and much-envied standard of living, and we cannot understand those strange creatures who would pull down our whole well-tried structure just because a few of its timbers are rotten. There is much to be considered by this House, for we ourselves require that those timbers shall be replaced. There are many problems, such as the distressed areas and scarcity economics, that want tackling, and I suggest that most of them want tackling at both ends. It is not only the man who restricts production by cartels and the man who throws fish back into the sea who needs to change his ways, but also those who restrict the productivity of union labour. Most of us feel that we shall have to work like Trojans to restore our pre-war standards, let alone improve them. We are quite unimpressed by clever economists who speak over the B.B.C. and prophesy a world of beer, butter and Beveridge. We know perfectly well that the end of the war will find a large debit balance in Britain's passbook, and we cannot imagine that the blasting away of our wealth on the battlefields is miraculously building up a national nest-egg. . . .

The other day I received a postcard from the Social Security League asking me to press the Government to implement the Beveridge Report in the Gracious Speech. I replied politely that I would do no such thing. I refuse to press the Government to distribute wealth yet to be recreated. I refuse to accept the plan of one man, however eminent, as the best plan that can be produced. Surely we are not so tired a nation, so bankrupt in brains and practical experience, that we cannot get others to tender before signing so important a contract. Surely we can devise plans which will do away with some of our hoards of officials rather than multiply them. Sir William is a great expert, and there is much with which I agree in his scheme, but I shuddered when I read an article by him in the *Observer* in which he finished up a powerful paragraph with these words:

"subject only to the preservation of a limited list of essential British liberties."

The present-day soldier is taught, whatever his rank, to stand on his own feet, and I suggest to the Government and the House that they have no mandate whatsoever to draw up a limited list of essential British liberties.

I gathered the other day that the Ministry of Health is being pressed by a high authority to inspect the houses of rehoused slum dwellers. I would again tell the House that when the British soldier comes back to his home he will live just as he likes within his own four walls, slumily or otherwise, and that any inspector who tries to force his way in will get thrown out on his neck. May I conclude

by reminding the House of some words of William Pitt:

"The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the force of the Crown. It may be frail; its roof may shake, the wind may blow through it; the rain may enter, but the King of England cannot enter; all his forces dare not cross the threshold of the ruined tenement."

My opinion is that the British Army fights for a Britain in which the ruined tenement becomes a thing of the past, but where our old spirit of British liberty is our passport to the future.

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