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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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Provincial Elections in Alberta on August 17

The tenth legislature of Alberta has been dissolved by the Premier, the Hon. Ernest Manning, and on August 17 Albertans will go to the polls to elect a new government.

The tenth legislature, the third consecutive government in which Social Crediters have predominated, has held five sessions since its election in August, 1944. At dissolution it was composed of 49 supporters of Social Credit, three Independents, two Commonwealth Co-operative Federation (C.C.F.-Socialists), one veteran and one Independent Social Creditor; one seat was vacant owing to the death of the Hon. W. A. Fallow, Minister of Public Works. Of the 60 members, one was returned from each of 47 provincial ridings, five each from Calgary and Edmonton, and there were three service representatives. In the next government there will be no service representatives.

The C.C.F. announces that it will contest nearly every riding in the province. The Independents (the party formed in 1940 out of a coalition of Liberals and Conservatives to defeat Social Credit) will put up candidates in 23 out of the 49 ridings. By mid-July a total of 117 candidates had been nominated by all parties. Mr. Manning's party had nominated 45 candidates and the C.C.F. had also made 45 nominations. Liberals had nominated 20 candidates officially, and there were two candidates each for Independents, Labour-Progressives (Communists) and the Labour Party.

The reason given for the dissolution is that the government, which had to go to the people by September 1949, considers the present time to be more opportune.

In 1944 Social Credit gained a sweeping victory at the polls in Alberta, which reaffirmed for the third time the Albertans' support of their Social Credit legislature. The Hon. E. C. Manning, the Premier, was re-elected outright for Edmonton with more than double the quota number of votes (proportional representation is used). The second of the five members for the constituency was not elected until the twelfth count. The whole Cabinet was re-elected. The massed opposition to Social Credit failed to win a single seat on the first returns.

U.S. Financiers Buy Canadian Bonds

It was announced in Canada recently that the Canadian Government has marketed \$150,000,000 issue of long-term, 3 per cent. bonds privately in the United States.

The Finance Minister said that the proceeds would be used "mainly to repay the drawings of \$140,000,000 so far made by the Government on the (\$300,000,000) credit arranged last fall with the Export-Import Bank at Washington." He added that the remainder would serve to increase Canada's exchange reserves.

The proceeds of the loan are payable in United States dollars, of which Canada is in urgent need.

The Finance Minister, Mr. Abbott, also said, "The bonds, which have a term of fifteen years, have been sold at par. They will be dated August 1, 1948, and will mature on August 1, 1963. The bonds were sold to the Prudential Insurance Company of America, the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States, and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. The negotiations were handled through Morgan Stanley and Company, New York City."

He explained that the earlier arrangement for a short-term credit with the Import-Export Bank was a departure from the Canadian government's normal practice. The new bond issue is a return to it, and he added, "The purchase on such favourable terms of this substantial issue of Canadian bonds by these three large insurance companies in the United States is a tribute to the high credit standing of Canada in the United States market."

Medical Service: 'Secrecy'

The CATHOLIC HERALD of August 6 published the following letter from SIR ERNEST GRAHAM-LITTLE, M.D., M.P.:—

Sir,—The leaflet lately posted to every householder by the Ministry of Health, describing the new National Health Service gives the definite promise that "your dealings with your doctor will remain as they are now, *personal and confidential*." (The italics are in the official text). What is one to think of a Minister who gives this promise, while issuing Regulations (Statutory Instruments 506 and 507, 1948) which require the practitioner in the new Health Service to submit his medical records of his "*public*" patients (as distinct from his private patients) for inspection, and even for temporary possession, to two bodies, the local Executive Council, and a new creation also local in character, the "Medical Service Committee"? Both these bodies contain a large proportion, in one case a majority, of lay members; both function in the same area as the doctors and patients concerned, so that the disclosure of the fullest and most intimate details of a public patient's medical history and condition will be made to persons in the patient's own neighbourhood, possibly even the residents in the next flat or house, and such intimate disclosures might well be particularly embarrassing to the patient (whether man or woman) and most harmful to their private or business interests.

The doctor's most sacred duty to his patient, that of professional secrecy, is swept away, and for the patient the injury resulting may be incalculable.

I believe when our people come to understand this position, and realise how cynically the Minister has broken faith with them, they will demand the withdrawal of these injurious and impudent regulations. Would-be dictators would do well to give heed to Chesterton's warning:

"But we are the people of England; and
We have not spoken yet.
Smile at us, pay us, pass us. But
Do not quite forget."

Canadian Provincial Elections

In the recent provincial elections in Ontario the Conservatives were returned with a reduced majority.

None of the fourteen Social Credit candidates put up by the Union of Electors were elected; but between them they polled nearly 10,000 votes (one half per cent. of the total vote), which is an increase on the Social Credit vote in the last provincial elections.

