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The Realistic Position of the Church of England

By C. H. DOUGLAS

(V)

In considering the general policy which appears to lead to a re-incorporation of the Church as a living and vital element in daily life, it appears to me to commence with a repudiation of rationalism and its absurd claims.

"Reason," as I understand it, is nearly synonymous with logic, of which mathematics is a special example. It is a pure mechanism, just as a slide rule is a mechanism, and as such, is deterministic. You put into the mechanism practically anything you please, and you get out something which was inherent in what you put in, but nothing further. If I say that $(a+b)^2 = a^2 + 2ab + b^2$, I can apply that very useful piece of information to a number of concrete problems, but they must, on each occasion, concern similar objects. It is no use saying that the square of a apples plus b oranges gives you some information about bananas. It does not.

The whole validity of the Christian Church rests upon the acceptance of certain premises. Those premises are not provable by reason, or they would not be premises. But they are provable or disprovable by experience, and to my mind, quite a surprising number of the Christian premises will stand

that test.

Given that attitude, and the proper and reliable historical background, an immense power could be built up as an instrument of higher legislative criticism. It does not appear that legislation is a proper function of the Church, and in fact there is far too much legislation (it is absurd that legislation should be a continuous product, much like automobile manufacture, but less useful).

The Church has a *locus standi* on The Just Price.

The Church as such, does not appear to be properly much concerned with physical science, and the incursions of Bishop Barnes would seem to confirm that view. But one subject of mathematical science does come clearly within its province—that of Time.

I am sitting by my desk. It is five o'clock. I get up. The fact that I was sitting by my desk at five o'clock, is now what we call a memory. But, humanly speaking, I know that my desk will be there in five minutes, that is to say, at five minutes past five, so it is difficult to believe that both the desk, and five minutes past five, are not together in existence now.

"As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end."

What do they mean by that?

(Concluded).

Sovereignty and Freedom

By BEATRICE C. BEST

A word subject to-day to almost as much abuse, misunderstanding and ill-usage as Democracy is Sovereignty. It is generally associated with power and the use of power. The dictionary gives as its meaning supreme power—dominion, but supreme-dominion over what or whom is not stated. Yet it is a point of the utmost importance, because it is precisely at this point that ambiguity about the real meaning of sovereignty arises.

An example of this ambiguity may be found in an article in *London Tidings* (July 26, 1947) entitled "Wanted—A Philosophy of Survival." It may therefore be taken to illustrate the kind of confusion and uncertainty to which the ambiguous use of the word gives rise.

The article might be regarded as an appeal to the nation to preserve its sovereignty and its freedom. However, unfortunately, the author leaves one in doubt as to what he actually means or intends to mean by sovereignty. For instance, referring to the states of Roumania, Hungary, Albania, etc., who have come under the heel of the Russians, he says: "These unhappy peoples have been robbed of their sovereign rights because they lacked the power to safeguard their

sovereign independence." So far so good. We learn from this that sovereignty means independence; that is, that it secures to the state that possesses it the right and the power to mind its own business, provided presumably—if sovereignty is to be allowed any general application—that it does not thereby interfere with the right and power of other nations to the same measure of independence.

But then, if this is what the author really means by sovereignty it is disconcerting to read elsewhere in the same article: "To suppose that it is possible to stop men from acquiring power over other men, or nations from acquiring power over other nations is the dream of the political dunce or madman." Here we are faced with quite a different conception of sovereignty. In this case the writer appears to regard sovereignty as consisting in the power to deprive others of their right to independence. The doubt as to which he really does mean is not resolved by the further statement that: "For better or worse this world is, and must necessarily remain, a welter of power-politics, and those nations which cannot command the power to shape events so that the cause of their own sovereignty is served are doomed to lose their freedom."

This statement appears to present two alternatives, either (1) Nations whose interests are in everlasting conflict so that

they must "command the power to shape events" to secure their own sovereignty and freedom at the expense of the freedom and sovereignty of others; or else (2) Nations regarded as the instruments used by the politicians for realising their lust for power in the game or "welter" of power politics. If the second alternative is intended then the nations have already lost their sovereignty and freedom and become cats-paws or tools in the hands of the power-politicians.

This "Philosophy of Survival," it might be observed, offers on the political plane, an interesting and significant parallel to the Darwinian doctrine of "The Struggle for Existence" and "The Survival of the Fittest." One can detect the same air of an unanswerable and unalterable decree: "... this world is and must necessarily remain ...", the same contempt for those who would repudiate or question this "Philosophy." Those "who inveigh against power-politics" are "fools." In the same way those who questioned or inveighed against "Darwinism" were once regarded as fools.

