THE SOCIAL CREDITER

FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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From Week to Week

There are so many reasons why we do not agree with Sir Oswald Mosley that we should perhaps have dealt with some of them if we were not so incensed that he should have been victimised under 18b while the first or second generation continental scum who afflict us draw large salaries and travel in luxury.

But in his speech on November 15 he is so incontestably right that we quote him. "War was not only unnecessary, but a world disaster. The Labour Government has produced a muddle without parallel, and a paradise for every crook and shark, great and small."

Just look at their faces.

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It is easy to lose sight of the fact—it is intended that we should do so—that the real Government—more correctly termed Administration—of these islands and what remains of the British Empire is the Civil Service, and that the whole tone and composition of that body has undergone a complete revolution in the past thirty years. Apart from its ever closer liaison with the Fabian Society and, latterly, P.E.P., the system of appointment by examination, the complete inadequacy of which was, as much as any adventitious cause, responsible for the loss of prestige and consequent loss of authority of the Indian Civil Service, had the curious effect of discouraging the right kind of competitor. It appears to be true that the economic law which Sir Thomas Gresham enunciated, that bad money drives out good, has a much wider application than to currency.

All of this adds to the magnitude of the task which we have allowed ourselves to engender. Nothing less than a new spirit, and the drastic elimination of Civil Servants who cannot accept it, seems adequate to the problem. The only gleam of hope which can be deduced is that the deterioration has been so rapid that possibly regeneration may not be so arduous as it would appear to be.

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The economic policy of this country is so insane that it is impossible to believe that it is not wholly dictated by our enemies. A very much under-rated patriot and most fearless Parliamentarian, Mr. Pemberton Billing, M.P., who had a good deal to do with the smashing of the 1917 aeroplane strangulation which nearly lost us the war, was convinced that no politician achieved Cabinet rank and Office unless he could be politically or socially blackmailed. Once in the net, he could transgress to his heart's content, on one condition —that he did not contest His Master's Voice.

We do not believe that any man of average ability, and we do not rate average ability highly, could spend six months in or near higher political circles in this country without coming to the conclusion, either that Cabinet Ministers are not free agents, or they are half-witted. Our contemporary, *London Tidings,* is evidently of the same opinion; and there are many refreshing signs that the Press is not so completely gagged as our enemies hoped that it would be. We are being treated as a minor province, much disliked, of an economic Empire.

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We think that Mr. James Caunt, the Editor of the *Morecambe and Heysham Visitor,* who was found Not Guilty in the prosecution brought by the Crown (*i.e.,* the Socialist Cabinet) against him for seditious libel in respect of an article castigating the Jews, was correct in his comment that the prosecution was a political prosecution, and its failure would be a blow to the prestige of the Government which brought it. That such an action should have been undertaken is in itself a further confirmation of the curious mentality of our temporary rulers. A correspondent reports a conversation with an expert on psychology to the effect "that the propaganda of the Socialist party is the most effective thing of its kind that the world has ever seen—so good that its use for evil is now striking back at its users, and that there are distinct signs that many of them are insane." He adds, without elaborating the statement, "*dementia praecox* can be intermittent," and mentions certain members of the Cabinet.

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Speaking at a meeting of the Lancashire executive of the National Farmers' Union, the Vice-Chairman, Mr. A. Pickles, said in regard to the despatch of 250,000 tons of animal feeding stuffs to Southern Ireland "I would like to know where these feeding stuffs are to come from. Why haven't we had them? Commenting, the Chairman said that 120 million pounds of maize had been burnt in the Argentine, and that 11 out of 32 carloads composing one train, had been used to fuel the locomotive.

"Personal Dilapidation"

"Habitual novel-reading should really be classed as an act of darkness. For one must face a disquieting fact: few novelists are personally either satisfied or satisfactory. Most of them employ the novel as an instrument of revenge against a form of existence which has not given them the things they most want. From this proceed the spiritless fantasies, the chronicles of interested or sacrificial love, and the ponderous re-dressings of trivial experience with which a vast public is kept amused.

"The novel-industry is a huge conspiracy against reality; but reality takes its revenge. Nothing is so betraying as the writing of a novel. In comparison, the alcove, the witness-box and the hazards of war are kindly tribunals; and what emerges most clearly from all but the best novels is the personal dilapidation of the novelist."

—John Russell in *The Sunday Times.*

PARLIAMENT

House of Commons: November 10, 1947.

Parliament Bill: Second Reading

The Lord President of the Council (Mr. Herbert Morrison): . . . The Bill is a precautionary Measure. It is far better that we should discuss it on its own merits now rather than wait until the Lords had taken some foolish step and passions are inflamed and the issues are confused. The tribulations of the Liberal Government from 1906 to 1911 are an awful warning, and we must at all costs avoid any repetition. We gave due notice in "Let us Face the Future" that we would not tolerate obstruction of the people's will by the House of Lords. This Bill is in fulfilment of that declaration. That is the broad—and as we see it—the sound case for this short and sensible Bill.

