THE SOCIAL CREDITER

FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

Vol. 17. No. 12. Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper Postage (home and abroad) 1d. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1946. 6d. Weekly.

From Week to Week

These islands have had many bad Governments—probably, on balance, many more bad Governments than good ones even by comparison with the low quality of Governments everywhere. But the present very bad Government, or as we prefer to say, Administration, differs from anything which has preceded it in three major qualities. It is not a British Government and does not pretend to be so, in fact its Cabinet Ministers boast that they do not consider the interests of "Britain" any more than those of any other part of the globe. In contrast to, say, Mr. Gladstone or Lord Salisbury, Mr. Shinwell is a World Statesman. The Prime Minister made it quite clear fourteen years ago that the Labour, *i.e.*, Finance-Socialist-Party was an International Party and although not elected by anyone (so far as is publicly known) outside these islands, it was committed to further every alien interest. That of course is a quite logical excuse for the amazing fall in the standard of living, on the material, and the decline of morale on the spiritual, plane here as compared with countries whose administrators are at least pretending to mind their country's business primarily. If we are to be treated as Hottentots, we must naturally become Hottentots in self-defence. The second factor in which it is unique is that for the first time, we have an Administration almost purely professional. Not ten *per cent.* of the Socialist Members of Parliament have any experience or knowledge of the matters with which they deal except in the "office" sense, as distinguished from the "field" sense. This phenomenon began with the invasion of Parliament by lawyers in the 19th century. Anyone with extensive experience of life will instantly grasp the distinction, and as most of the members of the Socialist Party who are honest, and not merely office seekers, have not this experience, or they would not be Socialists, they are unconscious of its bearing on affairs. And the third factor is that this is by far the most powerful, *i.e.*, highly centralised, Administration the world has ever seen outside Germany and Russia.

Now, it appears to be proven beyond argument that Lord Acton, in his much misquoted dictum that all power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely, was enunciating a natural law so that the more powerful a Government is, the more certainly it will deterioriate. All the available evidence goes to prove that German National Socialism always carefully referred to as Nazi-ism, started with high ideals, and ended in a bog of corruption. "Russia" obligingly advertises its methods by the periodical purges which diversify the drab existence of the dictating proletariat.

The feature which is really frightening about the condition of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is the universal corruption which is spreading downwards like a plague. It is only eight years ago that anyone with sixpence in his pocket had an absolutely equal chance of buying a packet of cigarettes with the man who had a ten pound note, if they both wanted cigarettes sold at sixpence. But, passing over the fact that no cigarettes are now sold at sixpence a packet, the important consideration is that you must have a powerful friend who will see that you are served first. It may be a matter of a "priority"—that is the comparatively clean form. It may be the Black Market, or it may be a straight bribe. And it is only necessary to notice the manners of the population to see the effect of the system.

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We gather that a Mr. Newman in Australia has produced one of the large number of New Economic Systems which appear to be displacing dominoes as a game for odd moments doubtless to avoid doing anything about the New Order we are all enjoying so much. So far as our information goes, it incorporates (as usual, without acknowledgement) various features of Major Douglas's Scheme for Scotland, to which we feel sure he would have no objection, with, however, one important reservation. Any serious exemplification, and more than an exemplification is a display of puerility, must consist largely of the application of well understood principles together with checks and balances.

Any provision taken out of its context is quite probably unsound; and we trust that no one will suppose that Mr. Newman's or any other synthetic production is any sounder because its provisions were sound in another context.

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Sir John Boyd Orr is to make a round of the European capitals for Food Talks. While, compared with our British Reformatory, American food and cooking is princely, the best European hotels make a nice change.

150,000 British applications to emigrate to Canada have already been received, and they are pouring in daily. The rush to Australia is equally large. This will make a nice opening for refugees from Stalin's tyranny.

Propaganda in the Army

Sir T. Dugdale asked the Secretary of State for War whether he was aware that those attending a lecture on the morning of Saturday, October 19, at the barracks, Richmond, Yorkshire, were subjected to Communist propaganda and that no time was given by the lecturer for subsequent discussion; and what steps are taken by his Department to ensure that political lectures given to the forces are kept free from Party political bias.

Mr. Bellinger said everything possible was done to ensure that advocacy of any particular party or political movement is avoided in lectures given to the Army.

PARLIAMENT

House of Commons: November 4, 1946.

Consumption (Statistics)

Mr. Erroll asked the Minister of Food on what statistical sources he bases his figures for prewar consumption of meat, eggs, butter and milk when comparing them with present day consumption.

Dr. Summerskill: The estimates of prewar consumption quoted by my right hon. Friend are based primarily on imports as recorded in the "Accounts relating to the Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom" and on estimates of home production prepared by the Agricultural Departments, and by such organisations as the Milk Marketing Boards.

