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From Week to Week

"The primary concern of all modern dictators has been to gain the power over money. Then it is easy to abolish the rule of law... Free nations are those which contribute their money and their labour freely, by choice, and not under the compulsion of the State."—*If Freedom Fail*, Edna Lonigan.

The Australian Government is to nationalise the Chartered Banks. (Daily Press, August 18).

"The Government was optimistic, but America must help. If the country did sacrifice its independence, it would only be temporarily." Mr. Emanuel Shinwell at Perth, August 16, 1947.

After all, what are a few sacrifices? Isn't that what we fought the war for, and didn't we win it? Well, Mr. Shinwell did anyway. Independence? It doesn't matter a tinker's cuss.

In an article whose interest and importance is only blemished by the silly gibe at "starvation amidst plenty," from which no Liberal economist seems able to refrain, with the usual mis-statements of it, Herr Frederick Jellinek maintains the high standard of *The Tablet* as a beacon of sanity in a mad world.

Two propositions emerge which seem fundamental to the present crisis, whether we regard that crisis as political or economic. The first is that Mr. Jellinek envisages the essential conflict under the, to us, novel protagonisms of the Universities of Vienna and Berlin, between the years 1860 and 1910. In regard to the latter, he observes "The men of Berlin [exactly like those of the London School of Economics, where the intellectual leaders of the present British Government were bred] insisted that their teaching was not Marxism but a specific form of Socialism adapted to their nation."

It must immediately occur to readers of these columns that this geographical localisation of economic-political theory is merely to set up Austria and Germany, or still more exactly Vienna and Berlin, as the incarnation of Christian and neo-pagan culture, and anyone who knew and understood those cities before 1914 must at once concede the truth of that conception.

Mr. Jellinek's second proposition is so important, and so immediately apposite to the present situation, that it would be improper to paraphrase it: "In an economic system where currency is not degraded by State action to being a commandeered internal means of payment, even a considerable deficit in the external trade does not matter. The epoch from 1885 to 1939—one and a half generations—has taught us that the most progressive, thriving countries—France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Japan—had, almost during the whole

of this period, regularly, large trade deficits. In a small, although extremely wealthy country, for instance, like Switzerland this deficit during fifty-four years was not less than 22 billion Swiss ["gold." *Ed. T.S.C.*] francs... But the most significant example is Germany, the inventor nation of autarchy [?]. From 1890 to 1914—the period when the growth of Germany into an economic world power of the first rank occurred—her yearly excess of imports over exports amounted to approximately 1250 million gold marks. From the very day when an enforced policy of National Socialism started, namely 1933, the deficit figures were either small or replaced by slight excesses of exports. Yet these were the years when Germany's economy was finally and utterly destroyed by rulers whose main characteristic... was an almost unbelievable degree of stupidity. *Caveat Britannia.*"

Now, if very country in Europe during the period of Europe's greatest material prosperity had an enormous excess of imports, (a trade deficit) who supplied them? Not the U.S.A. And if, as stated by Mr. Herbert Morrison on August 20, our exports have reached an all-time record, and, as he stated on the same occasion, our economic situation is most grave, and is worsening, and we must curtail our imports, and, as every returning traveller will testify, Great Britain and Australia (which is being run by the same gang) are the only "victorious" countries which are not recovering from the war, can it be that Great Britain and Australia are being "finally and utterly destroyed by rulers whose main characteristic... is an almost unbelievable degree of stupidity"? Or is it?

When you recall that we are being ruled by selected experts from the London School of Economics, specially financed by Sir Ernest Cassel for that purpose, doesn't it make you realise how awful it would have been if we'd had just an ordinary Government?

The E.V.Ws.

General Sir Frederick Morgan, former head of U.N.R.R.A. displaced persons operations in Germany fiercely indicts the present methods of recruiting European volunteer workers in an interview with the *Catholic Herald*.

The three main points General Morgan makes are: (1) Families are broken up because we want only the workers, not those dependent on them. (2) European volunteer workers are kept in enforced idleness despite our man-power shortage because of trade union objections, and (3) On the question of welfare costs he asks why are the funds accumulated by Baltic shipping during the war not used for the purpose?

It is stated that of the 20,000 E.V.Ws. who have already arrived in England only 12,500 have been placed in jobs.

Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers) Bill

The full text of the new measure, the Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers) Act, which received the Royal assent on August 13, is as follows:—

Whereas under the Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers) Act, 1945, Defence Regulations appearing to His Majesty to be necessary or expedient for the purposes mentioned in subsection (1) of section one of that Act (being purposes connected mainly with the orderly transition from war to peace and the allocation of available supplies and services during the transition) were continued in force by virtue of that Act:

And whereas, by reason of the war and the dislocation of trade consequent thereon, supplies and services available are, or are likely shortly to become, insufficient for meeting the essential needs of the community, and it has become necessary that the use of the powers conferred by those Regulations should be directed more particularly to increasing production and redressing the balance of trade:

Now, therefore be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:—

1.—(1) The Regulations which have effect by virtue of the Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers) Act, 1945 (hereafter in this Act referred to as "the Act of 1945"), and any orders or other instruments in force thereunder at the date of the passing of this Act, shall, in so far as their operation is limited, expressly or by implication, to the purposes mentioned in subsection (1) of section one of that Act, be extended so as to be applicable for the following additional purposes, that is to say:—

(a) for promoting the productivity of industry, commerce, and agriculture:

(b) for fostering and directing exports and reducing imports, or imports of any classes, from all or any countries and for redressing the balance of trade; and

(c) generally for ensuring that the whole resources of the community are available for use, and are used, in a manner best calculated to serve the interests of the community;

and accordingly any references in the said Regulations, orders and other instruments to the purposes mentioned in subsection (1) of section one of that Act shall be construed as including references to the purposes aforesaid.

(2) In section three of the Act of 1945 (which confers powers to revoke and vary Regulations having effect by virtue of that Act) references to the purposes specified in subsection (1) of section one of that Act shall be construed as including references to the purposes specified in the preceding subsection.

(3) In paragraph (d) of subsection (2) of section one of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1939, as applied by section five of the Act of 1945 to Regulations having effect by virtue of that Act, and in subsection (4) of that section as so applied, the expression "enactment" shall mean any enactment passed before the commencement of this Act, other than the Act of 1945 and the provisions of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Acts, 1939 and 1940, applied by section five of the Act of 1945.

(4) His Majesty may by Order in Council direct that

the preceding provisions of this section shall apply, with such exceptions, adaptations, and modifications, if any, as may be specified in the Order, in relation to:—

(a) any Regulation having effect by virtue of the Act of 1945 in or in respect of any of the countries or territories specified in section four of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1939, and any orders or other instruments made thereunder; and

(b) any power to vary such Regulations.

2. This Act may be cited as the Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers) Act, 1947.

Commons and Press

In the House of Commons on August 13, Mr. Driberg asked the Attorney-General if his attention had been called "to the seditious libel contained in an editorial article in the *Morecambe and Heysham Visitor* of August 6, which is professedly anti-Semitic in character and commends the use of violence against the Jewish community in Britain; and what action he is taking."

The Attorney-General (Sir Hartley Shawcross): My attention has been drawn to the publication referred to by my hon. Friend, which I have forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions for consideration.

Mr. Driberg: Will my right hon. and learned Friend bear in mind that if the existing law and powers prove inadequate to deal with this most dangerous disease of anti-Semitism, it may be necessary to introduce new legislation?

The Attorney-General: I have no doubt of the deplorable character of this movement, or, indeed, of the article in question, of which the avowed intention is to create anti-Semitism. Whether it involves any breach of the criminal law is a matter which is now going to receive consideration in connection with this article. The wider aspects of the matter will certainly be looked at in the light of the result of the consideration to which I have referred.

Mr. McGovern: Will the Attorney-General bear in mind that while deprecating anti-Semitism, sometimes when one tries to cure an evil one only extends it, and that it is far better to allow public opinion and reasoned opinion in this country to operate instead of going in for wholesale repression which may affect more than the people concerned?

The Attorney-General: I quite agree. That is a very important consideration and one to which, of course, we have regard, both in connection with prosecutions in particular cases, and in connection with the wider aspect of the matter which was put to me by my hon. Friend the Member for Maldon (Mr. Driberg).

Mr. Gallacher: Is not the Attorney-General aware that anti-Semitism is, in its essence, an incitement to murder, and should it not be treated as the crime which it really is?

Mr. Bechervaise: While hoping that some action will be taken against this movement, may I ask the Attorney-General at the same time to consider some of the violent anti-British propaganda?

The Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage in Canada is again available, price 7/- (postage 8d.)

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PARLIAMENT

House of Commons: August 5, 1947.