Let us now look at its brief provisions before I come to my concluding observations. Clause 1 of the Bill will make it possible in future for a Bill to be passed into law, notwithstanding the Opposition of the House of Lords, if it has been passed by the Commons in two successive Sessions instead of three and provided that one year instead of two has elapsed between the date of its first Second reading in the Commons and the date on which it is passed by the Commons for the second time. The proviso in Clause 1 will have the effect that, once the Bill has become law, a Bill which has been twice passed in the Commons and been rejected by the Lords can be presented for the Royal Assent after its second rejection by the Lords even though it was passed for a second time in a Session previous to that in which this Bill which I am now moving was passed. This proviso is needed —and it is reasonable—in order to meet the situation which will arise if the Bill is rejected by the Lords and has to be passed into law under the existing provisions of the Parliament Act, 1911.

In that event this Bill will not become law until two Sessions after this. Suppose that another Bill, which we may call Bill A, is rejected by the House of Lords this Session and is to be passed into law under the Parliament Act procedure. It will be passed again by the Commons next Session and again in the Session after that. Suppose that, in the third of those Sessions, it is not passed until after the Bill has become law. Bill A might—it is a nice point—be left high and dry. It would have passed the Commons in three Sessions, whereas the amended Parliament Act would require it to be presented for the Royal Assent after two Sessions. It would have missed the bus, even though it would have gone through more House of Commons procedure than the new Parliament Bill requires. The proviso will enable Bill A, after being passed by the Commons and rejected by the Lords in this current Session and again in the next Session, to be presented for the Royal Assent in the following Session immediately after the Royal Assent had been given to the Parliament Bill. . . .

Clause 2 (2) of the Bill is required because Section 4 (1) of the Parliament Act, 1911, sets out in terms the words of enactment to be used in a Bill presented for the Royal Assent under the Parliament Act, 1911. Those words of enactment refer to "The Parliament Act, 1911," It is necessary to provide that the reference should in future be to "the Parliament Acts, 1911 and 1947." If the Bill is itself rejected by the House of Lords, it will have to be enacted under the existing provisions of the Parliament Act, 1911. That is to say, it will have to be passed by the House of Commons in three successive Sessions, with not less than two years between its first Second Reading here and its third passing in this House. This would mean that it would not become law earlier than two years and one month from the date of its first Second Reading in the House of Commons. The additional month is due to the requirement in Section 2 (1) of the Parliament Act, 1911, that the Bill should be sent up to the Lords at least one month before the end of the Session, which in itself is not unreasonable. This means that if the Commons gives the Bill a Second Reading to-morrow and the Lords resist the passage of the Bill, it cannot finally be passed into law until some time in December, 1949. If we are forced to use the Parliament Act procedure in this way, some rearrangement of the normal Sessions may be required in order to secure the statutory three Sessions before the Bill can receive the Royal Assent.

. . . If the constitutional safeguards in the Parliament Act are to be argued on the ground that they prevent the House of Commons doing what it thinks is right in the public interest for the second or third time, and that thereafter it is to be at the mercy of another place, let the Opposition say so. Then we shall know where we are.

. . . They [the Opposition] have had plenty of time; they have had great Conservative majorities and they have been predominant in Coalitions. Why did they not reform the House of Lords? The truth is that they did not know what to do. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Do you?"] Well, this is a free country. I am not bursting to do anything about it. What I am bursting to do is to limit the power for mischief of this institution, with which we have to live.

The Government have an open mind about all these matters. [HON. MEMBERS: "Oh."] Certainly. We would fairly consider any proposal to reform their Lordships' House. Let hon. Members get round a table, perhaps with the Liberal Nationals and possibly with the Leader of the Liberal Party, and see whether they can agree upon reforms. Then let them send a suitable memorandum to the Government and we will see that it is properly considered by Ministers. That is up to hon. Members. . . .

Mr. Quintin Hogg (Oxford)[*] I am coming to that point. Let me make it plain, if I have not already done so, that I do not believe that the hereditary principle as such has any place in the modern state. . . .

Mr. Emrys Hughes (South Ayrshire): . . . I want to put the point of view of one who is absolutely opposed to the Second Chamber, thinks this Bill is too timorous and does not go far enough, and who believes in the liquidation of the House of Lords and hereditary institutions altogether. . . .

Mr. Pickthorn (Cambridge University): . . . The British Constitution can really be boiled down, I think, roughly speaking, to three points. First of all, the omnicompetence of statute—that anything the King in Parliament declares to be law is law, and breaches of it will be punished. That is a part of the British Constitution, and perhaps the most important part in modern times. Secondly, in arriving at the decision how to exercise that omnicompetence, Parliament gives the fullest freedom and fairness to the Opposition. The existence of His Majesty's Opposition may, I think, be held

[*] A number of other Conservative M.P.'s specifically repudiated the hereditary principle.

to be another of the great features, and perhaps the second most important. Thirdly—and it will be seen that the third is necessarily involved in the second; the second condition is not fulfilled unless the third is kept—there should not be conscious changes in the Constitution in the rules for the participants, except with the fullest discussion and with the maximum obtainable consent. . . .