The Labour-Progressive (Communists) retained their two Toronto seats; C.C.F. (Socialists) gained 11 seats in Toronto and 22 throughout the province. The Labour-Progressive Party openly supported the C.C.F. in the elections. The alliance is an old one: even in 1943 Harold Winch, the C.C.F. leader in British Columbia, said at the 10th annual Convention:

"We must make it quite clear that we are not a reform party and intend to be a militant and revolutionary government."

Later in that year Mr. Winch said that when the C.C.F. came to power, "We will institute Socialism immediately and use police and military forces to force those opposed to obey the law. Those who defied the government's will would be treated as criminals. If capitalism says 'No'—then we know the answer. So did Russia." Mr. William Irvine, C.C.F. Member of Parliament, is reported as saying in Edmonton on June 26, 1945:

"The C.C.F. party in the recent Federal election lost a great 'weapon' when it failed to capitalise on the popularity Russia achieved in five years of war. We should have made it clear to Canadians that Russia, a Socialist country, is our type."

In New Brunswick, where elections were held on June 28, the five Social Credit candidates polled 3,333 votes, 0.6 per cent. of the total vote. None were elected. The Liberals were returned to office with an increased majority.

Mr. Aubrey Eban

The presence of Glubb Pasha at the head of the Arab Legion was exploited in a deadly manner against the Arab cause and held up as a shocking example of British collusion with the Arabs: yet for weeks the fact that an 'Englishman,' a full British subject and citizen, Mr. Aubrey Eban, was officially representing the "state" of Israel at the United Nations did not receive even a casual mention in the British Press. Finally, one newspaper did draw attention to it, though general interest in the matter and enquiry into its implications

By

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were swallowed in a polite silence.

So Mr. Eban continues to juggle with the rights of dual—or is it triple?—nationality, unimpeded by any blast of adverse propaganda.

PARLIAMENT

House of Commons, July 22, 1948.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL

Lords Reason for insisting on certain of their amendments to which the Commons have disagreed and disagreeing to the Amendments made by the Commons in lieu thereof, considered.

Lords Reason:

"The Lords insist on their Amendments in the Title, line 1, in page 1, line 9, in page 53, line 36, and in page 66, line 15, to which the Commons have disagreed and disagree to the Amendments made by the Commons in lieu thereof for the following Reason:

Because they consider that Clause 1 as amended by the Commons would be unworkable since the list of capital murders is illogical and incomplete, and because it is not in the public interest at the present time to suspend the death penalty for murder generally."

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Ede): I beg to move "That this House does not insist on its disagreement to certain Amendments on which the Lords have insisted and doth not insist on its Amendments made in lieu thereof to which the Lords have disagreed."

Last week, on July 15, this House by a substantial majority disagreed with the Lords on their Amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill omitting Clause 1 of the Bill, and passed an Amendment to Clause 1, substituting for the proposal to suspend the death penalty in all cases of murder a proposal to retain the death penalty for certain types of murder, while suspending it in all other cases of murder. This Amendment, as explained in the Debate, was proposed by the Government in order to minimise the special risks, to which I drew attention in my speech on the Second Reading of this Bill, involved in the suspension of the capital penalty at this particular time, and took account of the fact that some sections of public opinion had shown themselves to be disturbed at the proposal to suspend the death penalty for all offences of murder.

This Amendment has now been debated and rejected by a large majority in another place. . . .

The matters in dispute in regard to this Bill between this House and another place have now been narrowed down to this single, but very controversial, issue of the death penalty. [*] It is clear, from the decision of another place upon the amended Clause, that the Bill as it now stands containing that amended Clause cannot be passed in this Session, and that if this House insists upon the retention of the amended Clause the Bill will be lost. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Hear, hear."] I should have thought that not even one hon. Member of this House would desire that the Bill as a whole should be lost. . . .

Mr. Hollis (Devizes): . . . I am myself an abolitionist, and an unrepentant abolitionist, and I do not unsay the

[*] The Lords were persuaded to drop their opposition to the Clause abolishing Birching on the ground that opposition on two points would make it difficult on the Commons to give way on the one.

speech I made on that topic. . . .

As the Home Secretary has said, and as, indeed, is the truth, we cannot have heard the last of this subject. This is a subject in which it is vitally necessary that we should reach a settlement, and also it is appallingly difficult to reach a settlement. It is not necessary to reach a settlement merely because we are all anxious to get rid of a tiresome subject, but for a much deeper reason than that, and it is this. Any-one who is anxious to reduce the rate of murders must ask himself two questions. He must ask what course of action is likely to be the most effective deterrent to the potential murderer, and also what course of action is likely to cause there to be as few potential murderers in society as possible.