Fatal Accident, Strathblane (Inquiry)

Mr. Balfour asked the Secretary of State for Scotland if he is aware of the fatal accident which occurred at Strathblane, Stirlingshire, when a shepherd and an Ayrshire cow were killed by coming in contact with an electrically live barbed-wire fence; if proper investigation is being made into the matter; and what steps are being taken to prevent such fatalities.

The Lord Advocate (Mr. G. R. Thomson): I have been asked to reply. This fatal accident will be the subject of a Fatal Accidents Inquiry under the Fatal Accidents Inquiries (Scotland) Act, 1895. At that inquiry the cause of death and the circumstances of the accident will be fully and publicly investigated by the sheriff.

Unofficial Strikes

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Thomas Moore asked the Minister of Labour whether he will consider issuing a regulation declaring all unofficial strikes to be illegal for the next six months or until the economic and financial crisis in which the country is now involved is over.

Mr. Isaacs: No regulation is necessary as these strikes are already illegal.

Sir T. Moore: If these strikes are illegal, why are they allowed?

Mr. Isaacs: They happen before we can prevent them.

Mr. Donald Chamberlain: Should the Minister not first make regulations on the parasites who are living on unearned income?

Squadron-Leader Fleming: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us in how many unofficial strikes has legal action been taken against the leaders or anyone taking part in such strikes?

Mr. Isaacs: I cannot give a definite answer without notice, but I cannot recall any.

Vice-Admiral Taylor: Will the right hon. Gentleman take the action which can be taken against these men who start unofficial strikes?

Mr. Isaacs: Circumstances in these cases are examined, but sometimes it is found that by taking precipitate action we might extend the trouble.

Major Lloyd asked the Minister of Labour under what authority a trade union or branch of a trade union disqualify men who have refused to strike unofficially from participating in any voluntary fund and retain sums already paid by such men into the fund.

Mr. Isaacs: The position depends upon the rules of the unions over which I have no control.

Major Lloyd: Is it not the case that the Minister has to shut his eyes and do nothing about the grossest victimisation of individuals who refuse to take part in unofficial strikes and who have their voluntary rights prejudiced by their comrades in the union?

Mr. Isaacs: I have had no examples of that kind given to me, and if the hon. and gallant Gentleman has any, I shall be glad to look at them, but so far as I know no trade union, as a trade union, has acted in such a way. I am under the

impression that some branches improperly brought pressure to bear, and in those cases the head office of the union promptly took action to the contrary. I know of no rules to permit of such action being taken, and we should consider such action, if taken, most improper.

Major Lloyd: I appreciate the right hon. Gentleman's reply, as according to my information it is 100 per cent correct, but the fact remains that the union's action, which coincides with the Minister's reply, is unable to be effective.

Mr. Isaacs: If the hon. and gallant Gentleman would be good enough to give me particulars, I will promise to make a full investigation.

House of Commons: August 6, 1947.

Russian-born Wives

Commander Maitland asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, if he is unable to procure the release of British wives from the U.S.S.R., he will offer to pay on their behalf the Soviet tax levied on them for childlessness.

Mr. Bevin: No, Sir. While His Majesty's Government have every sympathy with the wives, if indeed they are called on to pay this tax, they could not undertake to pay it on their behalf.

Commander Maitland: Can the right hon. Gentleman take the opportunity to assure the House that he is still pressing for the release of these wives?

Mr. Bevin: I must make a frank statement. I do not think there is a hope of getting them out.

Palestine (U.N.O. Decision)

Mr. Teeling asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will assure the House that the decision of U.N.O. as regards Palestine will be neither accepted nor rejected until it has been debated in Parliament; and that no action on the decision will be taken until after this House has reassembled after the Summer Adjournment.

Mr. Bevin: I cannot at this stage commit His Majesty's Government to any restriction upon their freedom to take such decisions as may be necessary during the forthcoming Assembly debates, but the importance of associating Parliament with the policy of His Majesty's Government in Palestine will, of course, be borne in mind.

Mr. Teeling: Can the right hon. Gentleman give us any idea when an announcement is likely to be made? Will it be much before Parliament reassembles? Has he any idea?

Mr. Bevin: I cannot.

Palestine (Press Messages)

Mr. Wilkes asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will authorise the Palestine Government to withdraw facilities from the Palestine correspondents of U.S.

(Continued on page 6.)

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The C.O. Calls Us Up

If the conscientious objector of the first phase of the world war can become Minister of the War Cabinet in the second and arbiter in chief of individual liberty under the atrocious 18B Regulation, why should not the Socialist who deems "permission" for his war-time Prime Minister to attack a totalitarian regime the extreme of "resolute democracy" become himself a totalitarian dictator? His own answer, that the people wouldn't stand it, seems insubstantial, and, should opportunity present itself, is there anything to prevent Mr. Herbert Morrison's waiving it?