. . . Now the Opposition—which I think the House will agree with me is one of the two or three necessary parts of the British Constitution—can clearly not be being treated fairly unless it knows and knows all the time what the rules are; and unless it knows when the rules are going to be changed, how they are going to be changed, and at what rate they are going to be changed.

Mr. Norman Smith (Nottingham, South): Ah, yes!

Mr. Pickthorn: I say that this method of changing what is a fundamental rule—I do not say the most important rule in the world, whether the delay should be two years or one year—is wrong. I will return to that point later. All I say is it is a fundamental constitutional rule; it is a rule about the whole question of how the game is to be played. We had the rather surprising question from one of the few lawyers who spoke today, the hon. Member for East Islington (Mr. E. Fletcher), who asked when was the right time to introduce this Bill. The purpose of this Bill is that the law should be, as from the beginning of this present Session, different from what it has hitherto been, and that in a matter of constitutional importance. I should have thought the obvious answer for any lawyer would be that the Bill ought to have been introduced in time to become an Act before that date. It is a matter of very considerable constitutional importance that this Bill should be introduced at this time, and with this degree of retrospection I believe that to be a matter of first-rate importance. . . .

. . . The House is agreed, with a few exceptions, on the opinion that there ought to be two-Chamber Government. Is it not plain that the Second Chamber might have behaved differently—I do not know in what respects, and it would not be for me to guess publicly, but the Second Chamber might have behaved differently in the first Session or in the Second Session, if it had known that in the course of the Third Session, a Bill was to be passed altering the constitution as from the beginning of that Session? The Government therefore take the advantage of constitution A, if I may adopt the Lord President's terminology, and of constitution B simultaneously. I say that, in the playing of any other game, that would be described in language which Mr. Speaker would not like me to use here.

Sir D. Maxwell Fyfe: Gamesmanship.

Mr. Pickthorn: It would be described in highly offensive language, and that that is being done to-day which is a matter of very considerable constitutional importance. Indeed, I will make this prophecy. It is a matter of great political importance, too, to any Government, because there are two things you cannot do for long and get away with them—one is to base your policy on palpable nonsense, and the other is to do things which Mr. Speaker would not like me to mention plainly. If you step on that rake, it always comes up and hits you on the back of the head, and it will hit the Government on the back of the head.

It seems to me that that is important and that this also is of considerable constitutional importance. Note, if the Second Chamber system has that degree of validity and necessity which I have indicated, what we are now doing. We are, to many, if not to all, intents and purposes, abolishing the two-Chamber system, except for the last few months of any Parliament. There cannot be claimed to be any sort of mandate for that. At the very least it makes it necessary, and in my judgment makes it an honourable obligation, on the Treasury Bench now to face the question of the length of Parliament. . . .

Another expression used by the Lord President of the Council—I think I have got it right—was "The Government's term of office." That is the fundamental constitutional fallacy which hon. Members opposite are in. This is not the United States of America. In the United States of America the Executive is elected for a term of office of four years, and has immense powers for these four years corresponding, roughly speaking, to the powers which the Crown had in this country in the 17th century, and which the Americans, always a little old-fashioned, picked up in the 18th century. That is the power of the Executive in the United States. But then the Executive in the United States cannot count on always having a majority of Congress. That the Executive should have these powers, a term of office of between four and five years, and at the same time the powers which anyone with a majority in this House of Commons has, is to give to the Treasury Bench greater authority than any human authority ever had before in any state. I really and honestly believe that to be true. But the only legal constitutional check—no doubt there are checks in practice; there are checks in the amount of time and ability that right hon. Gentlemen dispose of, there are checks in their relation with trade unions, and so forth—the legal check was this: that if, after two or three years of office, it appears to the House or Lords, who have a great interest in not judging rashly in the matter, that a Bill passed by this House is not one which public opinion really goes with, that can be held up, not for long, at the worst only for as long as it takes to win an election. The Treasury Bench can always get its way in that manner. What we are being asked now is to make a Treasury Bench much stronger than anything which has ever been asked by any previous Government. It is fantastically foolish to say that is not a considerable constitutional question.

. . . The last few words I have to say are on the point of the retrospective nature of this Bill. I do not want to overcall this argument. I clearly see that it can be overcalled. But I hope I can put it fairly. My objection to this Bill is that, first of all, it is making a conscious and considerable change in the Constitution without the public being in the least interested and without the fullest consultation. The Minister of Food dealt with any chance of the public being interested by rationing potatoes this morning. That is my first objection to this Bill. It is making a considerable change in the Constitution without making sure of full public discussion, without trying the ground in every direction for the possibility of agreement.

The second objection is this: The retrospective nature of the way in which this is being done. The retroactivity, if that be the word, is so far only within the Session. The Bill purports to alter the constitutional arrangements, not from some day after the Bill is passed, but from the beginning of this Session. I say that is logically, in the logic of Constitution-making and management, a terriffic thing to do. This is the only country in the world where the Constitution largely is, as I began by saying, the statutory omnicompetence

(*continued on page 6*).