Administrative Costs

Mr. Dodds-Parker asked the Minister of Health if he is aware that the expenditure involved by the administrative work connected with housing controls imposed by his Department and by local authorities on his behalf adds, in many cases, as much as 20 *per cent.* to the cost of houses being built at the present time; and whether steps will be taken at an early stage to simplify the procedure so that this cost can be materially reduced.

Mr. Key: No, Sir, and I do not know on what information the hon. Member has based his calculations. Far from adding to the cost my right hon. Friend is satisfied that actions taken by his Department or by local authorities on his behalf have kept the cost of houses down. He is, of course, always ready to simplify procedure, if practicable, when it promotes efficiency.

House of Commons: November 5, 1946.

Ammunition Stores (Perthshire and Stirling)

Mr. Snadden asked the Secretary of State for War the number of claims in the counties of Perth and Stirling for compensation for the poisoning of cattle or other livestock by poison gas or other warlike stores; the numbers of cattle, sheep, poultry and horses involved; the number of dairy herds destroyed; and the total amount of compensation claimed to date.

Mr. Bellenger: Eighty claims have been received involving 2,438 cattle (including seven dairy herds destroyed), 11,527 sheep, 15 horses and 445 poultry. Investigation showed that 350 of the poultry for which claims were intimated were not involved in any possibility of poisoning from warlike stores. The remaining cases are still being investigated. The total compensation so far claimed is £92,880.

Mr. Snadden asked the Secretary of State for War what steps are being taken to prevent the continued contamination of pasturage and crops by poison gas, or other emanation, from the explosives and ammunition stored in the counties of Perth and Stirling; how many additional cases have been notified since June 25, 1946, and where they are situated.

Mr. Bellenger: No burning of any ammunition stores of the kind referred to has been carried out since February of this year. I understand that grazing and feeding trials have shown that the area is free from contamination. No reports have been received of cases occurring since June 25th.

Clothing Coupons (Investigators)

Mr. Assheton asked the President of the Board of Trade how many investigation officers are now employed by his Department on work connected with clothing coupons; at what stage in their interviews with retailers they are expected to reveal their identity; and what are their instructions with regard to asking for clothing for which they have not the necessary coupons.

Mr. Belcher: Officers, other than accountants, engaged on investigations of offences in respect of clothes rationing at the retail stage, number about 100. These officers are instructed to reveal their identity to the retailer at the outset, except in the case of test purchases which are only made at establishments in respect of which complaints have recently been received; officers are instructed to reveal their identity at once in these cases if asked by the trader, and to leave the question of coupons to be raised by the trader whose responsibility it is to require delivery of coupons before he supplies rationed goods.

House of Commons: November 6, 1946.

Libel Law (Committee's Report)

Mr. Wilson Harris asked the Attorney-General when the committee sitting to consider the revision of the law of libel is expected to report.

The Solicitor-General: My present information is that the Report of the Porter Committee on the Law of Defamation will be ready early in the New Year.

Mr. Harris: Seeing that an inquiry into the press was advocated on the ground that an inqury into the law of libel is desirable, will the hon. and learned Gentleman ask this Committee to pick up a spare public relations officer from somewhere in order that their activities may be advertised to the world?

Mr. Gallacher: When he is considering the Report, will the hon. and learned Gentleman take into account the present state of the law which, because of possible libel, caused me to make six changes in a pamphlet I did a short time ago? Will he see to it that something very clear is set down about what is libel?

The Solicitor-General: The present state of the libel law obviously would be a material circumstance to be taken into consideration.

Professor Savory: May I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he will consider introducing the French law which gives the person attacked the right of reply in the

newspaper and which requires that the newspaper shall give him the same amount of space as that used for the attack and just as prominent a place in the newspaper?

The Solicitor-General: The citizen in this country who is attacked in the newspaper has every right to reply, and, as far as I know, that is a right which is vigorously exercised.

Mr. W. J. Brown: Is the Minister aware that an earlier supplementary question made reference to the fact that six possible actions for libel were deleted, but that 18 others still remain?

Royal Assent

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and having returned—

Mr. Speaker (standing in the Clerk's place at the Table): I have to acquaint the House that the House has been to the House of Peers, where a Commission under the Great Seal was read giving the Royal Assent to:

1. Police (Scotland) Act, 1946.
2. Education (Scotland) Act, 1946.
3. Hill Farming Act, 1946.
4. Coinage Act, 1946.
5. Public Works Loans Act, 1946.
6. Unemployment Insurance (Eire Volunteers) Act, 1946.
7. Association of County Councils (Scotland) Act, 1946.
8. Supreme Court of Judicature (Circuit Officers) Act, 1946.
9. Public Notaries (War Service of Articled Clerks) Act, 1946.
10. Atomic Energy Act, 1946.
11. National Health Service Act, 1946.
12. Cable and Wireless Act, 1946.
13. Roosevelt Memorial Act, 1946.
14. Ardrossan Gas Order Confirmation Act, 1946.
15. Ministry of Health Provisional Order Confirmation (Norwich) Act, 1946.
16. Aberdeen Harbour Order Confirmation Act, 1946.
17. Northmet Power Act, 1946.
18. Glasgow Corporation Act, 1946.
19. Banbury Corporation Act, 1946.