Politicians are nowadays referred to as gangsters only because the gangster is recognised as one of the lowest of moral types. Politicians are only slowly, too slowly, gaining recognition for their superlative lack of quality. A lady who walked into a room where the Lord President of the Council was being broadcast last Saturday interrupted a specially sibilant passage to say: "Whoever is it you're listening to? I don't like his voice." When we said it was Mr. Morrison's, she said "Must we?"

It seems that we must, if only to try to discover what the mistrusted may mean. In the circumstances, such experiments lead only to speculative results. When Mr. Morrison says those who suffered most under "competitive selection" were those who were ready to do most for Britain, he cannot be referring to himself; but we are willing to concede the point that we don't know who did suffer most. When he says that "this government is not going back to competitive selection as the Conservatives would practice it", we would ask what is the purpose, and whose, behind the "competitive selection" promised us by Mr. Morrison. Slave labour torn from its roots in "Europe" is to compete selectively with the indigenous Englishman dragooned by "drastic decrees" (avoided "as long as possible") for food and houses. Socialists (long list of 'unconscious' Socialists on application) are people who "never took out of the kitty anything like the value that they gladly put into it." So a nation of Socialists is a nation which plays to lose, and lose all the time? We have always said so. We are left, but in the empty terms of oratory, to "contrive" our own salvation. If only we were!

"The World's Fool"

"In estimating the chances of a national revival the party politicians must be left completely out of account: not until the revival is well under weigh will the political hacks pluck up the courage to proffer their services. What is wanted, therefore, is a non-party movement, or movements, not to become a contestant for political power (which would

be merely to form another political party) but so to organise opinion in the country that no candidate could hope to win a seat in Parliament unless he could establish his soundness as a *national* representative, in contradistinction to the present position, wherein candidates are sometimes elected because of their avowed anti-nationalist views, and almost always because of their professed internationalist views. In other words, nationalism must employ the same technique as internationalism, which—while making use of all parties—has never made the mistake of forming a party of its own. The internationalists have been content to create a series of conventions to which politicians of every colour have felt obliged to subscribe. By this means they have won acceptance for their unnatural cosmopolitan doctrines: by the same means it should not be impossible to defeat those doctrines and to replace them with a philosophy which has roots in our own soil, and which is less likely to suggest that the British are a nation of lunatic dreamers, stooges, dupes and yes-men.

"Let us revive in this country the grand old tradition of blunt-speaking, for assuredly without that habit we must fail in our endeavour. Perhaps that is why such strenuous efforts are made to discourage the use of forthright language. It is certainly why there is at present a powerful agitation to make all criticism of Jewry a criminal offence. If we succeed in our aim to re-establish British traditions, such an agitation would be laughed out of existence as the impudent and ludicrous thing that it is. In that event Jews will be welcome to remain here subject to British Laws, while Britons will no longer be required in their own homeland, to be subject to Jewish fiats. The Laskis and the Shinwells and the rest, should they decide not to re-emigrate, will be expected to cease their attacks on the traditions of the land which has given them harbourage and succour, and to comport themselves in more seemly fashion. High treason will be re-defined, to protect the nation against those who would use the nation for purposes other than its own. In brief, we shall cease to be the world's prize fool and zany."

—Philip Faulconbridge in *London Tidings*.

Housewives' Gazette

The Petts Wood branch of the British Housewives' League has brought out an excellent first number of a little sheet called *The Housewives' Gazette*.* The Editor outlines its aims thus:

"There is no intention to enter into competition with those two excellent papers, *British Housewives' League Newsletter* and *Housewives Today*, which we heartily recommend to our readers. The object is to deal solely with local matters, particularly in regard to the supplies of food, clothing, and shelter in Petts Wood.

"There are many subjects discussed at the Orpington Council Meetings, which are never criticised in terms of our policy. Every effort will be made to enlighten you on these matters, and by these methods it is hoped to influence our Member of Parliament, and Councillors in such a way, that their reactions will ultimately lead to the solution of our problems."

The first issue is given to the consideration of the supply of milk to schools in the Orpington Area.