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The National Insurance Racket

The Editor, The Social Crediter.

Sir,

It is evident from the letters of medical men which are being published in the "responsible" newspapers that the Government is indulging the Medical Profession with a species of Referendum about this measure in order to ascertain that Profession's wishes. The Medical Profession, all told, forms a small minority of our population. If that minority can be accorded a Referendum, on what good ground or principle is a Referendum denied to that vast majority which will have to bear the concealed cost of this scheme, when it blossoms in the Statute Book in the course of next year? There is *no* good ground for the denial of a Referendum to that vast majority which is clearly entitled to express its assent or dissent after being informed in calculable and intelligible terms the cost to the individual, which all the individuals are letting themselves in for—in the dark in which they have so far been carefully kept. The idea of their being inflicted with *more* taxation, in these days of already "intolerable" taxation, without informed consent is simply monstrous and is indicative of the impudent notion about its true Consititutional function which the House of Commons has got into its swollen head. Just fancy, an annual expenditure of over £600,000,000 for the first year to be put on the backs of the Rate and Taxpayers without their permission obtained *ad hoc* !

Both "the Great Parties"—and especially the one now in power—delude themselves that a General Election of either of them gives it a 'mandate' for passing all the items of the mixed-pickle programme offered by each to the electorate at a General Election. It is obvious as daylight that a Party Programme at a General Election obtains nothing of the sort. That Programme is composed of items A.B.C. *etc.* Some may vote for A, others for B or C, but there is no definite and direct sanction by the voters of any one of those political ingredients. The House of Commons of these days is trading under its former reputation of being the guardian of the Rights and Liberties of Englishmen. It has long since ceased to be so and has become, virtually a hydra-headed tyrant, engaged, with "the policy making section of the bureaucracy", in taking advantage of the means, in our unwritten Constitution, of fooling the electorate and *of imposing taxation without consent.* That was the sheet-anchor formally of the English Constitution, the violation of which was one, at least, of the causes bringing about the loss of the American Colonies.

It is as plain as a pike-staff now that modern House of Commons developments need to be assailed vigorously and the principle established of a Referendum to the Electorate on the occasion of each measure passed by that assembly involving financial cost to His Majesty's lieges. Those subjects will then know where they are and so will the House of Commons and its bureaucratic inspirers behind the scenes.

Let me repeat in conclusion the question—as the Medical Profession is being given a Referendum on this Insurance Measure, on what ground is one denied to the vast majority, outnumbering by millions the whole of that profession, comprising the electorate of the country, in order to find out whether or not they want the Insurance Scheme, after being told in calculable individual terms what it is going to cost?

Under present practices the English Constitution is simply being made a fool of by the House of Commons. The ill or ulcer to be removed is not the House of Lords, but the House of Commons. Does that House lack the intelligence to know the growing contempt in which it is held; or is it wishful, knowing it, in the anxiety caused by that inner knowledge, to divert the Electors' attention on to the House of Lords? More fool the Electorate if it allows the Commons to succeed.

Yours truly,

W. B. LAURENCE.

Barnes, S.W. 13. November 22, 1947.

The Threat to Our Homes

The wave of incredulity which swept the more inert elements confronted with accounts of injustices committed under the protection of those behind the War Agricultural Executive Committees is now giving way to rather sullen silence. This is not a characteristic in keeping with British tradition; but Captain Arthur Rogers is probably right in saying that the British public do not realise that since the outbreak of war, revolutionary changes have brought "ruin and untold misery to great numbers of our fellow-subjects engaged in agriculture and kindred pursuits or that these changes, if they are not corrected, must jeopardise the security of us all." In *New English Justice,* a booklet obtainable, price 1/6d., from Margaret Douglas, 180, Brompton Road, S.W.3., he says further that "The truth is that farmers are now suffering from legalised injustice on a great scale. This assertion calls for an examination of the facts by all right-thinking persons so that they may decide for themselves whether existing conditions are right or wrong—tolerable or intolerable. To consent to injustice to others is to invite injustice to oneself." The booklet, with cases summarized by Margaret Douglas, is well designed to assist in securing Captain Rogers's objective.

From the R. A. Knox Translation

Ask, and the gift will come; seek and you shall find; knock and the door shall be opened to you. *Matt.* 7. 7.

If you will only believe, every gift you ask for in your prayer will be granted. *Matt.* 21. 22.

Why then, if you, evil as you are, know well enough how to give your children what is good for them, is not your Father much more ready to give, from heaven, his gracious Spirit to those who ask him? *Luke* 11. 13.

Every request you make to me in my own name, I myself will grant it to you. *John* 14. 14.

As long as you live on in me, and my words live on in you, you will be able to make what request you will, and have it granted. *John* 15. 7.

"Sous le Signe de l'Abondance"

M. Louis Even's *Sous le Signe de l'Abondance* may be characterised as a well-aimed book: it is loosed at a mark as definite and clear as the dart board to the dart-thrower, and as carefully studied; and his marksmanship is excellent.