It is surprising to find this "Philosophy of Survival" advanced by a writer who, elsewhere, has seemed to be aware of the existence and activities of one over-riding Power operating behind power-politics. To present the world as a "welter of power-politics" is to provide this Power with an effective camouflage behind which it is able to carry out its plans to obtain supreme control, not, be it noted, by entering into this "welter," but by directing it, and making certain that every victory won there shall be no more than a pyrrhic victory. Furthermore, the "welter of power-politics" serves to promote and assist the 'divide and rule' principle so necessary to this power for advancing its plans, and enabling it to carry them out in secret. In addition, what a splendid justification this "welter of power-politics" provides for those who are concerned to propagate the idea of Internationalism. So far as the nations, understood as the people composing the nations, are concerned, they suffer nothing but misery from this "welter" and, win or lose, each succeeding conflict deprives them of more of their remaining freedoms. From this wretchedness Internationalism can be made to appear as a way of escape.

By way, perhaps, of support for his main contention, the author tells us that: "The smallest rural district council, the humblest village debating society, the most modest amateur repertory company is an arena for the clash of power-addicts." Whether this be so or not the statement is important for it serves to show in what real freedom and sovereignty consists, and where it resides. The revealing fact is that the "power-addicts" in a debating society, or repertory company, have no real power for the reason that every member of such a society or company is free to contract out of it. And those who stay in do so of their own free will, not under compulsion. Were all to leave, the "power-addicts" would be left high and dry, for they hold their position purely on sufferance and have no jurisdiction. Obviously in the case of a rural district council the position is different. Within its jurisdiction the council has power and can employ sanctions. To contract out would involve leaving the district. And needless to say one's freedom to contract out decreases as the area over which the jurisdiction extends increases.* To contract out of

* Roughly speaking it might be said that the function of a sovereign is to rule for his people regarding their interests as his own. The rules and laws of a sovereign state would be enabling laws, designed to facilitate freedom of action and the use of

a nation state may present great difficulties. To contract out of a world state would be impossible.

From all this, then, it should be clear that sovereignty and freedom appertain to the individual and consist in his freedom and power to contract out—to "... choose with increasing freedom and independence whether he will or will not assist in any project which may be placed before him." (Douglas). A sovereign state or nation therefore, is one the citizens of which are themselves sovereign and free. But a nation bent on "acquiring power over other nations," in other words on *destroying the sovereignty of other nations*, has already fallen into the hands of tyrants, however disguised as power-politicians and its people stand to lose both their sovereignty and their freedom.*

"The price of freedom is eternal vigilance," we are told, but it would be nearer the mark to say that the price of tyranny is eternal vigilance, for the tyrant rules and is ruled by fear. Hence vigilance must be maintained by the secret police, the gestapo, the ogpu, the spying and endless controls devised to encroach more and more on the people's freedom till nothing remains of it.

But for the lover of freedom vigilance alone is not enough; it must be accompanied by enlightenment ("the Truth shall make you free.") Indeed vigilance without enlightenment can do more harm than good, for those people full of zeal and concern for our freedoms, may, if not enlightened, be deceived and tricked into actually assisting the enemies of freedom.

Judged then, from the point of view of enlightenment "A Philosophy of Survival" must stand condemned. The author of it in another and a later article points out that Gladstone had foreseen the impending commercial ascendancy of the United States; but it would have been more enlightening to have drawn attention to the sinister discovery actually made by Gladstone when he became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and found that: "... the Government itself was not to be a substantive power in matters of finance, but was to leave the Money Power supreme and unquestioned." Thus the fact was revealed that England at that time had already lost both her sovereignty and her freedom, and this not by any failure or disability to compete in "the welter of power-politics", but because the enemy had already insinuated himself into her very stronghold, and that without striking a blow!

It is therefore not enlightening to present a picture of this world as a "welter of power-politics." Such a picture has an appearance of truth and so is readily accepted. But it is not true in fact and reality unless at the same time there be included in the picture the "tall poppies who play behind the scenes with the policies of nations, as you or I do with the chessmen or the draughts."†

It will probably be pointed out that Douglas has declared that any nation adopting Social Credit would have to "arm to the teeth." But that would not be for the purpose of

personal initiative. By contrast a tyrant rules over and against the people. The rules devised by him are *disabling*, designed to curb freedom and discourage initiative.

* This way of contracting out is the only one left when the people have yielded their authority to their servants (the Government, whether local or national) and have thereby renounced their sovereignty.

† From *Admiral to Cabin Boy*. Admiral Sir Barry Domville.

entering into the "welter of power-politics." It would be for the purpose of defending the freedom and sovereignty which that nation had won by means of Social Credit. For that nation would have to face the implacable and pitiless hostility of the Power which is determined that no nation, no one, shall be either sovereign or free—that the individual as a freely acting personality shall cease to exist.