Distribution Figures

Major Legge-Bourke asked the Minister of Food if he will give a list, as per head of the population of Great Britain, of the amount of fresh, corned and tinned meat, bacon and ham, butter and margarine, lard, flour, jam, sugar, cheese, dried fruit, liquid milk and eggs available in 1938 and now; and what alterations may be expected in the next six months.

Mr. Strachey: It is not practicable to reply to the precise terms of the Question, firstly, because statistics of supplies moving into consumption are available for the United Kingdom only, and not for Great Britain separately, and, secondly, because complete statistical information is not readily available for the year 1938. It is preferable in any case to use annual averages for the five years preceding the outbreak of war, because averages tend to reduce the effects of year to year changes and therefore provide a better basis for comparison than do the figures for any single prewar year. Comparisons of the current position with prewar can be made in a variety of ways. Perhaps the most convenient is to compare the average distribution figures with the prewar averages which are published in the Statistical Digest, but care must be taken in making such comparisons as they may give rise to misleading conclusions. The distribution figures quoted in the Digest include supplies to the Services stationed in or supplied from this country and in certain cases supplies for export also, but these are at present negligible. Estimates for the second half of this year are given below—they naturally differ in some particulars from the figures previously given for the three months June, July and August, 1946.

SUPPLIES MOVING INTO CONSUMPTION UNITED KINGDOM.

lb. per head per annum.

Commodity.	*Pre-war annual average (estimated)*	*Second half of 1946 (estimated)*
Fresh Meat	99.2	84.5
Canned Corned Meat	2.1	6.1
Other Canned Meat	0.8	10.1
Bacon and Ham	27.3	14.1
Butter	24.8	10.2
Margarine	9.0	15.4
Lard	9.3	7.0
Flour (for food in the U.K.)	194.5	208.5
Jam and Marmalade	10.1	12.5
Dried Fruit	8.0	8.8.
Cheese	8.8.	8.9
Milk (liquid consumption)	216.9	269.0
Eggs in shell	21.8	9.4

In the case of sugar our consumption was fixed at a rate equal to that of the U.S.A., namely about 72lb. *per capita.* In addition the civilian public have had the benefit of such savings as have been made in the distribution to His Majesty's Forces. The second part of the Question can be answered only in very general terms since supplies in the next six months will obviously be influenced by a variety of factors, the effects of which are difficult to predict.

Jam

Mr. Touche asked the Minister of Food what estimate he made for the amount of home made jam before the war in his calculation that the nation now has six parts of jam for every five before the war.

Mr. Strachey: In my reply of October 23 to a Question by the hon. Member for Lowestoft (Mr. Edward Evans) I said that we were eating five pots of jam or marmalade for every four pots that we ate before the war (not six pots as against five). This calculation was based on a comparison of total commercial production since it is impossible to arrive at any estimate of home made jam production now or before the war. In any case home made jam is hardly a significant proportion of the whole.

Germans (Naturalisation)

Mr. Vane asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Germans have been granted British nationality during each year from 1933-45.

(*continued on page* 8)

THE SOCIAL CREDITER

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: (*Business*) 7, VICTORIA STREET, LIVERPOOL, 2, *Telephone*: *Central* 8509; (*Editorial*) 49, PRINCE ALFRED ROAD, LIVERPOOL, 15, *Telephone*: *Sefton Park* 435.

Vol. 17. *No.* 12. *Saturday, November* 23, 1946.

The Republican Victory in the United States of America

By C. H. DOUGLAS

Since quite a large proportion of the electorate of the United States do not understand the Constitution of their own country, still less that of European nations, and the same commentary is applicable to all but a small minority of our own "democracy", it is perhaps desirable to make clear certain fundamental differences between them. Without an understanding of these differences, no estimate of the significance of the recent elections is possible.

The first point to bear in mind is that the United States is, as its name suggests, a Federation of sovereign States, forty-eight in number, and has only such powers as the States have agreed to relinquish to the Federal authority. As is invariably the case in Federal groups, and as is happening in Canada and Australia, a constant semi-secret struggle goes on to "centralise" State powers in Washington, the seat of Federal Government. Without going into the details of this most vital issue, it is nevertheless easy to see that one major effect is to over-emphasise the concern of Congress with Foreign Affairs, a subject which until recently has in Great Britain been dealt with by the Foreign Office. Perhaps the best method of assessing the virtues of these different systems is to compare the prestige of a British Ambassador of the nineteenth century with that of an American Ambassador of the same period.