"Social Credit," he says in his foreword, "is a complete orientation of civilisation, and concerns social affairs and politics no less if not more than economics." But he limits the scope of his book to the economic and financial aspects, presented broadly and without many technical terms for the attention of the ordinary man.

The book is in three parts. In the first he examines the economic and financial system in the light of a number of ideas which while they are implicitly accepted by the individual are yet entirely ignored in the economic organisation, and in these terms shows the breakdown of the present system. The rectification lies with Social Credit, and he expounds the gist of this without going far into technique or methods of application, as he thinks it more important to gain acceptance for these fundamental propositions, seemingly too simple as well as too bold to minds accustomed to lose sight of ends in considering a complexity of means.

The second part of his book describes a method established in Alberta for bringing the money instrument gradually back to its correct function; in the third part are reprinted various speeches and articles, some by other authors, which elaborate facets of his subject.

> A man is a person. Not only an animal.
>
> All people live in society. The more perfect they are, the more perfect is that life in society. The society of angels is more perfect than the society of man. As to the three Divine Persons, they live in a society infinitely close without being in any way confounded.
>
> The divine society has elsewhere been suggested to Man as a model: 'Father, let them be one as we are one.'
>
> So men, too, being people, live in society. Association with others corresponds to a need in the nature of Man.

So run the opening paragraphs of M. Even's book. From this ground he develops some general principles in discussing the true meaning of the common good, ends and means, and the priority of objectives, stressing how in practice the realistic meaning is not only accepted, but taken for granted. Next he works out the application of these principles to economics, in paragraphs on the objectives of economics, the confusion caused by the use of economic means to impose moral ends, and the order necessary, in both its senses of priority and appropriateness, to integrate means and ends to policies chosen by a correctly informed people.

From here he passes to the classical case for social credit, considering in turn the consumer, the goods, poverty in plenty, increasing productivity, the function of money, banks and their fabulous gift of what he gracefully terms *la plume créatrice*, and finally the main sweep of the social credit solution with an account of the National Dividend and the Just Price (the A+B theorem is not directly expounded); but always he binds back his discussion of economic facts to the principles of subordinating and binding means to ends, of considering first the ends to be served, that is, those which when put together make up the required policy.

A chapter on signs and things, for instance, prefaces and enlightens his treatment of the money problem; and the clarity with which he relates the dividend both to the physical fact of an abundance of material goods and to the moral rights of a cultural inheritance of freedom, make some of the most outstanding passages in the book. It is this quality of binding back to a few simple clearly-stated conceptions which gives the book its special power, a power which will fascinate social crediters themselves although intended primarily for those who are not yet social crediters.

The result is in the best sense dogmatic: it is also a lucid text-book with an enchanting simplicity which could be joined with truth in no language so well as in French.

The third part of M. Even's book, which may conveniently be mentioned with the first, consists of articles expanding the ideas put forward in the first part, and is similar in substance though not so tightly knit. His estimate of the size of the National Dividend possible in Canada is of particular interest. We may perhaps comment on the ambiguity in the reference to *The Social Crediter* on page 265, when by the context it seems that *The Canadian Social Crediter* is meant.

M. Even follows his general exposition of social credit in Part 1 of his book with a particular account (in Part II) of the institution, operation and function of Treasury Branches in Alberta. He would like to see them throughout Quebec, and evidently hopes much from this short-circuiting of the cycle of real credit by providing opportunities for appreciating the purchasing power in the hands of the consumer (by a non-money mechanism) in accordance with expanding production in the province. For the significant fact is that productivity has expanded since the Treasury Houses were instituted, and consumers are getting some benefit, even though the pre-war bonus of five *per cent.* on Albertan goods taken had to be replaced during the war by a two *per cent.* bonus on all goods, wherever made. While the consumer gets the bonus, the middleman and producer benefit by the increased turnover and greater business activity caused by people being enabled to take their goods. Yet the bonus itself is only a means to the further development of home industries by the inducement of an assured and increasing home market. Increasing turnover means increasing returns to the citizen, and, without any rise in taxes, more in the bag for Provincial taxes. The upkeep of Treasury Branches costs the Provincial Treasury money, but it brings much more into the Treasury.

Public debt in Alberta was $158 million in 1935 when the Social Credit Government came to power; in 1945 it was $113 million, 45 million less; provincial taxes had not been raised, not a penny had been borrowed from the banks, and at the same time the Government was giving the people more and better services. This was due to the growth of industry, largely because the Treasury Branches allowed the stimulus of peoples' wants and needs to tap the enterprise of producers.