There is a verse from the prophet Micah which must be familiar to Social Crediters as it has been quoted by Douglas, and has been taken by him, one feels, as an earnest and promise of what a Social Credit state could mean, and of the peace and concord, freedom and security which would become possible under its aegis.

The words of the verse and those that precede it must be regarded with peculiar loathing by the Power that stands behind the 'powers', for they run thus: "... and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid."

BATTLE IN AUSTRALIA (continued from page 4).

gradual, but certain and complete, abolition of private practice. Other aspects that were brought out by degrees were that there must be some degree of direction of doctors, and some limitation as to the particular branches that an individual might pursue—that is, he would be required to show an 'aptitude' for certain work. He also envisaged something in the nature of a Corporation (though that word was not used—it was called a Commission) which would be a policy-making body under the general direction of the Minister. The Commissioners who would probably be three doctors, a Finance member, and one other, would be appointed by the Minister, not on the recommendation of the profession, though such recommendation would be considered. This, you will notice, is similar to the system on which your B.M.A. is so keen.

"This information was given to us in some detail, in the form of extracts from a verbatim report of the conference. Interspersed with this account the President made many comments, directing attention to the way in which the various provisions would limit and eventually end the freedom of doctors. He said that in the opinion of the Council what was really at stake was not the good of the public, but the freedom of doctors, and that all the Government was concerned with was *power*.

"Finally he answered some questions (which were not of great interest) and then put before the meeting some Council recommendations, which were passed unanimously, the effect of which was that the profession considered that in view of the Minister's declared intention to abolish private practice, and direct doctors, the profession could not co-operate with him in bringing about the end of the present system of medical practice, and that further discussions would serve no useful purpose . . .

"He told us that the Council had had several discussions with the representatives of the Press, who were entirely

sympathetic, and promised their support if the profession would fight. (This is confirmed by several references 'on the side' which I have noticed in editorials and comments in the past few months). He felt that the public would be fully sympathetic to the profession when the reason for its stand was explained.

"Just to be sure, I asked the President whether, had the Government been sympathetic to a corporation, with the members of it appointed on the recommendation of the profession—the system, I said, which had been favoured by the parent B.M.A. in England—the Council would have considered that a satisfactory basis on which to pursue discussions. The President did not quite grasp my meaning, so I took the opportunity to re-state it, and added that I considered the matter important, because in my opinion, if such a central authority was set up, with power to mould a service, and at least limit the freedom of doctors, there would be nothing to prevent a subsequent government, on some pretext or other altering the system of appointment of Commissioners, using the apparatus to run a completely centralised system of control. The President thanked me, and said that the observation I had made was very wise, and that the Council agreed with that view, and was opposed to the idea of such a corporation.

"In individual discussions at the end of the meeting, I discovered that the attitude of the Council had come as something of a surprise and relief to the members. They said that they had been in the dark as to what was going on, and had not known whether it was possible to resist; and they had not felt at all sure of the Council. One man remarked to me that the attitude of the Council was a complete reversal of its attitude at the time of National Health Insurance.

"This whole business confirmed the view I originally expressed . . . that the *inherent* policy of the profession is *freedom*, and that it was only the attitude of the 'leaders' which confused the picture. There was no mistaking the relief of the meeting yesterday when it was realised that a new attitude was being displayed. There was hardly any discussion, just because the President was expressing the real policy of the profession, and there was nothing more to be said. Since that was the case, the correct relationship automatically obtained—that the Council should adopt the necessary technical methods to defeat the Government's plans—methods of no special consequence or interest to doctors generally.

"As you know, the Victorian Branch of the B.M.A. republished *The Problem of the Medical Profession* and distributed it to all its members in Victoria, some considerable time ago. I felt while the President was speaking that he was basing himself to a considerable extent on that booklet—the phraseology, and the issues brought up, were recognisable in the same way as the influence of P.E.P. is recognisable in the approach of your Executive (B.M.A.).

"I should mention that there are many indications that the Government lacks confidence in its ability to go ahead in face of medical opposition. Publicly, of course, the Government is 'determined' to go ahead. I have no doubt at all that the British scheme would never have got so far as it has but for the fifth columnists among your leaders. 'Inevitability' is pure and conscious bluff . . ."

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Saturday, November 22, 1947.

From Week to Week

Writing as spivs, drones, and infra-tinkers cusses, and touching our forelock obsequiously to our imported conquerors, we find an unsolved problem in comparing a familiar quotation from "The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page" which appears in a recent number of *Truth* with a comment appearing in *Human Events* (Washington, D.C.) for October 29. Writing in 1913, Page remarked of London, "The world never saw a finer lot of men than the best of their ruling class. You may search the world, and you may search history for finer men than Lord Morley, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Harcourt and other members of the Cabinet."