The recent elections were Federal Elections, and those matters, of which Foreign Policy is the most important, which have been relinquished by the States to the Federal Government are therefore primarily and expressly involved, and because under the curious inversion in which we live, Foreign Policy dominates domestic policy, the power of the Federal Government has been immensely enhanced over that of the States.

The second point to grasp is that the United States has a written Constitution which places real limits on precipitate Government action. While it is probable that, two years hence, a Republican President will be elected, there is nothing inherently impossible in, say, the re-election of Mr. Truman, a Democrat. The position then would be much as though we had a Conservative Government in power with Mr. Aneurin Bevan as Prime Minister, with the difference that Mr. Truman, unlike a British Prime Minister in theory, does not derive his powers, which are immense, from Parliament, but from the Constitution—a very different matter. It is perhaps unnecessary to observe that the names Republican and Democrat convey no information whatever. The situation is made still more complex because, while the Left Wing organisations vote with the Democrats, the most solidly Democratic vote, that of the "solid South", corresponds in actual personal opinion more nearly to a genuine Tory vote than that of most of the Republicans.

With this outline in mind it is interesting to notice the opinion of a competent American observer, Mr. George Sessions Perry:

"In practice, the Federal Government, in whose behalf Washington toils, is a modern adaptation of feudalism, in which power is exercised, not by squads of yeomen, but by blocks of ballots, which, generally, are steered by coalitions of the ballot-controlling lords of various economic, racial, religious or regional realms."

D'markrazi, in fact.

(*To be continued*).

Ex-Tennessee

First big national job of Mr. David Lilienthal, who has now been put in command of the U.S. board of five civilians to control atom energy, was head of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Lilienthal is neither scientist nor electrician. Law is his province, but he has the administrative mind for vast enterprise. At 47 he is a good-looking man with a pleasant manner and humorous eyes.

The atom chief receives a relatively modest salary of £4,375. As a top-rank lawyer he would earn much more.

—*The Evening Standard.*

Farm Labour

(From *The Daily Telegraph* of October 31.)

(From *The Maclaine of Lochbuie.*)

"Sir,—One of the most serious problems that confront this country is perhaps, the future of the British farmer who is coming face to face with an acute labour shortage. This year the crisis was averted by the employment of some 200,000 German prisoners of war, but we are now told that they are being repatriated at the rate of 15,000 a month.

"The question now arises whether the Government have a solution to the problem. If the answer to this is in the negative, which I believe to be the case, then I suggest that they might make use of those somewhat redundant philosophers of the land who in the past have been only too pleased to advise on how best the crops might be produced.

"I refer to the War Agricultural Committees in which there appears to be no shortage of man-power, since according to the latest Government statement, they have a total staff of 10,000 with salaries totalling £2,650,000, plus £650,000 travelling and other expenses.

"The reduction of this august body might also assist Mr. Bevan with his housing problem as they occupy 798,000 square feet of floor space.

"Yours faithfully,

"LOCHBUIE.

"Kelvedon, Essex."

ODLUM v. STRATTON

Judgment in this action (an action for libel) was delivered by Mr. Justice Atkinson at the Royal Courts of Justice on July 29, 1946. Very little concerning it has appeared in the "National" newspapers, and publicity largely depended on the public spirited action of the *Wiltshire Gazette* in preparing a *verbatim* report of the Judgment, which awarded the Plaintiff damages in £500 and costs.

From this report an article was prepared for inclusion in *The Social Crediter*, only to be withdrawn at the last moment on legal advice following lodgment of a notice of Appeal. Information has reached us that the notice of Appeal was withdrawn on or before October 10, and, in consequence, the verdict stands. The pivotal nature of the issues raised leads us to publish the Judgment in full.

References to the case have appeared in the *Law Journal* and *Truth*, and there have been questions (reported in *The Social Crediter*) in Parliament.

JUDGMENT

ODLUM v. STRATTON

(*Royal Courts of Justice, July* 29, 1946.)

Before:

Mr. JUSTICE ATKINSON.

Mr. Gilbert J. Paull, K.C., Mr. H. Heathcote-Williams and Mr. J. M. Colas (instructed by Messrs. Chamberlain & Co.) appeared on behalf of the Plaintiff.

Mr. G. O. Slade, K.C., and Mr. W. J. K. Diplock (instructed by Sir Denys Stocks, Official Solicitor, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries) appeared on behalf of the Defendant.

Mr. Justice Atkinson: This is an action for libel brought by Mr. George Milton Odlum against Mr. Richard Stratton. The plaintiff was, until 10 July, 1942, a farmer; he owned a very well-known farm in Wiltshire, the Manor Farm at Manningford. The defendant was, and is, the Chairman of the Wiltshire War Agricultural Committee.

In May of 1942 the plaintiff agreed to sell his farm to Mr. Hudson, the then Minister of Agriculture, for £41,000 odd, plus certain valuations, and the total sum came to somewhere about £60,000. That was the price that the plaintiff asked; it was agreed to without demur, and apparently was entirely satisfactory. Completion was on 12 July.