It is the second of those questions which, though less frequently asked, is really the much more important. In a controversy in which many things are uncertain, one of the few things that is certain is that murders increase where there is a morbid and excited public opinion that is hysterically interested in the subject of murder. Therefore, for that reason, if it be not too impertinent of me to say so, I do hope that hon. Members will take every step they possibly can to prevent this from becoming the subject of long drawn out and passionate controversy.

Secondly, although a settlement is vitally necessary, it is also appallingly difficult, and it is appallingly difficult for a reason that is entirely to the honour of people on both sides of the controversy. Here I need not delay the House by stating my argument at length, because it is exactly the same as the argument that was cogently developed the other day by my hon. Friend the Member for Oxford (Mr. Hogg), who takes the diametrically opposite position from that which I take in the controversy. It is that the difficulty arises from the fact that people on both sides of the controversy have the highest regard for the sanctity of human life. If that standpoint is also perfectly honestly developed on the question of whether the death penalty is or is not a deterrent, one is led inevitably—or almost inevitably—to one of two diametrically opposite conclusions.

If it is a deterrent, it is greatly against a man's conscience to advocate the abolition of the death penalty; and if it is not, it is much more difficult, obviously to ask a person who does not believe it to be a deterrent to vote for some compromise solution, when he does not think the death penalty is necessary at all. What has struck me as most interesting—if "interesting" be the word—about this whole controversy in this House, and in another place, and in the country at large is that the best chance of having a settlement lies in our scientifically investigating the question whether the death penalty is or is not a deterrent. Very little indeed has been said on that topic. A few people now and again have given some personal experiences of some criminals they have met, and that is valuable as far as it goes; but others have simply stated their prejudices as to whether the death penalty is or is not a deterrent.

The fact that there has not been an attempt to approach the question really scientifically is the more remarkable in that, since the Royal Commission sat in 1930, and during the last 18 years, there has been a vast amount of scientific work, tested out in practice, on this question in Sweden and in Switzerland, and, doubtless, in other countries. There has been very little sign that many people are acquainted with that, which is the most important data on the question at all. To a large extent it is not possible for people in this country

to be acquainted with it, because the information is simply not available, and I think the Government have been very remiss in not putting that information before the public and so enabling the public to judge on it. Their reply to Lord Templewood's request was a miserably inadequate little paper that does not get us any further at all.

I would appeal to the Home Secretary to consider this practical suggestion. We have a breathing space, and the day will come when we shall have to consider this question again. Let us use this breathing space profitably. Let the Home Secretary appoint some gentleman or three gentlemen, responsible people, to inquire into the facts of the present state of the treatment of murder. I agree with the right hon. and learned Member for West Derby (Sir D. Maxwell Fyfe) that it gets us very little further to give us mere proved statistics of the number of murders in this or that country, without telling us any of the circumstances. Let the inquirers tell us the facts of the murders, the methods of treatment, the arguments that weighed with the people at the time the treatment was changed, and the psychological principles on which that treatment is based in those countries.

Let them cast their eye a bit further afield and tell us whether there are any marked differences between the general habits of the people towards murder in this and other countries, whether larger space is given to murder questions in the Press; whether sadistic films are not popular in one country or another, and so on. Let us examine that important saying of Professor Jung, the greatest of psychologists, when he says that fear is a more common cause of violence than grief or wrath. Let us get the exact evidence on which he made that statement, which is obviously fundamental to the whole consideration of the case.

Let the inquirers not recommend anything, but let them carry out the inquiry, report and lay the facts before the people of this country, so that when this question comes to be judged again, having failed to solve it on a political plane, we may hope to take it on a much more proper plane, the medical plane, on which alone, I believe, a solution can be reached—a solution which is so vitally necessary and so earnestly desired, I am sure by people of every sort in this House and throughout the country.

Mr. Quintin Hogg (Oxford): . . . My final point is upon the constitutional issue. Here I venture with respect, but still firmly, as I believe in the real tradition of English constitutionalism which is something apart and above party, to differ from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Norwich (Mr. J. Paton), the hon. and learned Member for East Leicester (Mr. Donovan) and the hon. and learned Member for Northampton, in both the content and implications of what they were seeking to say. The hon. and learned Member for East Leicester spoke of the supremacy of this House, the hon. Member for Norwich talked about letting this House die, and the hon. and learned Member for Northampton in his speech to night when he referred to the use of the Parliament Act in this connection, and out of doors when he spoke in less measured language, talked very much on the same lines.

I venture to point out to hon. Members just where their doctrine leads. We in this House are not, and never have been, an unfettered assembly of elected dictators, and if we should seek to become such an assembly the reign of law and freedom and democracy in this country will be ended. I must refer to the terms in which the hon. and learned Member for

(continued on page 7.)