"And I meet such men everywhere—gently bred, high minded, physically fit, intellectually cultivated, patriotic." (To anyone who supposes this to be over drawn, we recommend the perusal of Sir Edward Grey's *Fly Fishing*, not for its fishing lore, but as a revelation of character, and then an attempt to imagine any single member of the present Administration writing it.)

Now to the present. "It is granted that in Britain [*sic*] certain forces are at work which are peculiar to that country alone. Few pause to realise how devastatingly a complete crash of prestige, together with a sudden recognition of poverty and weakness, can be dispiriting to a people who have for generations been accustomed, even schooled, to consider themselves as the rulers of the world". (*Human Events*, Washington, D.C.)

These two quotations, taken together, deserve close consideration in the light of the fact that we are, beyond any shadow of doubt, the nation which has been the soul of two "victorious" wars. We do not say that they are complementary; it is not so simple as that. But they are connected. And their sequence is a planned sequence.

Ponder on D'Israeli . . . "The traditions of a nation are part of its existence. Its valour and its discipline, its venerable laws, its eloquence and its scholarship, are as much portions of its life as its agriculture, its commerce, and its engineering skill . . ."

After enumerating the achievements of the nation and the race, D'Israeli proceeds "And all these mighty creations are out of all proportion to the essential and indigenous elements and resources of the country. If you destroy that state of society, remember this—England cannot begin again."

There spoke the authentic Hebrew Prophet.

The whisky racket goes from strength to strength like

the whisky sent abroad. Some back bench Member ought to ask for information as to the amount of spirits drawn from bond and tax paid at the old rate, during the past month, thus making a profit not on the spirits, but on the tax. Our information is that practically everyone in the Trade had a fairly accurate knowledge of the Budget. We feel sure there will be a clamour amongst the admirers of the present Administration for one Budget per month. It was noticeable that several Labour Members wanted a higher tax, *i.e.*, a higher profit for the Black Market.

Unlike the whisky, Alcohol shares gained renewed strength on the Budget.

The almost incredible situation to which we have allowed ourselves to be brought by the rigging of the Constitution is not a Party matter. For ourselves, we have no confidence whatever that an Administration headed nominally by Mr. Churchill, while its methods would be more skilful, would not sell us more irrevocably to our real enemies. The root of the matter has been clearly put by Mr. Herbert Morrison, obviously sublimely unconscious of the implications of what he said. "Parliament is supreme. It is one of the virtues of our system that Parliament can do what it likes." And it is clear that the Sanhedrin can do what it likes with Parliament.

The fall of Mr. Hugh Dalton, which we wish we could consider final, has an unconvincing air. If it is to be taken at its face value, however, its implications are far reaching. Dr. Dalton is the first string of the London Economics team, that cancerous organisation "to train" (with the aid of Jewish malignants) "the bureaucracy of the future Socialist State". The prestige of it, already falling, will not be enhanced.

Speaking in Edmonton on October 19, Mr. Coldwell, C.C.F. Party (London School of Economics Finance-Socialists) said "I feel there is ground for real hope in the way Britain [*sic*] is rallying support from both conservative *financial* (our emphasis) leaders in the U.S.A. and the democratic peoples of other countries." Mr. Coldwell is doubtless well informed.

Mr. Coldwell is an Englishman by birth, but we are happy to say left these islands many years ago.

The Battle in Australia

The following extracts from the letter of an Australian medical correspondent, dated, Canberra, October 13, are of interest in view of the position in Great Britain:—

" . . . Yesterday I attended the meeting of the local Association (the equivalent of your Division) of the B.M.A. The meeting was called to hear an account from the President of the New South Wales Branch of a conference between the B.M.A. and the Federal Minister of Health which took place some time ago.

"The essence of the account was as follows. From the outset the B.M.A. officials endeavoured to ascertain what were the ultimate intentions of the Minister with regard to private practice. After a good deal of beating about the bush, the Minister stated that what he had in mind was the

(continued on page 3).

PARLIAMENT

House of Commons: November 3, 1947.

Control of Engagement Order

Mr. Rhys Davies (Westhoughton): I beg to move,

"That the Control of Engagement Order, 1947 (S.R. & O., 1947, No. 2021), dated September 18, 1947, a copy of which was presented on October 20, be annulled."