A Mr. White, who was the manager of the farm for Mr. Hudson, had paid many visits to the farm before completion, and the plaintiff visited the farm very often after completion and saw Mr. White, and had nothing but praise and complimentary remarks upon his farm.

Thirteen months later, in August, 1943, the plaintiff was amazed to see in the Press a description of an itinerary of a visit by a number of journalists, which contained this paragraph:—"4-30 p.m. Then to Mr. R. Hudson's farm at Manningford. This is a typical Wiltshire chalk farm of 900 acres, with top downland, back arable, and water meadows and pasture running down to the River Avon. This farm was taken over last summer by Mr. Hudson, and was in very poor condition, but is now showing excellent crops."

I think those are the exact words that appeared in one paper, the *Wiltshire Times*, and in two other papers which have been put in the same words appeared, but I think the word "very" was omitted.

It took time to discover the source of the statement and when it was discovered—I will come to that a little later on—on 10 December the plaintiff, who resented this statement as to the condition of his farm very bitterly, consulted his solicitors, and on 10 December they wrote to Mr. Stratton saying: "We have been consulted by our client, Mr. George Odlum, with regard to statements published in a number of newspapers purporting to report a sponsored tour of journalists which in August last visited the farm at Manningford previously owned by our client, and all of which contained a statement to the effect that our client's farm was in a bad state when purchased by the present Minister of Agriculture. That statement was plainly defamatory. It was, of course, obvious that the statements referred to must have had a common source, and we understand that the journalists in question were in fact issued with a document about the farms they were visiting," and so on.

Then it says: "We shall accordingly be obliged if you will kindly let us know whether or not it is true that you wrote the document in question, or caused it to be written, and gave it or caused it to be given to the journalists who visited the farm, and if so, what justification you had for the statement which you made."

Then he replied: "I was not the writer of the document to which your letter no doubt refers, but as Chairman of the Wiltshire War Agricultural Executive Committee I accept full responsibility for it. I regret that Mr. Odlum should regard it as defamatory of him." Then he quotes the paragraph, and he says: "I cannot think that anyone would read this as libelling Mr. Odlum, but I am sorry that it has caused him offence."

That was acknowledged, and he was asked to supply the name of the writer, and the defendant then sent a copy of the whole itinerary, and said that the author of it was Mr. William Thomas Price, the Chief Executive Officer. Then on 26 January the solicitors wrote again asking for an apology in terms to be agreed upon, and said that if that was done no more would be said, and he would not even ask for the costs already incurred. No notice was taken of that letter, and he was therefore driven to bring this action.

Now, his case is that the statement about the condition of his farm in July, 1942, was absolutely untrue, and that it reflected very seriously upon his reputation as a farmer, and as a man who owed a duty to his country at that time to be making the most of his farm that he owned and worked.

The defence admits publication to journalists, but not to the Press. It claims that the words are incapable of bearing any defamatory meaning, and pleads that in their natural and ordinary meaning they are true. It is not clear to me exactly what the contention of the defendants is about this. It was stated in plain language by Mr. Slade that there was no attempt to justify the innuendo, and he said: "If these words suggest incompetence, our plea of justification goes." But towards the end, as I understood him, he said: "They are entitled to contend that the farm was in bad condition due to negligence, and to justify the implication of negligence, because that comes within the fair and ordinary and natural meaning of the words used," and therefore I take it that the claim is to justify the suggestion of negligence. Negligence is imported, and they say that that is justified.

Then there is the plea of fair comment, which was introduced by amendment, and during the hearing the claim was amended by bringing in the publications in the various newspapers which the plaintiff contends were impliedly authorised by the defendant.

The defendant, Mr. Stratton, has really had very little to do with all this. Mr. Price, the Executive Officer, is really the author of this, and he accepts that, and it is his conduct that one has to consider more than that of Mr. Stratton; but of course Mr. Stratton has accepted full responsibility, and therefore any case that might be established against Mr. Price is established against him.

Mr. Odlum is now 67 years of age. Since early childhood he has worked on farms. He was born in America, and at 15 he owned a farm in Michigan. He later went to the College of Agriculture and obtained a degree of Bachelor of Science. At 21 he was Adviser on Agriculture to the Rhodesian Government and the British South African Company, and he was responsible for the introduction of tobacco into Rhodesia. He has farmed in various places—in Honduras, for example, in bananas, and for 35 years he has been a farming consultant in Europe, and he has visited 35 countries in that capacity. I do not mean that all the 35 countries are in Europe. I think he was a consultant before he came to this country.