There has been an amusing secondary effect of the mere existence of a network of Treasury Branches, which is scarcely less important, at least monetarily speaking, than the immediate stimulation of trade. M. Even relates the substance of a talk with Mr. Solon Low, for eight years Provincial Treasurer of Alberta, and Mr. L. D. Byrne, Technical Advisor to the Alberta Government on matters of

money and credit. Among other points Mr. Low remarked that without the Treasury Branches he would never have been able to reduce the interest on the public debt in Alberta. The financiers protested pitifully in the press against the reduction in the rate of interest, but nevertheless, with a wary eye on the potentialities of the Treasury Branches, which are quite capable of bye-passing the functions of the Banks if necessary, they gave way. Thus at one stroke the province saved four million dollars a year, a substantial sum to set against the $250,000 dollars that the Treasury Branches cost to run.

In June, 1945, the Albertan debt was entirely reconsolidated at this figure of $113 millions, and at the rate of interest of $3.39 *per cent.*, the lowest rate paid by any of the provinces. Not only were the bonds accepted at this low rate, but there was such a scramble to obtain them that the Federal Government passed a measure expressly to tax profits made on the buying of Alberta bonds before the reconsolidation and their sale after it.

"The system of Treasury Branches," concludes M. Even, "aims at putting the real credit of the province at the service of the citizens of the province. It is achieving this gradually, whether by injecting new credit corresponding with new production, or by obliging the present holders of credit to serve better the interests of the people."

It will be realised that M. Even approaches Social Credit through the problem of the distribution of plenty. If we on this continent cannot read his book without a nostalgic sigh escaping us, that is not M. Even's fault: it is Mr. Strachey's (among others), who has engendered our insanity. For there is no denying that the approach to social credit though 'poverty in plenty' has been gravely prejudiced by Mr. Strachey's antics. He has fought the conviction of plenty tooth and nail, and he is gaining ground. He has produced some remarkable statistics proving that we are all better fed than before the war and so flaunted the housewives that a prominent cartoonist has mobilised her to fill the post of Official Bogy vacated by Colonel Blimp, deceased. (It is not a dishonourable post: Colonel Blimp was generally proved right). Moreover, there has now grown up a generation of young men and women who neither remember nor believe in the days of plenty. They are the prey of Mr. Strachey's figures, and hold with great earnestness that the only alternative to a centralised, detailed direction of themselves and everyone else, is chaos. It is uncanny, in this land of the free, to see them fumbling in incoherent and puzzled reproach with the suggestion that a riotous abundance (that it was abused is a different proposition) *could* have existed *without the Government organising it.* While for those who do remember it, the ghastly abuse of plenty in the years between the wars has been tied indisseverably in people's minds to the *fact* of plenty and to them wholly discounts it. Thus, an alternative to the 'poverty in plenty' approach (for which you must first set about convincing people of plenty) is the demonstration that an inalienable National Dividend is the only way of inducing plentiful production. The National Dividend is the *only* inducement varying with production which does not penalise production in taxes, which is a bulwark against capitalist exploitation as well as socialist tyranny, and encourages a man to get on in the maximum freedom with the job he likes and can do best—and so to produce more. An inalienable Dividend is even more necessary in a regime of scarcity than in one of plenty. Inalienable? In this country, now, the mere word raises problems of the most serious nature.

We hope that Canadians will never be faced with physical scarcity, nor yet with an irresponsible party attack on their constitution to undermine its very nature for the bolstering up of mob-rule and the rule of scarcity. But the enemy has a habit of perfecting his methods in one part of the world, and then applying them elsewhere. It is for this reason that we venture to commend them to M. Even's capable pen as a companion target to that marked by the present excellent volume, confident that M. Even, if any one, can forestall similar developments in his country by forearming his people against them.

E. S. D.

PARLIAMENT—*continued from page* 3.

of Parliament. That gives us here an immense responsibility. In every other country, when you want to make constitutional changes, you have to have longer notice, larger majorities, discussion with your constituents, all sorts of safeguards of that sort. In this country, there is nothing of that sort at all. In a country where there is legislative omnicompetence and no legal or constitutional line drawn between any ordinary statute and a statute making constitutional changes, in a country such as that at a moment—a political and economic moment such as this—to purport to pass a Bill to change the Constitution from a date before that on which the Bill becomes law—that seems to me to be an immense step. . . . this is a matter of principle, looked at from the point of view which I have tried to indicate, principle which, I think, has very great legal, constitutional, logical consequences, possibly implicit in it. I say it is a great outrage that such a thing should be done at this time and in this way. . . .

House of Commons: November 11, 1947.

Parliament Bill: Second Reading

Mr. Churchill: The right hon. Gentleman spoke about Parliament, about the rights of Parliament, which I shall certainly not fail to defend. But it is not Parliament that should rule; it is the people who should rule through Parliament . . . We accept in the fullest sense of the word the settled and persistent will of the people. All this idea of a group of super-men and super-planners, such as we see before us, "playing the angel," as the French call it, and making the masses of the people do what they think is good for them, without any check or correction, is a violation of democracy. Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time; but there is the broad feeling in our country that the people should rule, continuously rule, and that public opinion, expressed by all constitutional means, should shape, guide, and control the actions of Ministers who are their servants and not their masters.