It will be obvious to all hon. Members that this Motion is intended to challenge the right of the Government to choose their jobs for the unemployed, instead of allowing the unemployed to choose their own occupations. Six months ago this House gave support to the Government and passed the National Service Bill. I ventured to suggest then that, once the Government secured military conscription in peacetime in this country, industrial compulsion would follow almost automatically. I was, of course, treated with scorn and contempt because I prophesied that; but industrial compulsion has now become a fact. . . .

We are promised, of course, that this regulation will come to an end in December, 1948. I have no faith at all in that promise. I well remember the promises that were made about military conscription. I was here when we were told that conscription was needed only for the emergency; and, now, military conscription is practically fastened on the British people for all time. Consequently, I repeat that I have no faith at all in the promise that it will come to an end in December, 1948. I want the House to listen to the promise of the Minister of Defence when he said on All Fools' Day this year—that was very ominous:

"The Government, in spite of what has been suggested from both sides of the House from time to time, have no intention whatsoever of introducing, or supporting, any form of industrial conscription."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, April 1, 1947; Vol. 435, c. 1956.]

Now, where is he to-day? If the right hon. Gentleman sincerely believed that, he ought to support my Motion in the Lobby this evening.

I want next to challenge the new philosophy about industrial conscription that has arisen in our party. I have been preaching this same gospel for 50 years—and I preached it when some hon. Members on the Front Bench belonged to the Tory Party, by the way. This is the argument which I hear on all hands; people say to me, "If you are to have a planned Socialist society, you must accept compulsion of labour." But the gospel which I have preached all along the line—and I have done as much as most of my hon. Friends on the public platform—is that Socialism would provide greater personal liberty and freedom for the worker than capitalism. If hon. Members to-day will convince me that we cannot have as much individual freedom in a Socialist society as we could get under capitalism, I am opposed to a planned Socialist State. There is another point I want to make. I am told that we cannot very well raise objections to the compulsion of labour because we have accepted so many restrictions already. As we have accepted military conscription, it is said, we are logically bound to accept the direction of labour. What nonsense! It is just like saying that, if one member of a family suffers from infantile paralysis, all the rest of the household ought to be afflicted alike. I must make it clear that there is no absolute freedom, any more than there is absolute tyranny, but there is no reason why,

because there is no absolute freedom, we should restrict it and enlarge the scope of tyranny by Parliamentary action.

Let me say a word or two more about this new philosophy that is growing up inside our own party, but first let me thank both this Parliament and my hon. Friends for suffering a man like me to say these unpopular things. I am proud to say that, in my Union, the National Union of Distributive Workers, which is the fifth largest in the country, the policy of military conscription and industrial compulsion are not very welcome. . . .

. . . Let me make my own position as a Socialist clear to my hon. Friends. I am in favour of harnessing, controlling and owning by the State or municipality of those inanimate things necessary for the community, but I draw this fundamental distinction. I object to the State treating human beings as if they were things and inanimate material. That is a gospel which every Socialist used to preach in this country. It will be said, of course, that I shall get Tory support for this Motion. Why should I not welcome Tory support for Freedom? The Government were delighted to have Tory support for military conscription, so I say, "tit for tat" to that. Let me make it clear too that, where personal freedom is at stake, I do not mind where support or where opposition comes from. I should have thought that the issue of freedom in this land of the free ought to be above party considerations; that it ought to appeal to Members of all parties, because, in the end, it is the children of the future who will suffer under this tyranny if it is allowed to grow.

There are queues at every street corner, military conscription, food rationing, a scarcity of clothing, furniture and houses, and exceptionally heavy taxation. It is no use the critics blaming the Government for the shortage of houses and all the other restrictions that are taking place. The fact is that this nation to which we all belong has squandered the substance of the country on two wars until we are hopelessly bankrupt; and no Government of any kind would do better than this one in relation to food and housing, and right hon. Gentlemen opposite know that perfectly well. But why should we add this additional direction of labour on top of all the other restrictions? Why not try freedom for a change? The most ridiculous argument of all that I have heard in relation to this, and one put forward by my own colleagues, is that the imposition of this direction of labour by a Labour Government will not be as cruel as if it were imposed by the Tories. That is nonsense too. I have said before that a pair of handcuffs are no easier to wear because they happen to shine with a Socialist solution. They are still a pair of handcuffs; and when this regulation leaves the Department of my right hon. Friend the Minister of Labour, little does he know how it will be administered in the employment exchanges. He will have very little control over it at that level.

Some of my hon. Friends are very happy about this Regulation because they believe that it is going to catch the rich, that it is going to deal with those who

"Toil not, neither do they spin."