He started farming here in 1926, and he decided to go in for Friesian cattle. After much search he decided upon Pewsey Vale, and, finding this farm, Manor Farm, Manningford, for sale, he bought it. It was then a mixed farm, which consisted of 900 acres. He prepared it for the reception of Friesian cattle, double fenced it whenever there was contact with his neighbour's pastures; he put up 30 miles of fencing, rabbit wire, and so on. He built completely new cattle sheds, and reconstructed old ones, and one of the few things about which there is complete agreement is that these farm buildings were at least among the finest in the country, if not the very finest. One witness said "the finest." He put in hydro-electric plant in the river, and this pumped the water and gave light, and ran the grain mill and the milking machines, and refrigerators, and saw benches, and he collected and bred a herd of 217 cattle, an attested herd, certified free from tuberculosis, and so on; and again it is agreed that this herd was at least one of the finest in the country.

His reputation in connection with this herd was certainly more than this-country-wide: He has great experience in soil analysis. He had learned that there was very little connection between the full content of any element and its availability, and he tried on this farm the many fertilisers which were available—phosphates, nitrogen, potash, and so on—and tested them out on the cattle—or on his herd, and he found that phosphate and lime gave the best results, and that potash made no difference of this particular farm.

He spent £10,000 on fertilisers, and £32,000 on feeding stuffs, grain and cakes. The manure, he said, from cattle fed on these things is of the utmost value to the land, and 5,000 tons of cake would contain 500 tons of potash fertiliser.

Well, as I have said, his herd became famous not merely in this country, but abroad. The animals were all registered with the Friesian Society, always with the prefix "Manningford." He was very anxious to improve the standard of Friesian cattle breeding in this country, and he had a fixed scale of moderate prices for the sale of Manningford bulls. Farmers came from all over the country, eager to buy, and one witness said that Mr. Odlum had done more for Friesian cattle in this country than any man of his generation.

The result was that among farmers "Manningford" and "G. Odlum" were one and the same thing. It was a show dairy farm, and if important foreigners wanted to look at farms, the first farm that they would be taken to would be Mr. Odlum's farm. He had had very unusual milk figures. He bred 52 cows which each produced over 2,000 gallons a year, and some of them over 3,000, again all certified milk. Of one thing I am satisfied, namely, that I accept the body of evidence to the effect that you must have good soil properly balanced in minerals, to get the vegetation that gives you good sound healthy cattle. You cannot grow good cattle on bad land.

There are many facts in dispute in this case, but of one thing I am satisfied beyond a shadow of doubt, and that is of the complete veracity and reliability of the plaintiff. That has never been challenged; Mr. Slade again and again made it quite clear that he accepted it.

Now, before 1939, Mr. Odlum, at times during the year, used to travel abroad performing his engagements as a consultant. Until 1936 he had a full-time manager, Mr. Main. He always had a farm bailiff, and in 1936 Mr. Main bought a farm on his own; but there was an arrangement between the two men that whenever the plaintiff was away Mr. Main would manage his farm, and to that end he kept in close touch, visiting the farm normally on an average once a week, right up to the time of the sale. One other thing to be said about the plaintiff is this: His health has never been very good, which had the result—I do not know what his trouble is—that he had orders to rest for a couple of hours a day after the mid-day meal. This has not interfered with his work or his farming, but that has been, I gather, a necessity for some years.

Before the war this farm was purely a dairy farm. There was no grain or hay or straw produced for sale. What was grown was retained for his cattle. I have not counted them, but I think there are round about 26 fields on this farm, and they are lettered from A to Z. Probably there are more than 26, because three fields are lettered with the letter L, for instance, but at any rate there are round about that number, and I have two very useful plans which I asked for and which were supplied early on in the case, one plan showing the distinction between the colouring of the grass fields as against fields under cultivation in 1939, when the war began, and the other showing the layout of the farm at the time of the sale.

Now, in August, 1939, there were only two fields which were arable, fields I and M, and they were growing fodder for the cattle. All the rest was grazing land. Some 667 acres were used for grazing, and 53 acres, the fields I and M, producing forage for the cattle. Unfortuntely cattle have got to be fed in winter as well as summer, so that in the winter, when they cannot be grazing, they have got to be kept on feeding stuffs which are bought and on the forage which is grown for that prupose on the farm.

Now, in August, 1939, in the summer, Mr. Odlum saw that the war was coming, and he considered what would be the best policy to pursue. It was evident that he would have to feed his cattle off his own farm, and that it would be impossible to rely on any more imported feeding stuffs, and therefore, again, it was perfectly clear that he would have to produce more heavy forage. He also recognised that he

ought as far as possible to produce food for sale, and his scheme was this, that for every two acres cultivated for sale he should plough one for heavy forage, and in that way he would be able to produce grain to help the food supply and also to maintain his herd and his milk supply. In his view, the milk would be of the utmost importance.

Now, on the outbreak of war there were formed War Agricultural Committees. There was the County War Agricultural Committee, and then the County War Agricultural Committee formed certain District War Agricultural Committees, and these Committees were given statutory powers over all farms, and they had power to order any farmer to do anything that they wished, and to override his wishes in as dictatorial a way as they chose to adopt. The District Committees appointed representatives, allotting to each of the representatives a defined area. The representatives were supposed to carry out the policy of the County Committees, and the Committees were supposed to carry out the policy of the Ministry.