I remember, many years ago, old John Morley talking to me about *boylee*, a Greek word, born in the classical cradle of democracy, meaning the wish, the will, and the determination, with special reference to the gods, or to destiny, or, as it was adapted, to the desire of the mass, the

inward desire of the mass of the people. This implies that there should be frequent recurrence, direct or indirect, to the popular will, and that the wish—the *boylee*—should prevail. That is what the party opposite is afraid of, and that is what this Act is devised to prevent. [HON. MEMBERS: "Rubbish."] That is the first broad submission which I make to the House upon this important Measure. . . .

However, it is argued that the present Second Chamber is a biased and unrepresentative body; that it does not act evenly between the two sides or parties in the State. Let me just look into that dispassionately. There is, of course, a difference beween the two sides in our political life. Temperament, conditions, upbringing, fortunes, interests, environment decide for every individual in a free country which side he will take. One side claims to be the party of progress, as if progress was bound to be right, no matter in what direction. The other side emphasises stability, which is also very important in this changing world. But no one would rest content with that. This is an unreal and far too narrow a dichotomy. I heard that word 40 years ago as a debating rejoiner from Mr. Asquith. I went home and looked it up in the dictionary, and I do not think that it has been used in this House until now. Both progress and stability are needed to make a happy country. But the right hon. Gentleman complains that the present Second Chamber has, from its composition, an undue bias in favour of stability.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if you have a motor car—and I believe some are still allowed—you have to have a break. There ought to be a brake. A brake, in its essence, is one-sided; it prevents an accident through going too fast. It was not intended to prevent accidents through going too slow. For that you must look elsewhere, to another part of the vehicle; you must look to the engine and, of course, to the petrol supply. For that there is the renewed impulse. To prevent your going too slow you must look to the renewed impulse of the people's will; but it is by the force of the engine, occasionally regulated by the brake, that the steady progress of the nation and of society is maintained, and tens of millions of humble people are given steady conditions in which they can live their lives and make all their plans for their homes, their families and for bringing up their children, and have a chance of bettering themselves, and, at the same time, forwarding the cause of the whole community . . .

. . . If the Socialist Government do not like the character of this particular brake, certainly we are not defending it. . . . I must say that the Government themselves seem to be a little more reconciled to it than they used to be judging by the number of Socialist hereditary nobles who are being created. If they do not like the character of the brake, why do they not propose the reform of the Second Chamber? We are quite ready to confer with them and to help them in such a task. As the Socialist Government now stand, they maintain the hereditary principle. The hereditary Chamber is to have one year's suspensory veto but not two. One year's suspensory veto by a hereditary assembly is the true blue of Socialist democracy; two years is class tyranny.

One is astonished that the human mind can be constrained into such silly postures. But then the explanation is furnished and backed by ever-accumulating evidence that this Bill does not arise out of any consideration of general principles, or of the needs of the State, or of the practical requirements of the day, but only out of a deal between Cabinet Ministers quarrelling about the nationalisation of steel. There is no doubt, however, that what His Majesty's Government seek and intend is virtually what is called single-Chamber Government. On this issue there are wide and world-famous arguments. No free country enjoying democratic institutions that I know of has adopted single-Chamber Government. . . .

All these constitutions have the same object in view, namely, that the persistent resolve of the people shall prevail without throwing the community into convulsion and disorder by rash or violent, irreparable action and to restrain and prevent a group or sect or faction assuming dictatorial power. Single-Chamber Government, as I have said, is especially dangerous in a country which has no written Constitution and where parliaments are elected for as long as five years. When there is an ancient community built up across the generations, where freedom broadens slowly down from precedent to precedent, it is not right that all should be liable to be swept away by the desperate measures of a small set of discredited men.

"A thousand years scarce serve to form a State. An hour may lay it in dust."

This is the argument against Second-Chamber Government, which is evidently so espoused on that side of the House. In this field the outlook of His Majesty's Ministers is marked by the same meanness of thought and spirit which characterise so much of their action and which destroys their power to help or unite and save our suffering country. They wish to keep the present Second Chamber on the hereditary basis so that they can abuse it, insult it and attack it and yet to cripple its powers, although those powers stand on 36 years of modern Parliamentary title so that, in effect, it is both vulnerable and powerless. That is their tactical method. By this artful, and insincere scheme they hope to substitute for the will of the people the decisions of the Government. This sinister intrigue will be exposed by us without fear to the electorate resting upon a universal suffrage.

The Government say—let us look closer into the point —"We have the right to pass into law everything we mentioned or even hinted at in our election pamphlet, 'Let us Face the Future.'" It is arguable whether a Government, which is losing daily the real support of the nation, has the right to claim that such a bill must be paid even within the limits of what they call their mandate. At any rate no one should be under any delusions on this matter. There is no constitution or legal bar upon the right of a Government possessing a majority in the House of Commons to propose any legislation they think fit whether it has figured in their pre-election promises or programmes or not. The people have no guarantee, except the suspensory power of the House of Lords or Second Chamber, nor can they be given any other guarantee that Measures never thought of at the Election and to which they object will not be imposed upon them.