They are all wrong. This Regulation will not touch the rich; it will deal only with the wage earners, when they become unemployed who attend at the employment exchange. They are the only people who will be dealt with under this Regulation, and all the talk about spivs, drones, eels and butterflies is simply used to camouflage the real issue. This Regulation is akin to the line which the Nazis took in

Germany and the Fascists in Italy when they were faced with an economic crisis. I have just been in Germany, and I have seen the havoc done to a great people through accepting this sort of political philosophy—the easy way of tyranny and direction. Dictatorship is, of course, very easy; one does not need to argue with anybody; simply give them orders. That is what they did in Germany, and I know what has become of that great nation for not nipping dictatorship in the bud. Let my right hon. Friend remember the history of all the tyrants from the Pharaohs down to the Czar. The Czar himself thought that he was a decent and kindly fellow. All the tyrants think alike; they all think they know what is good for their people. But once the attack on freedom is begun, no Minister of State can stop the tyranny that follows.

The Control of Engagement Order applies to the coal mines to-day, and I will tell the House what I think is part of the problem of the coal industry. Some people in this House think that they are better bred than the miners. I am sure that no hon. Member in this House would send his son to work in the pits. But when a boy enters the coalmining industry to-day under the Control of Engagement Order, the parent knows that he is fastened there until he is 50 years of age. For ten years I worked underground, but I came out of the pit and I chose my own job. I want to proclaim the gospel here that every other man ought to be entitled to choose his own job instead of having a job chosen for him by a stranger. The difference between a slave and a free man is that the free man has the right to strike and the right to choose his own job instead of being told by a clerk at an employment exchange what job he must accept. The Government, the Coal Board and, if I may say so, some trade union officials forget the truth that man does not live by bread alone. The spirit of man must be taken into account in all this; and the soul of the decent workman is offended when he is ordered about as if he were one of a flock of sheep. The "Bevin Boy" experiment ought to be enough to convince the Government that compulsion will not avail them. That experiment, surely, was a failure. Although the people of this country submit to compulsion for the purposes of war, when there is an enemy at the gate, they do not submit so easily to compulsion in peacetime. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] More than that, one may take a horse to the trough, but one cannot make him drink.

I have every reason to believe that all this spiv business is part of a campaign to cover up the real issue. What is a spiv, a drone, an eel, or a butterfly? It just depends upon one's point of view. In my view, every man and woman in the world dressed up in military clothes is a drone living on the rest of society. . . .

The puritan regards all those employed in music-halls, theatres, films, dog-racing, football pools, breweries and public-houses as spivs. The philosopher looks upon everybody engaged on our penny daily newspapers as eels. The Government, apparently, regard everybody employed in the distributive trade as if they were just butterflies. The anarchist, on the other hand, regards every Member of Parliament as an anachronism, and the republican thinks the same of the monarchy all over the world. According to report, those employed in the film industry are to have special dispensation under these regulations. I do not want to offend that industry, but I am told that there are more spivs, eels, drones and butterflies in the film industry than in any other.

But those have been exempted. I hope my right hon. Friend the Minister of Labour will not be offended when I say that in his list of trades liable to direction there is not a word about his own printing trade.

If these regulations are allowed to pass, the next stage will be an attempt to convince the people that tyranny is good for them. They will be taught to like the chains that bind them. I have no illusions about what can happen in this connection. There are many responsible people, however, who do not agree with my right hon. Friend and who have come to the conclusion that this direction of labour and this business about spivs is all humbug. Listen to one of my right hon. Friend's chief officials, who ought to know as much as the Minister about the matter. I refer to Sir Godfrey Ince, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Labour, who spoke at a conference recently. According to a report,

"he ridiculed the spiv business. He made it plain that the spiv was important psychologically, but relatively he was insignificant. He thought that it would require more officials trying to catch them than the total number of spivs in the land."

That is my right hon. Friend's principal official. Sir Raymond Street, President of the Textile Industry Institute, one of the most important people in the cotton industry of Lancashire, objects to direction of labour because he does not think that directed is as good as voluntary labour. He is right.

See how this tyranny grows, little by little. The first indication we had of the intention of the Government to direct labour was in a speech delivered by the Minister at Carlisle at the end of August. He then said that a mild form of direction might become necessary, but that nobody would be sent away to work from his home town. Later on, when he met the Joint Consultative Council for Industry, he promised that these powers would be used sparingly. The Minister also said that he would not use this direction for the men at the bottom and let the men at the top go free. But in his long list of exemptions from direction, all the men at the top are free and all the men at the bottom are to be directed. Listen to the exemptions: Accountants, actuaries, architects—including town planners—auctioneers, adjusters and underwriters, barristers and solicitors, buyers, clerks of works, commercial travellers. There is a long list, and in that list of exemptions journalists are also included—that is ominous—and, of course, political secretaries. These are among those to be directed: Clerks and supervisors other than those with executive responsibility, distributive workers and domestic workers. It is proposed to exempt auctioneers, dentists, opticians, solicitors and barristers, but domestic workers, shop assistants, engineers and textile operatives are to be directed.