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From Week to Week

"It is my belief that if we carry into these years [ahead] the present system of concentrated economic powers and practices of both capital and labor, of concentrated populations, of concentrated industries, of concentrated government domination and direction, of heavy taxation with its destructive effects on community and individual initiative and independence, of the steady impairment of our soil and water and the destruction of our forests and of irreplaceable minerals and oils, of the prevailing greed of various privilege-seeking groups, we cannot possibly avoid economic disaster. . . . Yet it is a fact that the dominant thinking of the moment simply proposes a continuation, with ever-increasing government interference, of this same hopeless system."—*Decentralise for Liberty* by THOMAS HUGHES.

Mr. Hughes was Assistant-Secretary for Fiscal Affairs, (U.S.A.)

When Professor W. L. Burns remarked a few months ago that political thinking in this country was at too low an ebb to permit of the writing of a Constitution, the Broadcasts of Professor Laski and Mr. Kenneth Pickthorn for and against the abolition of the House of Lords had not fallen on the ears of those who happened to tune in on the Third Programme when they were delivered. They would have reinforced his opinion.

What must, however, impress, or depress, anyone possessed of the elements of the critical faculty is not the special validity of the arguments adduced on either side, but the difference in fighting spirit. Professor Laski approaches his subject clearly saturated with "the victory which is the historic right of the Left" (Professor Laski, *New Statesman*, June 5, 1943). Mr. Pickthorn barely questions his opponent's main argument, the Divine Right of the House of Commons, but feels that there ought to be some delaying action on its too rapid manifestations, much as Victorian children felt that God was only operative on Sundays, and quite enough too.

There is a general feeling that there will be a moderate "Conservative" majority at the next election, together with great uneasiness at the idea that it will be purely a protest victory. To the extent to which the ballot-box can, or will be allowed to, decide the future of once-Great Britain, this uneasiness has every justification. The Right is facing its supreme test; and if it is to justify its title, it has to do some far better thinking than that of which it has so far allowed its public to judge. If Mond-Turnerism with the Managerial State is still its dominant note; if the widely reported remark of a "Tory" industrialist, "Wait till we come back, we'll show them how Socialism should be run", is representative, as

seems quite probable; then Professor Laski will not have long to wait for the Victory of the Left, which is its historic right by reason of the adoration of our industrialists for the policy of the Gardarene swine.

During the coming year, the two new states of Pakistan and "India" will spend about twice as much on war preparation as the whole sub-continent under British rule spent for defence.

The war envisaged is against each other. It is not without significance that Mr. Jinnah dislikes Lord and Lady Mountbatten intensely, a feeling which is shared by the Nizam of Hyderabad.

As was to be expected, the United Nations organisation is a one-way street whose traffic flows into Jerusalem. Jews have always exploited the technique of two nationalities, their own and that of their country of residence; but they now juggle with three. To adapt Dr. Johnson on the subject of the dog which walked upright, the marvel is not that they do it so well, but that they are allowed to do it at all.

We have always regarded the statement made by P.E.P. that "they" proceeded on the assumption that "only in war, or under threat of war, would any British Government embark on large scale planning" (i.e., comprehensive brigandage) as being a key pronouncement from an authoritative source; and we have little doubt that the serio-comic knockabout act in Berlin is primarily staged to maintain the atmosphere of crisis. It has been finally established that Communism and Socialism lose heavily in what used to be regarded as normal times, and Communism and Socialism are the tactics of the major strategy; anyone who will not see that P.E.P., Roosevelt's New Deal, and Russian World Conquest are octaves of the same Satanic cacophony will also fail to grasp the fact that panic is the pre-requisite to them.

There is always the risk that what is meant to be *Grand Guignol* may turn into a wild stampede; but the stark fact is that as things are going at the moment, threat of war is working just as well for the ends of the Plotters and Planners as would war itself, and it can evidently be kept going almost indefinitely.

The key idea of the proletarianisation of the world is "full employment." To allow machinery to reduce labour would be to capitalise leisure, and uncontrolled leisure would bring out Mr. Aneurin Bevan, Mr. Shinwell, and Mr. Thomas Johnston into high relief.

The *Listener*, of all periodicals, reproduced recently a picture of Mr. Chaplin, the squire of Blankney and almost a classic High Tory. Disregarding all propaganda, we suggest a thoughtful contemplation of that portrait alongside the most flattering which can be obtained of Mr. Aneurin Bevan. Remember, after forty, it is character which forms faces.

Social Credit Library

Will members kindly note that the Librarian will be away till the end of August. The Library will be closed until then.

How to Increase Purchasing Power in Australia

A RADIO TALK BY ERIC D. BUTLER.

Although a majority of Australian electors correctly interpreted the Federal Government's demand for permanent Price Control from Canberra as an important part of the plan to build the Monopoly State in Australia, and therefore voted No at the Referendum, this still leaves the problem of rising prices to be solved.

While it will no doubt be shown that the State Governments can administer the present system of Price Control much more efficiently than Canberra, the States can do little to prevent prices from steadily increasing while the present financial policies are imposed from Canberra.