Now, during 1940 and 1941, and the first half of 1942, there was a considerable amount of interference with Mr. Odlum by representatives of the Committee. It is quite plain that there must have been a number of contemporary records and reports, and it is quite plain that those would be of the utmost assistance in arriving at the truth.

From the start, objection was taken to producing those contemporary records, and the Affidavit of Documents, in the First Schedule, Part 3, describes "Correspondence and Communications between Officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, correspondence and communications between Officers of the Wiltshire War Agricultural Executive Committee, correspondence and communications between the Wiltshire War Agricultural Executive Committee and the Ministry, notes, documents, memoranda and reports prepared by officials of the Ministry and by officials of the Executive Committee, Minutes of Meetings of District Sub-Committees of the Wiltshire War Agricultural Executive Committee," and privilege was claimed for those on this ground: "I have been directed by Sir Donald Fergusson, the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, that the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries objects to my producing documents in the third part of the First Schedule on the grounds that the said documents are confidential and are State documents and that it would be injurious to the public interest that the same should be disclosed and produced for inspection and I object to producing the said documents upon the said grounds."

The date of that is June, 1944, and barely two years before that it had been made very clear by the House of Lords under what circumstances this privilege could be claimed. That was in the case of Duncan v. Cammell Laird & Co., reported in 1942 Appeal Cases, where the Lord Chancellor, on page 638, said this: "The essential matter is that the decision to object should be taken by the Minister who is the political head of the Department and that he should have seen and considered the contents of the documents and himself have formed the view that on grounds of public interest they ought not to be produced, either because of their actual contents or because of the class of documents, for example, departmental minutes, to which they belong. Instances may arise where it is not convenient or practicable for the political Minister to act (for example, he may be out of reach, or ill, or the department may be one where the effective head is a permanent official) and in some cases it would be reasonable for the objection to be taken, as it has often been taken in the past by the permanent head."

Now, what happened was this: The solicitor for the defendant, Sir Denys Stocks, is also the solicitor to the Ministry of Agriculture. He said how he proceeded to draft a letter, which I will come to in a moment, and which was settled by counsel, and to which he obtained the signature of Sir Donald Ferguson. The way in which he put it was: "I got Sir Donald Fergusson to sign a letter," and the letter was this: "I am directed by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries to require you not to disclose to the plaintiff in this action or to anyone on his behalf, nor to produce for inspection in the action"—and then come the same words, I think, as appear in the Affidavit of Documents; so that none of those documents were produced, except that, for a reason which one can only surmise, an extract from the minutes of meetings of the Wiltshire War Agricultural Executive Committee was produced.

It will be observed that privilege was not claimed for minutes of the Executive Committee, but only for minutes of meetings of the District Sub-Committees of the Wiltshire War Agricultural Executive Committee. It is extraordinarily difficult to see why the minutes of the Sub-Committees and records of the Sub-Committees should be objected to on the ground of public interest and the minutes of the Executive Committee should not be objected to. When one comes to look at them one sees perhaps one reason which may have influenced those responsible for the framing of this letter. As it happened, Mr. Hudson, the then Minister of Agriculture, gave evidence in this Court, and when he was asked about this letter he said: "I know nothing about it. I never had anything to do with it, and never gave any such certificate."

Unfortunately, the case had to be adjourned for three weeks or so, to try another case which had been fixed, and by the time this case came on again an Affidavit, correct in form, and filed by the present Minister of Agriculture, still claiming privilege for all these documents [? was entered]. One document, or the contents of one entry in a document, I had asked for again and again, as to how this farm was graded, because we know that farms were graded A, B and C by these Committees, and it was agreed that there was such a grading, and that this farm had been graded; and I understand that I had been promised before the adjournment that I should have that, but when the defendant was in the witness box I asked him if he knew, and he said "Yes," and I asked him how it had been graded, and he refused to say, and he said he had been forbidden under a privilege to tell me.

The reason advanced by counsel for this objection was this: It was said: "Oh, the disclosure of the details of grading are strongly objected to by the Ministry, because it might lead to actions for libel," on the ground that if a farm was graded B or C the implication was that the farmer was an incompetent farmer, or that he was a farmer who was not doing his duty.

That was not a true explanation, at all. In March, 1942, there were "Notes on Agricultural Policy" issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, and on page 6 there was this paragraph: "It is suggested that farmers generally of all classes would be stimulated to further efforts if Committees informed them now of the class to which they had been adjudged, and this they are at liberty to do if they think fit." So it is not true to say that the Ministry really objects to

farmers knowing how their farms were graded.