There is still a little more to say on this subject. This is what my right hon. Friend said at a Press conference:

"People will be given a range of jobs to choose from, but if they are going to be 'sticky' we shall say to them, 'You will have this one whether you like it or not.'"

He then came down to the real fact of the case; he might have added that if they do not accept that one they can go to goal. That is what will happen.

This crisis, we are told, is upon us in part because of lack of manpower. Yet we have a million men unemployed in this country, wearing military clothes and doing absolutely nothing. Why does my right hon. Friend not use those men to do some work at home? . . .

Let us see how this thing works in the mining industry

already. This is what I saw reported in the Press the other day:

"A number of colliery workers will leave South Wales today to try to identify miners who are believed to have left the pits to work in the hopfields of Herefordshire. The names of any miners found will be passed on to the Ministry of Labour who may take proceedings against them under the Control of Engagement Order. Officials of the Coal Board and the Ministry of Labour, it is stated, have already interviewed some miners in the hopfields."

I have not spent 50 years in this movement to see my right hon. and hon. Friends on the Front Bench ordering sleuths to look for miners in the hopfields. The day of reckoning arising from this interference with freedom will come—to them. My right hon. Friend may feel that he is doing the right thing, but once this regulation is out of his hands he will not know what will happen to it. Let me read a case from my own constituency. If one case like this can come to my notice, I would not be the least surprised if there are thousands of others which never come to light. Let the ex-miners present listen to this one:

"DEAR SIR,

My daughter married a young man from Scotland in April this year, and we thought that he would have no trouble in finding a job in the Wigan coalfield, where we all reside. I took him to Victoria Colliery and they could not find him a job. We then went to Alexander Pit and we got the same answer. We then tried Leyland Motors; they would give him a job if he could get a green card from the employment exchange. He failed to get a green card at Chorley because he lived at Blackrod. Then Blackrod advised him to go to Horwich for a green card, but he could not be supplied with a green card at Horwich because his prospective job was at Chorley. Horwich, however, could offer him a job at a local paper mill, but as they needed miners at Atherton they could not give him a green card for the Horwich job. We then went to Ghaunters Pit at Atherton but the under-manager was off sick, and his deputy told him to wait a few days when he would be likely to start at Atherton. We then went to the area officer at Kirkless site, Aspull, to be told to go to Victoria Pit. In the end, he started work at Alexander Pit, up to his knees in water, and gave it up in disgust and returned to Scotland."

That is how it works. The Conservatives opposite allege that this Government are creating class hatred. I do not know whether that is true or not but I know this much: that if this regulation comes into operation the Government will create divisions and hatred within sections of the working class themselves. It will result in neighbour spying upon neighbour; workers telling tales against their comrades; and informers and denouncers will grow like mushrooms.

... What annoys me above all things is this. I have been here longer than most. I have been here 26 years. I have seen Governments and Prime Ministers come and go. I will make this statement now, whether it offends anybody or not. If a Tory or a Liberal Government did what our Labour friends are doing to-day we should howl them into silence. Everyone on these benches would fly to the rostrums and denounce the Tories or the Liberals as the tyrants of the day. More than that, I should not be a bit surprised if the Minister of Health, with his great Celtic eloquence, and especially the Secretary of State for War, with all the speech at his command, would not demand a general strike against this regulation. I shall be taunted, of course, that the Tories are supporting me on this Motion. Mr. Speaker, I am 70 years of age, I have seen tyranny at its worst, and freedom at its best. Having seen what tyranny has done to other nations, I care not, where freedom is concerned, who opposes me or who supports me. Some people argue that we ought to have a Coalition Government to get over this crisis. What I think we need is a Labour Government to return to the simple

principles that we used to preach on the Socialist platforms. That is what we need to clean up the whole of all this foul thing called directing people to certain jobs.

I shall be asked, of course, what alternative there is to direction. That is a fair question. What I want is this. Let us make it clear above all that this regulation will apply only to the unemployed men and women. That is all. They cannot catch the spivs. What about the 20,000 deserters in this country? They cannot catch one of those either. When I am asked what is the alternative, I say it is a fairly simple one. Why not go back to the Employment Exchange practice we used to enjoy, for which the Employment Exchanges were established? The unemployed man walked to the Exchange, found out what vacancies there were, and decided for himself what job suited him best. Surely, the workman knows what job suits him best—better than a clerk behind the counter at the Employment Exchange? That, in my view, is the simple and effective alternative.