Look around at what is happening every day. The idea of a mandate is only a convention. A band of men who have got hold of the machine and have a Parliamentary majority undoubtedly have the power to propose anything they choose without the slightest regard to whether the people like it or not, or the slightest reference to whether or not it was included in their Election literature. I will not expatiate upon the kind of laws they could pass if all is to be settled by a party majority in the House of Commons, under the

discipline of the Whips and the caucus. But anyone can see for himself, and it is now frankly admitted on the opposite side of the House, that what is aimed at now is single-Chamber Government at the dictation of Ministers, without regard to the wishes of the people and without giving them any chance to express their opinion. There is, in fact, only one thing that they cannot do under the Parliament Act, 1911, and that is to prolong the life of Parliament beyond the five years' span to which we reduced it in those old days. I must say I am very glad we thought of it.

As a free-born Englishman, what I hate is the sense of being at anybody's mercy or in anybody's power, be he Hitler or Attlee. We are approaching very near to dictatorship in this country, dictatorship that is to say—I will be quite candid with the House—without either its criminality or its efficiency.

Mr. Henry Strauss (Combined English Universities): . . . The topics with which I wish to deal are these—ought we to have a Second Chamber; if so, what sort of Second Chamber do we want, and are powers of delay essential; and if powers of delay are essential to it, can those powers of delay be less than two years? . . . The question of whether we should have a Second Chamber I am not going to argue at any length, because of the substantial unanimity that has appeared in the course of the Debate. . . .

On the next very important point of what sort of Second Chamber we want, many hon. Members have quoted from various documents, Resolutions of the House, the Bryce Report, and so on, to the effect that they did not want it to be in any sense a rival of this House. With that proposition I completely agree. But, if one maintains strongly that it ought not to be a rival to this House, one ought to be a little careful of the strength with which one condemns the hereditary principle, until one has thought of a better principle to put in its place. Although I am in complete agreement with the Resolution of the House or Lords that

"the possession of a peerage should no longer in itself give the right to sit and vote in the House or Lords,"

I would not go so far as some in condemning the hereditary principle altogether as part of the qualification for the other Chamber, until we have thought of something more satisfactory for the sort of Chamber we have in mind. . . . Yesterday, the Lord President of the Council, I think, and other hon. Members quoted Bagehot, and, of course, he is is a great authority. Perhaps the House will bear with me if I quote a passage or two from another great authority, the late Professor Dicey in his "Law of the Constitution." An interesting thing in what he says about the position of the House of Lords is his demonstration of its close concern with another thing which we value in our Constitution, namely the responsibility of the Executive to the electorate. In case it is of any interest I am quoting from the eighth edition; I have no doubt there are later editions. Professor Dicey says:

"The rule that the powers of the Crown must be exercised through Ministers who are members of one or other House of Parliament and who 'command the confidence of the House of Commons,' really means, that the elected portion of the Legislature in effect, though by an indirect process, appoints the Executive Government; and, further, that the Crown, or the Ministry, must ultimately carry out, or at any rate not contravene, the wishes of the House of Commons. But as the process of representation is nothing else than a mode by which the will of the representative body or House of Commons is made to coincide with the will of the nation, it follows that a rule which gives the appointment and control of the Government mainly to the House of Commons is at bottom a rule which gives the election and ultimate control of the Executive to the nation. The same thing holds good of the understanding, or habit, in accordance with which the House of Lords are expected in every serious political controversy to give way at some point or other to the will of the House of Commons as expressing the deliberate resolve of the nation."

Then, in a passage a little lower down, he says:

"The point at which the Lords must yield or the Crown intervene is properly determined by anything which conclusively shows that the House of Commons represents on the matter in dispute the deliberate decision of the nation."

I submit that that is sound constitutional doctrine and gives an indication of the Second Chamber which we want, a Chamber that shall not rival the House of Commons in any way, as any form of direct or indirect election would make a second Chamber rival the House of Commons, and whose sole object is the ultimate protection of the electors against the Executive Government. I will quote one other passage in that work:

"The general rule that the House of Lords must in matters of legislation ultimately give way to the House of Commons is one of the best-established maxims of modern constitutional ethics."

I accept that absolutely, and believe it to be the right doctrine. If that is the right doctrine, and we are determined both to have a Second Chamber and that that Second Chamber shall not rival this House, what is the essential power which we must give it? I believe hon. Members in all quarters of the House, if they have followed my argument so far, will say that the essential legal power which we must give to that Second Chamber is a power of delay. If it is to be a power of delay it must be a power of real delay . . .

Mr. Gallacher (Fife West): . . . I cannot possibly support a proposition to give the House of Lords powers of any kind. Since my early days, I have always campaigned for the abolition of the House of Lords, and I take my stand on that principle. I stand for one democratic chamber, without any hereditary Second Chamber . . . I suggest that the Government should, at the earliest date, take their courage in both hands, and carry out what leaders of the Labour movement have always stood for in the years gone by—the abolition of the Second Chamber. This Chamber is quite capable of doing the job that requires to be done.

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