**The Housewives Gazette*, Price 1d. (Postage 1d.); published by H. F. Marfleet, 19, Cross Way, Petts Wood, Kent.

Reconciliation

By B. M. PALMER

From Morley's *Essay on Compromise* to Aubrey Jones's *Pendulum of Politics** is a far journey, far longer in thought than the generations in time which stretch between. The Pendulum is moving. Here is a book which begins and ends with religion, which boldly states that the writer's views on politics are based on Christianity, that in fact, they represent the policy of a philosophy. He takes his stand on the fact that we have a choice of two alternatives. Either we may believe that the compelling power of goodness emanates from something beyond the self, or we may regard good as a set of rules or expedients worked out by men for the sake of living amicably together.

Do we hesitate to steal, he asks, for fear of the policeman, or because we feel stealing is wrong? The religious man feels that stealing is wrong, and it is this feeling, or emotion, which gives strength to the law. Without this strength, it is doubtful whether the law can survive.

"The rules of the Universe," wrote C. H. Douglas in *Realistic Constitutionalism*, "transcend human thinking, and cannot in the ordinary sense of the words be altered, and therefore must be ascertained and obeyed." It follows that the law as written can only be a memorandum on the results of the process of trial and error by which the rules of the Universe are ascertained.

As one who has followed the Social Credit movement from its inception, and who has been irritated by the claim made in certain quarters, (never by its founder) that under Social Credit (why "under"?) life would be one perpetual summer holiday, I find a refreshing astringency about the book.

"Where charity has withered," says Mr. Jones, "only one thing can make it flower again—a change in men's fundamental conceptions, a change by which they concentrate less on their present satisfaction and more on their common subordination to a power beyond them, a change, that is, of a religious order. It is the mark of Socialism that it promises exactly the same result from a change merely in certain external arrangements, from a change, that is, of a political order. In this sense Socialism—moderate as well as revolutionary, for they are both shoots from the same stock—is a usurper of religion. The central teaching of Socialism is that men and history are ruled primarily by material motives..."

But the truth is, as Mr. Jones believes, that goodness is in our origin, or how should we comprehend it? In this world something has separated us from goodness, "the good that I would that I do not," and life is a struggle, growing fiercer and fiercer as the urgent desire to return to the source whence our goodness came impels us on.

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Unfortunately there have been far too many people (not quite so many now) who have thought that a mere external change, would do all that is required to turn hell to heaven. Now the length of the road before us can be seen between the clouds—we have gone back so far that we must spend twenty years, perhaps, fighting to save our Constitution, and after that we may be permitted to consider a possible age of plenty.

**The Pendulum of Politics* by Aubrey Jones. Faber and Faber.

If we do not accept the materialistic interpretation of history, we cannot believe that the mere abolition of poverty will save us. Religion, philosophy, politics, and following on from these a correct use of material assets, a sound political economy—that is the only way we can take. Any short cut will lead us into the morass. As Mr. Jones puts it "authority is the one fixed thing, the one anchorage that exists in this life... Beneath the authority of heaven, however, there stand also certain lesser authorities here on earth..."

From the few biographical details given we gather that the writer is the son of a working class man, went to a University and left it ten years ago proudly styling himself a progressive, a pupil of Shaw, Wells and Laski, his favourite newspaper the *Manchester Guardian*. It would appear that he is now a Catholic, and this book is an account of the change of view which has led him to join the Conservative Party.

There's the rub.

The mere chapter headings alone are sufficient to show how right he is over almost everything. God overthrown—moderates as accomplices in crime—his defence of class—dictatorship over the proletariat (perhaps the best chapter in the book)—the chimera of collective security—the justification of Empire—the balance of power—the Trojan Horse—authority, property, power, force, Empire—all recognised for the value they have. The book ends with a warning that Christianity is in retreat, and Conservatism itself is subject to sore temptations and has many waverers in its ranks; that is he distinguishes between false and true Conservatism.

But Mr. Jones has drawn the cloth away from part only of the picture, and left part still shrouded. I think he is unaware that there is any more to uncover. With his beautiful balanced style—for just as he believes that the balance of power is the key to the whole, between nations, as between class and class, so he believes that the swinging of the pendulum is inevitable—his book recalls pre-Darwinian days. It is a book which draws us constantly back into the past—there is a flavour of even earlier days about it—but the writer is as completely unaware of the part played by the dealers in money as Sir Thomas More might have been.

Of the Labour Party he writes, "Through teaching that private employers are wicked and grasping, it has sapped the will and the willingness to work. History will comment bitterly that the British Labour Party, the party which had urged how easy it was to find abundance for all, first came into full power when Britain was facing the greatest financial and economic stringency that she had ever known; that at the moment when work was needed more than ever before, the spirit to work was weaker than it had ever been."