In cross-examination of Sir Denys Stocks, Mr. Paull put this to him, on page 9 of 9th Day: "(Q) I have before me something called "The Cornwall War Agricultural Executive Committee. Launceston District. 'Urgent and Important,' a document signed by Mr. Gubbin and Mr. Humphreys the District Officer." Then Mr. Paull quoted it: "'The time has come when the nation must demand new standards of efficiency and production from all those occupying land at this critical period.' This is an extract from the Minister's instructions to County Committees and the Committee have been instructed to notify all farmers who have been placed in categories 'B' and 'C', and has ordered them to do everything possible to secure improvements on these farms during the present year. We are, therefore, instructed by our Committee to inform you that your farm has been placed in category 'B'"—That was a document which had been served on somebody, it does not matter who it was.

Therefore, the reason for the refusal to tell me how this farm was graded, or the reason that counsel was instructed to give, is clearly contrary to the truth. But there is one point about the suggestion, if it is advanced with any measure of seriousness—I will not say honesty—and it is this, that if to say that a farm is graded B or C imports something defamatory of the farmer, it is perfectly plain that the statement that a farm is "in very poor condition" beyond all question would at least equally import something defamatory of the farmer. At any rate, I have had to make up my mind in this case without the aid of the contemporary documents which would have thrown considerable light on one or two quite important matters.

Now, I am satisfied of this, that it is quite clear that the Committee decided from the outset to adopt a policy of giving priority to grain production, and milk was to come second and, apparently from their conduct in this case, not a very good second at that. In November, 1939, there was served upon the plaintiff the first direction from the Committee, and that was a direction requiring him to plough 123 acres and to sow approved crops.

One of the fields which he was ordered to plough was a field which has been much discussed, called field A. The farm is a long narrow farm, and the south-easterly end is downland. I do not know what height it is, but at any rate it is described as downland, and it was very much exposed to the weather, cold winds and the like. Field A was quite good grazing ground, and there are several letters, on pages 1, 2, 3 and 6, in which the plaintiff strongly urged that it was much better to leave that particular field for grazing because there was heaps of much better land for ploughing up, because of its position. Well, he was not listened to; the Committee insisted, and it was done. Subsequent events showed that the plaintiff's judgment was right about that but at any rate the Committee insisted, and it was done. Then in February of 1940 there was another one dealing with about 75 acres, and on 11 May there was an Order dealing with quite a number of his fields, and so on.

Now, early on, the plaintiff pointed out to the Committee and to the representatives of the Committee what the effect of all this would be upon his herd. For instance, on page 8 of the correspondence, on 6 March, 1940, he was saying: "It would appear to be a mad thing to work on the 75 acres of down land and let the good land go. In fact if we did so, we should have no way of feeding our herd next winter. And after all this is first of all a dairy farm with 217 head of high-grade cattle to be cared for and fed. I have gathered from various official declarations that the main object is maintaining or even increasing the food supply, and not the sowing of some particular field. I wish to remind you that the old grass lands that we have ploughed, which is about everything that we could plough either this year or later years, without leaving the cattle short of grass and hay, were voluntarily ploughed. Not in consequence of any order."

That was followed by a visit from Mr. Nichols, who was the representative for the district; or when I say it was followed, whether the visit was just before or just after, I do not know, but the plaintiff said that it was in February or March, and he explained to Mr. Nichols this policy and the necessity for it, that is to say, the necessity for growing forage if he had to keep his herd. Mr. Nichols would not agree to any planting of forage to replace grass; he said that in the end all the farm would be ploughed and put in grain, even, possibly, to the bull-pen and the lawns; and from time to time from then onwards directions were given to carry out this policy.

In 1941 418 acres were arable land and it meant that Mr. Odlum was forced to reduce his herd. There is no getting away from that. He gives figures in one letter of the small quantity of feeding stuffs that he had been able to buy, and he emphasises that if he is not allowed to grow fodder his cattle will have to go. He was not allowed, from first to last, to grow any fodder whatever for his cattle even on fields M and I. What happened was that in 1940, on field M, he was made to grow barley, and in 1941, wheat; and on field A in 1940 wheat, and in 1941 mixtures for ploughing under. I do not know what that means; but at any rate, even the land which he had used for roughage had to be used for producing grain for sale.

(*To be continued*).

PARLIAMENT (*Continued from page* 3)

Mr. Ede: The figures, which do not include re-admissions to British nationality of British-born women, are as follows: Year 1933, 165; 1934, 138; 1935, 160; 1936, 144; 1937, 137; 1938, 293; 1939, 390; 1940, 208; 1941, 18; 1942, 20; 1943, 15; 1944, 9; 1945, 14; total, 1,711.

Report of the Royal Commission

(Order in Council P.C. 411, Feb. 5, 1946).

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Published by the proprietors K.R.P. Publications Ltd., 7, Victoria Street, Liverpool, 2. Printed by J. Hayes & Co., Woolton, Liverpool.