

THE SOCIAL CREDITOR

FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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From Week to Week

THE DYNASTS:—Walter J. Levy. Born Hamburg, 1911. Educated at “six German universities.” Left Germany for England when Nazis came to power. Continued education at London School of Economics. “He was not interned. But his status posed problems. And when he suggested he might do more good in America no difficulties were placed in his way.” Became ‘boss’ of petroleum section of America’s war-time intelligence agency, OSS, “in a matter of weeks.” While still a German, he returned to London as member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Enemy Oil Committee “and sat in on some of the most secret discussions.” Now, as “world’s top oil expert,” he “shuttles back and forth” between London and Teheran with Averell Harriman. The account is Frederick Cook’s in the London *Evening Standard*. Mrs. Levy is a Sondheimer “of the Frankfurt merchanting dynasty.”

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Political criticism without Douglas is a smear on squared paper where the ordinates are not indicated and the distances from them not measured. By persistently dealing in such distortions, facts are made as though they did not exist, and readers and writers are delivered from the necessity of facing them—but delivered into the hand of the Destroyer.

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“The man of the future will be a cross-breed. The Pan-European will be of the Eurasian-Negroid race similar to the ancient Egyptians, over whom the Jews will rule as an aristocracy of spiritual grace.”—(Count Coudenhove Kalergi: *Practical Idealism*, 1925).

We notice that *Free Britain* quotes this as well as Dr. Malan’s recent remark that “the proud British race is itself becoming mongrelised.” We are quite satisfied that the indications are valid, and also that the policy to which these ‘tendencies’ are ascribed, namely to secure by a change in the characteristics of its people a defeat which, up to now, the British Empire evades, is correctly diagnosed by *Free Britain*. We are much less certain that the means suggested for countering these manoeuvres promise anything at all. Leaving out of consideration whether or not Lord Simon is Jewish, the British Broadcasting Corporation is a skilfully devised instrument for the centralisation of the means of public information. It is constituted in, by and under (the array of prepositions will stand inspection) the ægis of the Power which *Free Britain* wishes to be exposed and brought down—though brought down would be enough. Does anybody in his senses imagine that the ventilation of ‘the question’ simultaneously on all three programmes could not be so contrived as to be a distinct advantage to the enemy? There are much surer and closer points of application, and it surprises us that more use is not made of them, for they

are at least as easy to handle as agensised bread is to Mrs. Pattullo. Let us illustrate. The following is a recent conversation somewhere in England between a medical scientist and a fashionable gynæcologist, originally of Johannesburg. He was Jewish. Despite a good deal of levelling recently, even medical scientists do not usually give fashionable gynæcologists a lift in their cars. It was the other way round, and to cut a long story short (for in view of the topic it had to go by stages) the question was the reason for the very large sums of money recently forthcoming for research in British as well as American Universities into problems of fertility. Said the Britisher naively:—“I can’t understand it. Do you think there is a political motive behind it?”—“What political motive?”—“Control of population.”

“Well, you know,” said the Jew, “that’s curious you should say that. Last night I was looking at a French film, and it said practically the same thing. But the French are a logical people and pursue a thing to a conclusion. They’re not like ‘us.’ You’ll never get ‘them’ to see that here.”

“Are you trying to?”—“What, me?—No fear, I don’t bother my head about it. You know, you’re an idealist: you don’t see that this wave of Socialism’s got to go all the way. Then the pendulum’ll swing right the other way!”—“Swing back and unscramble the eggs!”—“I said you were an idealist.”

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Our point is that it is not abstract race-destruction we are faced with, but practical complicity involving several hundreds of easily identifiable persons, some of whom may be reorientated by a little eye-opening. And for each group of ‘several hundred’ there are others of corresponding size and identifiability. The eyes of men who are not fools are on things in full view.