"... For material betterment there may not easily be."

The truth of course, is that mere material betterment is the easiest thing in the world. But it will never come until spiritual and political betterment precede it—power and responsibility have to be united. This has always been the heart of the problem, repeated so often that the words come trippingly off the tongue with their import forgotten.

The Parties have got to be made responsible for the results they produce in hard cash, in pounds shillings and pence; and the electors who vote for them must be aware and willing to pay for the programme for which they vote, to come out into the light of day and consent to an allocation of taxation according to the recorded voting. We must put

an end to the secret ballot, one of the prime devices for divorcing power from responsibility.

Another danger from this good and thoughtful book, for it is good and thoughtful and useful—is the danger of piecemeal quotation from it by unscrupulous members of the Conservative Party. The danger is very grave indeed. I would respectfully suggest to Mr. Jones that one of the most pregnant phrases in a book which abounds with them might as well be applied to the Conservative as to the Labour Party:—

“For a party which has lost empirical approach and instead has become wedded to a doctrine will not, when it has committed error, hasten to correct itself; it will, for doctrine’s sake proceed from error to greater error, from wildness to greater wildness, for the doctrine will in its eyes be a deity, sacred and infallible, which no amount of experience will ever disprove.”

What has Mr. Jones to say to the Conservative Industrial Charter, a mere milk and water edition of Marxism, and guaranteed to lead, and not necessarily by a slower road, to the same place? What of the Party’s denial of the right to contract out of National Insurance and State Medicine? That the Minority must be ruled by the Majority? If this book induces more people to vote for a Party which stands for these things under the absurd delusion that an anonymous, irresponsible and misinstructed ballot-box democracy can save itself by voting for the present so-called Conservatives, in order to “keep the Communists out” it will have added one more stone to our cairns. A true Conservative Party there could be, and it is our best hope; but Mr. Jones will not write successfully about that Party until he has drawn back the veil from the whole picture, and recognises that the allocation of responsibility is the reconciling element required.

Responsibility is the point of equilibrium which he is seeking, between excessive authority on one side and excessive liberty on the other. This is an important book.

PARLIAMENT

(Continued from page 3.)

newspapers who continue to print incitements to terrorise in Palestine.

Mr. Creech Jones: There is no censorship of any kind in Palestine over Press messages sent to destinations overseas, and I feel that it would not be in the public interest to attempt to place restrictions either on such messages or on particular categories of correspondents.

CONSUMPTION STATISTICS

(A table of statistics of consumption, from the Official Report of August 6, is held over until next week).

House of Commons: August 7, 1947.

Infantile Paralysis

Colonel Stoddart-Scott asked the Minister of Health, if the present rate of infantile paralysis has ever been exceeded since this disease became notifiable; to what he attributes this marked increase in the number of cases; and what are the best means of prevention.

Mr. Bevan: Not in this country. Medical science does not yet enable us to be sure of the causes of an increase in incidence. The best precautions are personal hygiene,

avoidance of close congregations of young people, and early medical advice if a young contact of a known case shows any mild or indefinite illness.

Colonel Stoddart-Scott: The Minister has not attempted to answer the first part of the Question, asking about the present rate, and whether it has ever been exceeded.

Mr. Bevan: I did.

Colonel Stoddart-Scott: Is the Minister then aware that the largest number of cases per week previous to this year was just half the number we are getting now; in other words, there are double the number of cases happening these last few weeks than previously? Does not the Minister think that people should know the truth, not necessarily to frighten them?

Mr. Bevan: With all respect, I rather resent the last part of that statement. I have already made known throughout the Press of Great Britain what the incidence is. It has been made known from week to week, and I have already explained that one of the most discouraging features about the existing outbreak is that it reaches a peak point earlier in the year than is normal.

Colonel Stoddart-Scott: Is the Minister aware that in America there is a school of thought which thinks that malnutrition—[HON. MEMBERS: “Oh.”]—or bad nutrition is a contributory cause, and has any research into that been going on in this country?

Mr. Bevan: I think that has probably not escaped the investigators in this field. There is no evidence whatever of the slightest connection between malnutrition and infantile paralysis, and I have no evidence at present that President Roosevelt suffered from malnutrition.

Mr. Collins: Can my right hon. Friend say whether there is any evidence of a high incidence of infantile paralysis in towns like Jarrow?