The first step towards salvation is a drastic all-round reduction in all taxation, direct and indirect.

Sales tax should be eliminated entirely, thus resulting in an immediate benefit to the consumer.

A drastic reduction in taxation would restore incentive to production and create competition. It is also desirable that Uniform Taxation be abolished and the people of each State responsible for their own income taxation. But these necessary steps are insufficient in themselves to solve permanently the problem of rising prices.

It must not be forgotten that, prior to the war, when taxation was much lower than it is now and when there was intense competition, prices generally were increasing.

Starting from the beginning of this century, to go back no further, prices have steadily increased in spite of increased efficiency in production methods.

It is true that during such occasional periods as the Great Depression, there was a temporary reduction in prices, but this was the result of a drastic curtailment of purchasing power directly related to financial policy.

What is urgently necessary is a new financial policy which will permit prices to be reduced without bankrupting producers in the process.

In order that we can examine this matter constructively, let us take one important cost in industry—wages. Ever since the first basic wage was defined in 1907, wage-earners have consistently fought for a higher standard of living per medium of an increased basic wage. No reasonable person will deny the justice of the wage-earners' claim that he is entitled to share in the increased productivity resulting from more efficient methods in industry.

Leaving aside at this stage the exploitation of the "worker" by the political agitators such as the Communists, the demand by the wage-earner for increased purchasing power and a shorter working week is based upon the belief that the modern production system can provide him with these results.

All reasonable people want the same results.

It is surely obvious that there must be something very wrong if rapidly increasing efficiency in industry does not result in a higher standard of living via increased purchasing power and shorter working hours.

During the war years, with 800,000 able bodied men out of the production system, we gained some idea of the productive capacity of this country.

In 1942 the rated horse-power of engines in use in factories, plus the horsepower equivalent of central electric stations, was over four million horse-power. As one horse power is equivalent to approximately ten man-power, we can say that the productive strength of Australia in 1942 could be rated at over forty million man-power. And, of course, it has been considerably increased since 1942.

It is obvious that the vast potentialities of the modern production system have been taken into consideration by the Arbitration Court in reducing the working week from 48 hours to 40 hours. However, so far from wage increases benefiting the worker to any great extent, *there is no argument about the fact that the purchasing power of the basic wage today is little better than it was in 1907.*

As a matter of fact, demands for increases in the basic wage have usually been based upon the fact that prices have risen. These increases in the basic wage have temporarily benefited the worker, but, as all wages are a part of production costs and must be passed on in increased prices, the ultimate result is that the worker is no better off than he was previously.

Although the Arbitration Court has granted an increase in the basic wage since the war finished, it is now being mooted that the higher cost of living necessitates another substantial increase.

This increase can only result in another spiral of rising costs and rising prices: an inflationary process which must be halted if the standard of living of those on fixed incomes is not to be further reduced and the destruction of savings halted.

The basic problem is how to give the worker increased purchasing power without increasing prices.

Communists and similar people argue that industry can pay increased wages out of profits without increasing prices. An examination of the total profits made by Australian industry will prove to any intelligent person that the distribution of all profits to the workers could only give them a few shillings increase in wages, and this would be at the expense of the thousands of shareholders in Australian industries.

Further, if those running industry could make no profit, they would cease production.

Well may it be asked, then, how does industry pay the increased wage costs it is called upon to pay now from time to time when the Arbitration Court rules that an increase in the basic wage must be paid? Not having the *cash* reserves to meet immediately an increased wage bill, industry has to obtain a loan from the banking system, a loan granted against the assets of the industry.

Of course, industry expects eventually to recover through increased prices the increased wage costs. The increased money made available to industry by the banking system eventually finds its way back to the banks by increased deposits, a fact which anyone can examine for himself by noting the manner in which bank deposits steadily increase.

The latest figures show that the deposits of the nine trading banks increased by approximately £50 million over the past twelve months.

There is no argument about the fact that the total amount of money in the community is increased by the banking system every time there is an increase in the basic wage. But, as we have already seen, this merely creates rising prices.

It is obvious then, that if the new money made available

by the banking system could be paid direct to workers instead of being passed through industry as a cost which must be passed on by higher prices, the workers would get increased purchasing power without prices rising.

Surely it is not beyond our capacity to evolve a simple formula whereby increased purchasing power can be distributed against the increasing industrial productive capacity. No reasonable person can deny that the present method of trying to control prices without dealing with the aspect of the problem we have outlined, has, while perhaps preventing prices from sky-rocketing, merely imposed a bureaucratic system of regimentation upon industry.

However, there is one aspect of Price Control as operated over the past few years that is sound in principle—that is the subsidy system.

This system was applied to certain commodities and results indicate that the system could be successfully extended.