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Having looked long and anxiously at the words for which the initials ALA stand, we silently resolve, if ever we found a League of any description (which God forbid!) that we shall identify it with a piece of Chinese picture-writing (perhaps that which stands for “He Who Successfully Cracks a Nut”). “The occidental defines ‘red’ as a colour; colour as a kind of vibration; vibration as a form of energy; energy as a modality of being—always evaporating into abstraction. The Chinese character pictures things that are red, such as iron rust, cherry, rose, and flamingo. The latter *defines*, the former does *not*. Chinese notation is something much more than arbitrary symbols. It is a vivid shorthand picture of the operations of nature.” Social Credit ought to go well in Chinese.

ALA?—Oh, yes: Aryan League of America.

PARLIAMENT

[Readers will note that our extracts from the Official Report are not in their proper time order, since we intruded the Debate on Broadcasting which took place on July 19].

House of Commons: July 9, 1951.

Rationing

Brigadier Clarke asked the Minister of Food what plans he has for the eventual ending of food rationing.

Mr. F. Willey: Our object is to end rationing as soon as the supplies available justify doing so, and we are taking all possible steps to increase supplies of those foods which are still rationed.

Brigadier Clarke: Does the Minister not think that after six years of Socialist misrule it is about time—

Mr. Speaker: Imputations and implications are not permissible in supplementary questions.

Mr. Somerville Hastings: Will the Minister take care that not only is there sufficient food, but sufficient money to buy that food, before he determines rationing?

Mr. Willey: Yes; we are continuing rationing for the express purpose of ensuring fair shares.

Atomic Power

Mr. Ellis Smith asked the Minister of Supply (1) if he will make a statement on the development that has taken place of the use of atomic power for industrial purposes; how far new metals, alloys and ceramic materials have been improved in readiness for meeting the needs of reactors; and if he is satisfied that sufficient numbers are receiving technological training to provide all who may be required in the use of atomic power for industrial purposes;

(2) if he has made an estimate of the potential economic value and use of atomic power; with what results; if he will give an estimate of the relative cost of generating electricity by present methods, compared with the cost if generated by atomic power, and of the saving in coal; if consideration has been given to the potential importance of the prospect of the development of backward areas by atomic power industrialisation; and what action is to be taken.

Mr. G. R. Strauss: As the answer is rather long, I will circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the answer:

I informed the hon. and learned Member for Aberdeen North (*Mr. Hector Hughes*), in reply to a Question on 3rd July, 1950, that considerable progress had been made in the planning of nuclear reactors for use as power units, and in the development of the necessary facilities for investigating materials for use in such reactors. This work has continued and considerable progress has also been made in the technology of the special materials required for reactor construction. Design studies of experimental reactors for marine propulsion and for static use are in progress.

It is too early to make any reliable estimate of the relative cost of generation of electricity by present methods and from atomic power. There is, however, a reasonable prospect that generation from atomic power can be developed on a large scale, and that ultimately the cost will not differ

greatly from that of power from conventional sources. The relative cost will vary from place to place, according to the local availability and cost of coal, and to other general economic factors. Generation from atomic energy is, therefore, likely first to offer advantages in particular places, which may include some of the backward areas to which my hon. Friend refers. It is, however, too early to form definite conclusions or to prepare plans for action.

The Research Establishment at Harwell and the production establishments provide technological training courses to staff the atomic energy project itself, and consideration is being given to extending this type of instruction to pupils from industry. The general question of education in preparation for the wide use of atomic power is a matter for my right hon. Friend the Minister of Education.

Electricity Industry (Generating Plant Capacity)

Mr. Ellis Smith asked the Minister of Fuel and Power if he will reconsider the capital expenditure and delivery dates of plant, power houses, etc., so that more power can be available within the next five years.

The Minister of Fuel and Power (Mr. Philip Noel-Baker): Every effort has been, is being, and will be made to speed up the commissioning of generating plant. The commissioning has not so far been delayed by restrictions on capital expenditure, and the investment in electricity this year will be considerably higher than it was last year. In 1952, it will be higher still.