Mr. Bevan: As a matter of fact, it is very well known that this country was one of the most exempt—and in those areas also—from infantile paralysis, but we ought not to ignore the possibility of isolating any cause whatever, and the fullest investigation will be made because malnutrition in some instances does not necessarily follow the distribution of income, since malnutrition might easily occur in well-to-do people not able to take full advantage of their diet.

Colonel Stoddart-Scott asked the Minister of Health what steps he has taken under the National Health Services Act to start, stimulate and encourage research into the causes prevention and treatment of infantile paralysis.

Mr. Bevan: Research on this, like other virus diseases, is at present a matter for the Medical Research Council and my right hon. Friend, the Lord President of the Council, is answering a Question on this point later today.

Dr. Segal: Can the Minister give any information to the House whether any research has been carried out into the prevalence of this disease in other European countries, notably in Central Europe, where the conditions of malnutrition are far more serious than they are in this country?

Mr. Bevan: I have no information at the present time about that, but I certainly will make investigations.

Colonel Stoddart-Scott asked the Lord President of the Council what public money is being spent on research into the causes, prevention and treatment of infantile paralysis.

The Lord President of the Council (Mr. Herbert Morrison): Research on virus diseases, of which infantile paralysis is one, forms an important part of the programme of the Medical Research Council, and over £10,000 is being spent upon it in the present year. The proportion of this represented by the salaries of workers devoting most of their time at present to studying infantile paralysis is about £2,000.

The State of the Nation

Mr. Boothby (Aberdeen and Kincardine, Eastern):... I agree with the leader of the Liberal Party when he said that what depressed him most was that the Government had not yet produced an economic plan. A planned economy without a plan makes nonsense. The Government have made nonsense for the last two years. Have they a plan now for national economic reconstruction? No, only targets. The Prime Minister talked a lot yesterday about "raising the sights." The sky is the limit so far as raising sights is concerned. I cannot think why he did not raise them much higher. We should have felt far more comfortable and happier; but it would not have had any more effect upon the actual facts of the situation than the greater part of his speech; nor, for that matter, than the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech today. All the major decisions have still to be made. The yawning gap, to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer referred, still yawns.

There was one encouraging feature, and only one. I think, in the Prime Minister's speech yesterday, and that was his reference to the absolute necessity of increased food production in this country. I think that it is a pity that the Government did not think of this a couple of years ago. Food production has steadily fallen over the last two years and hon. Members opposite know it. We shall not increase it now by waving a wand. If hon. Members opposite are really going to increase food production within the next three years, it will need a great deal of capital expenditure on the land for re-equipment and recapturing marginal land; and 100,000 more workers at least. Hon. Members opposite must realise that they are only keeping agriculture going at the moment by means of slave labour. That is how they have kept agriculture going ever since they took office. We have to get 100,000 new workers on the land; and we have to have houses for those workers, and it is not a frightfully good way of getting these houses to stop the reconditioning of all houses in rural areas, as the Government have done. We have heard a lot about feedingstuffs, but we have still to get them. We have not got them yet. All I say is that these are four vital prerequisites of any serious expansion of agricultural production in this country; and they present four very tough problems... I agree with the right hon. Member for the Scottish Universities (Sir J. Anderson) when he complained of the continuing and enormous subsidies to consumption which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is giving year after year. They are bound to be inflationary; whereas subsidies to production, if the added production or export exceeds the cost of the subsidy, are counter-inflationary. I do not say that these food subsidies can be abolished overnight or in a hurry; but I think that a start should be made because they are definitely inflationary in character, and conceal from the people of this country the truth in that they conceal the real cost of production. This is only one more example of our present situation, which is, that we are consuming far more

than we are earning. The pressure of money consumes everything. There is a partly concealed inflation, operating over the whole field, which the Chancellor has so far done little or nothing to stop.

A purely monetary deflation is not, I think, the answer. It is unfair in its incidence; it must involve contradiction; and in order to function, it requires a free market economy, which is impossible when there is a world-wide shortage of raw materials and also a local shortage of manpower. At the same time, I would suggest to the Government that it is really fantastic to apply to the present situation the remedies which Lord Keynes put forward at a time when the position in which we found ourselves was the precise opposite to that in which we find ourselves today—with a glut of labour, a glut of goods, and a steadily falling price level. There are, as the Chancellor said only two remedies—drastic cuts in unproductive Government expenditure, especially overseas, and on non-essential capital projects; and, secondly, a great expansion of production. One of the things that disturbs me most is that the present proposals of the Government are, in essence, contractionist. It is an inevitable result of the attempt to restore multilateralism in a hopelessly unbalanced world.