I am pleased to say that I have the Minister for Economic Affairs on my side. When he was speaking at a Labour Party rally the other day, a question was put to him whether people in non-productive work could be put to work in productive work. The Minister replied:

"I am personally against conscription of labour."

That is the answer, and if that answer is not good enough, let us see what the Government themselves said when we were on the brink of this economic crisis. In the White Paper "The Economic Survey, 1947," it is said—and nothing I say to-day can equal the eloquence of that annotation on the problem of the direction of labour:

"There is an essential difference between totalitarian and democratic planning. The former subordinates all individual desires and preferences to the demands of the State. For this purpose, it uses various methods of compulsion upon the individual which deprive him of the freedom of choice. Such methods may be necessary even in a democratic country during the extreme emergency of a great war. Thus the British people gave their wartime Government the power to direct labour. But in normal times, the people of a democratic country will not give up their freedom of choice to their Government. A democratic Government must, therefore, conduct its economic planning in a manner which preserves the maximum possible freedom of choice to the individual citizen."

That is what I am trying to say now in another form.

Finally, I shall be told, of course, that I am embarrassing the Government over this Motion. I am a Member of Parliament. I have been elected eight times. I have championed this freedom all my life, and I shall continue to preach it. Freedom will remain when those who talk differently have gone down to the dust. The soul of the British people is behind what I am saying to-day. Let those who tell me that this might bring the Government down remember this my last word on this—better that the Government should meet their doom than that individual freedom should perish in the British Isles.

The Minister of Labour (Mr. Isaacs): . . . These people will be given a job in their own industry if there is one going, or they will be offered a job in some other industry for which their skill fits them. In the long run, there will be offered on an average four different jobs of an essential character. If they still take the view that they will not take a job essential in the nation's interest because they want a job which from their own point of view is more valuable to them—I do not think that the question of freedom and principle comes into this; what a man looks for who goes after a job is how much money he will get at the end of the week—

... I said that the main thing a man is concerned about is how much money he gets at the end of the week. [Interruption.] I will not go into it. . . .

... If after a period of 14 days a worker still remains unemployed, he or she will be offered suitable employment in some other occupation on essential work. I do not know if it is really necessary to give such workers 14 days to make up their minds, but it is intended to give them a chance to think it over. I want to assure the House that this is not a question of men walking into the exchange, saying, "I am out of work," and being told, "Pack up, you are going to this job straight away," I should like to make this further point clear—we offer these men or women four jobs and we will say to them, "You must take one of them or we will direct you." If a man or a woman says, "I will voluntarily take one of these jobs," he or she is not directed. [Laughter.] . . .

Mr. Hopkin Morris (Carmarthen): . . . The moment we depart from the rule of law and put the fate of people in the charge of departments we are entering a reign of tyranny. There comes a time in some of the Debates in this House and this is one of them, when a man has to speak what is in him and tell the House, rightly or wrongly, what he really believes about the issue. Most hon. Gentlemen opposite have been engaged most of their life in fighting for the liberty of the individual. Now they are saying in substance that circumstances have come where the industry is more important than the men engaged in it and that the industry is the measure of the man. The hon. Member for North Battersea referred to coal. That is making the coalmine more important than the workers engaged in it. It is the old Athenian test— . . .

... The one issue confronting men lies between the Grecian democracy or the Roman law status. In this order there is nothing but status. This is the restoration of status after a great progress through Western civilisation during which social institutions were based upon the conception that they were to fit the individual man and that industry was to fit the individual man. We are now turning round and saying, "Let us restore the law of status," and inquiring who is to go first to the employment exchange . . .

In this order is the restoration of the Roman law status. Modern Europe is tending to go back to it, and it is creeping into this country. Because of that, I am grateful, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity of intervening in this Debate and, on this particular issue, to speak, whether it is agreeable to the House or not, what I really believe; also, to warn, as far as I can, of the danger threatening this country of losing its spirit in pursuit of material wealth.

Mr. Henry Strauss (Combined English Universities): . . . Several hon. and right hon. Members have said that nobody likes this order. The Minister said "Nobody likes this order." Unfortunately that is not true. Of course, it is perfectly true that the right hon. Gentleman does not like it; I accept entirely the sincerity of his statement, but I can tell the House who does like it, and who advocated it, and said he likes it. That was Mr. Horner at Margate on Whit Sunday. What is interesting is to remember two other things he said he liked on the same occasion. Perhaps the House would like to be reminded that those two things were the prohibition of foreign travel, and the abolition of the basic petrol ration. Those were the other ideals in the tripartite policy of Comrade Horner. Perhaps the hon. Member who opened the Debate was not far wrong in thinking that this order was not quite in the tradition of democratic Socialism, but he will find it perfectly in the tradition of totalitarianism. . . .

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