Mr. Smith: Now that the Electricity Authority have been allowed to embark on capital expenditure to meet the country's power needs, may I ask whether the delivery dates are being worked to and whether my right hon. Friend can give an undertaking that as soon as possible, as a result of the increased power available, power cuts will cease?

Mr. Noel-Baker: We shall have to take other measures about power cuts as well as increasing generating capacity. My answer means that we are doing everything we can to increase that capacity as quickly as we can.

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd: Is there any probability that the right hon. Gentleman's efforts in this direction will be any more successful than they are or have been?

Mr. Noel-Baker: I hope they will be more successful. In any case, I am now considering what measures can be taken.

Mr. Pickthorn: How does the generating capacity of 1951, now counted upon, compare with what was expected in 1950?

Mr. Noel-Baker: I still hope that it will be above what it was last year.

Mr. Pickthorn: The question is how what is happening now compares with what, a year ago, was thought was going to happen?

Mr. Noel-Baker: The largest increase before the war was 765 megawatts. In 1947 it was 340 megawatts and last year it was 960 megawatts. This year it will be more.

Mr. Ellis Smith: Without any reflection on the Minister, may I ask, in view of his reply, whether he can say why power plant is not being delivered?

Mr. Noel-Baker: The delivery of power plant is a

matter for the manufacturers. The Electricity Authority have a progressing department which works closely with the manufacturers. There have been very greatly improved deliveries since the B.E.A. took over.

House of Commons: July 16, 1951.

National Insurance (Statistical Information)

Dr. Barnett Stross asked the Minister of National Insurance what steps are being taken to collect and analyse the great mass of statistical information on health, disability and disease, now available to her Department; and whether she will publish a White Paper as soon as possible.

The Minister of National Insurance (Dr. Edith Summerskill): Certain statistical information is already published periodically. Other material of the kind my hon. Friend has in mind is now being collected and analysed and I shall shortly be considering the best way of making it available to the public.

Sickness Benefit Claims (Abuses)

Sir Waldron Smithers asked the Minister of National Insurance on how many occasions since sick pay benefit was available has the benefit been abused; and how many prosecutions have there been.

Dr. Summerskill: There have been 919 successful prosecutions since 5th July, 1948, for offences connected with the fraudulent obtaining of sickness benefit. I have no reason to think that the control of sickness claims is any less efficient now than in the past.

Sir W. Smithers: Is the right hon. Lady aware that at the Whitley Bay Conference of the Transport and General Workers' Union attention was called to the abuse of sick pay and the resulting loss of time, production and money? What is the right hon. Lady going to do about it?

Dr. Summerskill: I think that the hon. Member is a little confused. He is referring to the sick pay scheme of the Royal Ordnance factories, for which I have no responsibility whatever.

Electricity Industry (Supply Regulations)

Mr. W. Robson-Brown asked the Minister of Fuel and Power on how many occasions he has given his consent for the institution of proceedings against the British Electricity Authority for contravention of Regulations 34 and 35 of the Electricity Supply Regulations, 1939.

The Minister of Fuel and Power (Mr. Philip Noel-Baker): Consent to institute proceedings against the B.E.A. under Regulations 34 and 35 has never been asked for. It has been asked for once against an area board. On that one occasion I gave my consent to the proceedings; but the applicant decided not to proceed with his case.

Mr. Robson-Brown: Would the Minister make it generally known what that consent implies, and what the obligations are? Is he not aware that Regulation 35 places an obligation on the undertaker to maintain a constant supply of electrical energy sufficient for all consumers? That is the law today. Regulation 34 also places an obligation on the electrical undertaker—

Mr. Speaker: The Question asks only on how many occasions the Minister has given his consent for the institution of proceedings, not what is the content of the law.

Mr. Nabarro: Is it not a fact that every industrial consumer who suffers a power cut today should have legislative redress against the Minister under Regulation 35?

Mr. Noel-Baker: I do not understand what the hon. Member means.