I want now to say one or two words on the subject of the international disequilibrium, which is the root of the problem which confronts us. It takes two forms. There is the disequilibrium between primary producers and the manufacturers of industrial goods; and the disequilibrium between the United States and the rest of the world. The former is caused by under-production in Europe and Asia arising from the war; and the latter by the enormous industrial development of the United States under the impetus of war; and, at the same time, the industrial collapse of Europe, also arising out of the war. Although I was amazed that the Prime Minister did not mention it, I had thought that the Government at long last meant seriously to attempt the economic reconstruction and integration of Western Europe—a task which they should have undertaken a couple of years ago. I was astonished that the Prime Minister devoted practically no attention to it. The fact remains that they have climbed on to this boat with 16 other nations in Europe, who share our political and economic interests; and, now we are there, we must make the land in that ship or sink.

There is a second way out, on a long term point of view, and that is Colonial development to increase primary production, and reciprocal trade agreements with our own Dominions. I do not see why at long last we should not put very great faith in our Commonwealth and Empire. It will not be misplaced. They have never failed us in the past. They came to our rescue in the political field at once; and I see in the Press today that offers are pouring in again to help us in the economic field. I am not exonerating my own party in this matter before the war, although the economic situation in respect of commodity production was fundamentally different. But there is now no excuse for not doing everything we possibly can to increase our supplies of primary goods from our own Empire.

This brings me, in conclusion, to the fundamental issue which confronts us—an issue about which I feel very strongly. I would like the President of the Board of Trade to tell us whether or not we are now going to continue this insane attempt to revert to the international economic system of the 19th century. I think that there is a certain pathos about

the belief in this country that we can get back once again to being the greatest manufacturing and trading country in the world. And I hate pathos. It makes me feel uneasy. In the modern world multilateral trade between a multiplicity of separate sovereign states of varying size is a mirage; and the creation of huge export surpluses a disaster. What we want is the mutually advantageous exchange of goods between countries which have complementary requirements; and the way to get it is not multilateralism but regionalism. That involves, in the first phase, bilateral trade agreements; and, therefore, discrimination.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred in his speech to the American Loan and said that those who were opposed to the Loan have proved to be completely wrong. I do not know, but I remember saying myself at the time that within a year we should be plunged into the icy waters of free convertibility and multilateral freetrade, and that I did not see how we were going to get out of that icy sea. Here we are in it; and the Government have certainly not shown us how we are to get out of it. I do not think that we were so far out in our prognostications. We could have got far more from purely commercial loans from the United States, without the crippling conditions attached to them which we finally accepted, if we had shown more guts at the time. Furthermore, I think that if we had made a greater effort to stand on our own feet a year ago than in fact we made, it would have been to our great advantage. Nevertheless, that is done, and is in the past. What has been done has been done. The Government have had their hour and now they face their problem.

I think that we might now well concentrate on persuading the United States that the best way that they can help us, and help Europe, is not by any more Government Loans, but by doing what we did to the United States in the 19th century—by investing money in this country and in Europe. I do not think that that will be difficult to convince them that such investment will only be worth their while if the doctrines of non-discrimination and free convertibility are abandoned. We are also entitled to remind them that when we poured capital into the United States, built their railways, their steel and their textile industries, we did not impose conditions of any kind; and we never sought to reduce their protective tariffs, although we took all their goods in exchange freely into this country. We did not make any conditions whatever. We put capital in, and we developed their country. Later we reaped the rewards which were our due. I think the United States might fulfil their role much better as the great creditor nation of the world if they took a leaf out of our book and did not seek to impose conditions which make it difficult for us to recover. They should invest their money in this country, and in Europe. Our only hope of economic survival is to adopt a purposeful economic power policy, which meets our requirements in this 20th century, rather than a policy adapted to the 19th century. For this we require a purposive direction of the national economy as a whole. Nobody knows that better than the President of the Board of Trade; nobody knows better than he that there is as yet no sign of purposive direction on the part of the Government.

Naturalisation (Qualifications)

Mr. Hutchinson asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the procedure followed by

his Department in considering applications for naturalisation.

Mr. Ede: An applicant for naturalisation is required to have certain statutory qualifications, namely, five years' Crown service or residence in this country or in His Majesty's Dominions; good character; and adequate knowledge of the English language; and the intention to reside in His Majesty's dominions. No special procedure is followed by my department but careful inquiries are made to check these qualifications and to satisfy me that the applicant is one whose character and general background render him suitable for naturalisation.

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