It is commonly said that price subsidies are merely taking money off the people by taxation and giving it back to them by subsidising prices. This is not altogether correct, as the Government obtains the money for subsidies partly by taxation and, directly and indirectly, by the expansion of credit.

For example, some of the credit expanded to finance the war was taken by the Government in taxation. It can be seen, therefore, that subsidies have been, to a considerable extent, paid out of expanded credit in the same way as basic wage increases are paid out of expanded credit.

The use of the expanded credit for subsidies has been comparatively more satisfactory than the payment of basic wage increases. There is no argument about the fact that the stabilising of prices by the payment of subsidies has demonstrated the possibility of increasing purchasing power outside the present industrial costing system.

This is the key to the problem confronting us.

We suggest that, in future, instead of increases in the basic wage being paid through industry from new bank credit, such increases be paid direct to wage-earners in the form of what might be termed a National Production Bonus—that is, a bonus in addition to the wages already being received.

As the new money for this bonus would not be paid through industry, there would be no increase in wage costs and consequently no increase in prices.

As the size of the increase of bonuses would be directly related to increased potential production in industry, wage-earners would have an incentive to increase production safe in the knowledge that they would personally share in the benefits of the increased production. At present there is no incentive, and it is no use employers criticising the employees for not working harder when they themselves in many cases are doing likewise.

Admittedly high taxation has a lot to do with this, but the attitude of the wage-earners can also be traced back to the depression years, plus the fact that bitter experience has shown them that under the present system of increasing the basic wage they do not proportionately increase their standard of living.

Apart from paying bonuses from credit expanded against increased potential production, portion of this credit could also be used to lower prices to every member of the com-

munity by an extension of the subsidy system.

It must be realised that the modern productive capacity of a country is in the long run a community affair and therefore the benefits of increased production should be distributed to every member of the community via reduced prices.

Until constructive action is taken about the problem of increasing prices, we can expect no stability in the community.

The "worker" will continue to have his grievances exploited by the political agitators and slowly but surely the Police State will be introduced.

It is the task of all those political leaders who advocated a No vote at the Referendum to now indicate how the question of rising prices can be satisfactorily solved. We have briefly outlined in this talk how the matter can be handled.

(Reprinted from THE NEW TIMES, Australia).

PARLIAMENT—(continued from page 3).

Northampton was reported as having spoken out of doors on this issue. When it is alleged against him that public opinion is not on his side in this matter, he takes a view rather different from the other two hon. Members who spoke from below the Gangway tonight, and says, "What does it matter?" When the House of Lords differ from the rest on this issue, other hon. Gentlemen say, "What does it matter; we are supreme." When the judges express a view unfavourable to them, they say, "What does it matter, they are always wrong." And when the Press ventures to express an opinion they say, "What does it matter; it is the most prostituted Press in the world."

I beg hon. Members opposite to consider that they themselves could be wrong. Even if they are right they have not the right to force their opinions on a reluctant country or public opinion. I beg them to consider that this House has never been, and I pray to God never will be, an unlimited power in this realm, that there are other estates and interests to be taken into consideration, and although we are admittedly given the right of elected representatives of the people to determine matters of policy, we still have not the right to constitute ourselves elected dictators.

Nothing could be more deplorable than that the hon. and learned Member for Northampton should attempt to quote Burke and the constitutional doctrine of Burke in answer to his constituents who sought to make him prefer a private interest to that of the nation in support of a proposition which would have made this House an assembly of elected dictators. He will not forget that the whole of that man's great life was dedicated to opposition to the usurpation of the elected Chamber on precisely that prerogative, and we should be departing far away from the tradition of legality and constitutionalism in this country if we sought to take that point of view. I beg hon. Members, whatever their politics and opinions not to press that view.

Mr. Paget: I did not say anything on this matter to my constituents, because they asked for no explanation, being in entire agreement. I agree that the statement to which the hon. Gentleman referred was a statement made to a Press reporter. Burke's words which I quoted were:

"Your representative owes to you his judgement, and he betrays instead of serving you if he sacrifices his judgement to your opinion."

What I would say upon this issue is that I will consider whether it be a deterrent or not, whether it be right or wrong, but I will not consider the argument that we should hang people to please the crowd. That is the argument which appealed to Pontius Pilate, but I hope not to us.

Mr. Hogg: I hope that what the hon. and learned Member has said is not less carefully considered than what he says to his constituents, but he has forgotten, both on the occasion that he spoke to the Press reporter and tonight, the complete quotation from Burke which makes very plain what I was attempting to put forward, the true doctrine of Burke. I do beg hon. Members, whatever their views may be about the death penalty and about the present constitution or the powers of another place, before they give way to reckless doctrine and counsels, to consider whether it is not possible that the Government of which they, and not I, have been elected to support in this Parliament may not be right on this particular issue.

Mr. Proctor (Eccles): The House of Commons is considering tonight a very grave matter indeed. I do not think that the gravest aspect of it has been mentioned tonight, and that is the conflict between the two Houses of Parliament. This, in my opinion, is a matter upon which every Englishman, and the whole of the British people who believe in democracy, must take careful notice. This is a challenge that has come from another place to the authority of the elected representatives of the people. [HON. MEMBERS: "Rubbish."] I hope that that aspect of this situation will be considered very carefully by everyone who loves this country and who believes in democracy.

Mr. Oliver Stanley (Bristol, West): Is the hon. Member prepared to fight a by-election on it?

Mr. Proctor: I am asked if I am prepared to fight a by-election on it. I hope that the Government will be prepared to fight the General Election on the issue whether this House is to be supreme in this country. That is the issue thrown down to us. It may be that we can deal with this situation, as the Government suggest, but this is a clear warning that in regard to some vital matter on which the life of the nation and not the life of a criminal may be at stake, the opinion of this House, elected by the people, may not prevail. We shall have to give some careful consideration to the constitution under which we are operating. If further justification were needed for the wisdom of the Government in deciding to limit the power of another place in another Bill, this gives us that justification. . . .

. . . I ask my hon. Friends on this side of the House to consider what is the actual position with which we are faced tonight. We have to consider whether or not we will follow the advice of the Government and not insist upon the view of the House of Commons prevailing at this stage. I suggest to my hon. Friends that the wisest thing we can do is to support the Government. [Interruption.] That is where the cleverness of the right hon. Gentleman comes in—if he can divide the Government supporters tonight no one will be more pleased than he. The wise and proper course for the Labour Party is to let the Criminal Justice Bill go on the Statute Book and then deal with the other matter. Nothing we do in going into the Lobby in support of the Government tonight can in any way bind this party as to its future course. This is the proper course for us to take to deal with this present situation. Then, after we have dealt with this matter and the Criminal Justice Bill is passed, the House itself can

deal with the two issues I have raised—the question of capital punishment, and the other grave and important issue, the constitutional issue.

THE PRESS (MINISTERS' STATEMENTS)

Earl Winterton (Horsham): I rise to raise a question which I think is of some constitutional import and substance and which, so far as I know, has never been raised exactly in this form before in this House. . . .

. . . The point which I am going to raise, and which creates, I have no hesitation in saying, quite a lot of interest in the country outside this House, is this: the responsibility, both individual and corporate, on Ministers who make serious charges which, one must assume, they consider to be well-founded, against an industry or institution whose conduct is the subject of a Royal Commission. My contention—and this is the point which I propound through you, Sir, to the House and to the right hon. Gentleman—is that the public weal demands that Ministers who make such specific charges, as I shall presently show, have an onus on them to give evidence before the Royal Commission to support those charges. Otherwise, the whole situation would appear to be nonsensical. . . .

Mr. W. J. Brown (Rugby): . . . The Minister of Health did not attack the millionaire Press. He did not attack the Press of the Left, or the Right, or the Centre. He attacked the British Press, and his observation about the British Press was that it was the most prostituted Press in the world.

. . . When we consider by whom it was said, we must distinguish between an impulsive, un-thought-out ejaculation by somebody not trained in the precise use of words, and occupying an insignificant position in the community. If this observation had proceeded from such a man as that, I think probably nobody would have taken very much notice of it. But this was said not by such a man, not even by a back bencher, but by a Minister of the Crown and a member of the Cabinet.

We must ask what the effect of those words, unless supported by evidence, was bound to be both at home and abroad. When a Minister says that the British Press is the most prostituted in the world, the impression given to every reader of that observation at home or abroad would be that the Minister was so seized of information about the discreditable character of the British Press that he felt impelled to utter that condemnation. The effect of that abroad I need not elaborate. It will be treated abroad as giving ministerial sanction to the view that the British Press as a whole is corrupt, prostituted, unworthy of credence, not to be relied upon, not to be taken as expressing the point of view of this country, and so on and so forth.

In short, its effect abroad, it seems to me, could be nothing but harmful to the interests of this country, whichever side of the House of Commons we have to consider.

. . . It is an old English tradition, when charges have been made and have been referred to the judgment of a committee of inquiry, or of a court of law, or whatever it may be, and while the issue is *sub judice*, not to repeat the charges which are under investigation. That seems to me to be the most elementary fair play. . . . I very much regret that it was said, unless—and it may be the case—the Minister is possessed of the evidence which in his view would justify that

overwhelming condemnation.

I understand—and I know this only from the Press, and not from any other source—that the Commission of Inquiry into the Press did take note of the observations of the right hon. Gentleman on that occasion, and formally wrote to him inviting him, if he had the evidence, to bring it before the Press Commission itself. I read in the Press—again, I hope that it is not true; it may be it is not true; I do not know—that there has been acknowledgment of that invitation. But there has been, so far as I know—I speak subject to correction—no acceptance of the invitation. Again, so far as I know, the evidence has not been tabled. I think that is a wholly unsatisfactory situation. If the Minister has any evidence, then, in my view, it is his public duty to present it to the Commission which has been set up by this House to investigate precisely this kind of charge, and it does seem to me that the decision should have been taken as soon as that invitation was received to tender the necessary evidence. . . .

Mr. Edelman (Coventry, West): I said in an earlier Debate, to the disgust of some hon. Members, that the British Press is the best in the world, and for that reason I shall not be expected to agree with the Minister of Health in what he has said about the British Press. At the same time, I would fight to the death for his right to express his views. There seems to me to be no reason at all why he should not put his views in however intemperate language. . . .

Mr. Boyd-Carpenter (Kingston-upon-Thames): I think that the hon. Member for West Coventry (Mr. Edelman), no doubt inadvertently, has really missed the point of this discussion. No one, so far as I know, has suggested a kind of muzzling order for the Minister of Health; certainly no one would suggest that from the Conservative benches, to whom his speeches are so great a political asset. Nor is it really material from the point of view of this discussion whether the Press of this country is perfect or has imperfections. The point at issue is, as I see it, a much more constitutional one. For better or for worse, this House assented to the setting up by His Majesty of the Royal Commission on the Press, and it is perhaps material to have the whole of the terms of reference of that Royal Commission brought into this discussion. They were given on March 26, 1947, in the course of a statement by the Prime Minister. These were the terms of reference:

“With the object of furthering the free expression of opinion through the Press and the greatest practicable accuracy in the presentation of news, to inquire into the control, management and ownership of the newspaper and periodical Press and the news agencies, including the financial structure and the monopolistic tendencies in control, and to make recommendations thereon.”—[OFFICIAL REPORT, March 26, 1947; Vol. 435, c. 1232.]

It is, surely, abundantly clear that, whether or not the Press of this country is the most prostituted Press in the world is an issue which comes within those terms of reference. If there were any truth in that point of view, then that is a truth which must be relevant to the Royal Commission. The hon. Member for Maldon (Mr. Driberg) sought to distinguish between poetical truth and truth, although in the case of the Minister of Health perhaps fantasy rather than poetry would have been a more accurate metaphor. . . .

. . . It is surely the fact that we differ because we attribute different importance to different sets of facts. I attribute to hon. Members opposite the founding of their opinions on facts; and it is true to say that all responsible elements in this House do the same.

That being so, it seems to me that this matter is now

really a test of the Government's sincerity with respect to this Royal Commission. . . .

. . . That being so, it being the fact that the holder of a great and responsible Office—a Member of His Majesty's Cabinet—has made remarks which are clearly pertinent to the consideration of a Royal Commission; if the evidence on which those remarks were based is not tendered by that Minister to the Royal Commission, then we and people outside are left inevitably in one of two opinions: either that the Government of the day do not treat that Royal Commission seriously—that it is, in fact, a waste of public time and money—or, alternatively, that a senior Member of the Government has made a public statement on a matter of great importance without any material on which to justify it.

That, Sir, as you know, in accordance with the conventions of our Constitution, is a state of affairs which can be remedied only by the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman in question. [Interruption.] I do not know whether the Minister of Health, by that laughter, desires to indicate that he regards it as a laughing matter for irresponsible statements to be made by Members of the Cabinet on public matters. If the right hon. Gentleman does regard that as a matter for levity, it is perhaps as well that we should know of his attitude.

Mr. Bevan: It is the hon. Member whom I was regarding as a matter for levity. . . .

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The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Ede): . . . The constitutional position is that it does not seem to be desirable that Ministers who will have to consider the Report of a Royal Commission when it appears should give evidence in front of the Royal Commission. The only exception to that is when a Royal Commission may be inquiring into something that is very directly concerned with the personal responsibility of the Minister.

. . . I wish to make it quite clear that my right hon. Friend has not refused to give evidence before the Royal Commission. Knowing the temperament of my right hon. Friend and his willingness to accept any challenge that is thrown down to him, I rather suspect that if the matter were left to him he would be willing to give evidence before the Royal Commission. But for the constitutional reasons which I have given, that it is not the practice for Members of His Majesty's Government to give evidence before a Royal Commission except where they can give evidence as to fact and practice relating to their own Departments, the Prime Minister thinks that it would not be right for my right hon. Friend to give evidence before this Commission.

Earl Winterton: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman one question? He has made a point which is really sensational. I do not think that there has ever been such a case before. The Chairman of a Royal Commission, formally, as head of that Commission requests a Minister to give evidence in consequence of statements that Minister has made. I understand that that Minister has been forbidden by the Prime Minister to give evidence. Is that the position?

Mr. Ede: . . . For the constitutional reason which I have given the Prime Minister feels that it would not be right for the Minister of Health to accept this invitation. . . .