Domestic Consumption

Mr. Nabarro asked the Minister of Fuel and Power if he can now say what measures he is taking to secure abatement of domestic electricity consumption at peak load hours during the forthcoming winter; and whether such measures will be given legislative effect.

Mr. P. Noel-Baker: As I told the hon. Member a week ago, I am now considering the measures which should be taken to reduce the peak load demand for electricity during the winter months. I have as yet nothing to add to the answer which I gave him then, except to say that the peak load problem can only be solved by the co-operation of all who use electricity, whether in industry, in commerce, or in their homes.

Sir Herbert Williams: Or in Government Departments.

Mr. Nabarro: Does not the Minister recall asking me to put down the second part of the Question about the legislative methods proposed? May I repeat my earlier supplementary to him? Is it not a fact that Lord Citrine, Chairman of the British Electricity Authority, said that action would shortly have to be taken, enforceable by law, to reduce domestic consumption? Who is right—the Minister or the Chairman of the British Electricity Authority? Is this a case, metaphorically speaking, of the nationalised Citrine tail wagging the ministerial Noel-Baker dog?

Mr. Noel-Baker: No, Sir. The Chairman of the B.E.A. is entitled to put forward the view which he holds. I am considering the suggestion which he put forward and which I have already discussed with him. I will make a decision about it when I am able to, and I will then announce it.

Mr. Nabarro: How soon will that be?

Mr. Noel-Baker: I cannot say.

Mr. Peter Roberts: In dealing with the peak load problem, will the right hon. Gentleman consider recommending financial incentives to firms who have stand-by plants to encourage them to use them during peak periods?

Mr. Noel-Baker: It is in the interests of the firms to do that without a financial inducement. As far as I am aware, the F.B.I. have not asked for that. They have asked for new conditions for stand-by plants. The B.E.A. have granted them. They have reached agreement.

(To be continued).

On Planning The Earth

By GEOFFREY DOBBS.

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More About Agenised Bread

To keep our readers informed of the resurrection of initiative (in Scotland at any rate) suggested by the campaign against the use of agenised flour, we again use this column, prefacing further newspaper letters with the intimation that a further leading article (not sent to us) has appeared in *The Sunday Post*. Dr. Rattray's letter (below) appeared in *The Scotsman* and the *Dundee Courier* for August 6, and Mrs. Pattullo's in the *Dundee Courier* only for the same day:—

Sir,—I have followed with great interest the recent letters in your columns from Mrs. Pattullo, ex-president of Scottish Housewives' Association, and others on the subject of agenised flour. I feel the greatest admiration for Mrs. Pattullo's unstinted labour in collecting the information regarding agene, which has been the subject of debate in press and Parliament.

Two features strike me very strongly:—

(1) The almost complete apathy on the part of the medical profession, to which the public might reasonably look for support in suppressing the adulteration of our food. Has nationalisation paralysed the medical profession as in the case of other nationalised industries?

(2) For what purpose is the taxpayer paying M.P.s their salaries, when it is left to a member of the general public to attract the attention of the people to the slow but certain form of poisoning induced by agene?

One might reasonably suppose that Parliament's primary duty is to ensure that legislation is for the good of the people it represents, yet agene has been used for the past 30 years while successive Governments of all parties have maintained complete secrecy regarding its use.

Is it not time the people demand a sensible form of government, instead of the farcical system of party politics under which the country is being rapidly ruined?—Yours, &c., J. McIntosh Rattray, B.Sc., M.B.

Kirriemuir, August 3, 1951.

AGENE—A POINT TO REMEMBER

Dear Sir,—Mr. Copeland in his letter of July 31 states that "no regard seems to have been paid to the extensive tests on humans." I should like to quote Dr. Coghlan in his letter to me the other day:

"As you know, the results of a series of experiments showing agenised bread to be poisonous to human beings was sent by me to the Ministry of Health in 1940 with a request

that they be repeated by the Ministry and either confirmed or disproved. In 1942 the Ministry brought this correspondence to a close by a flat refusal to carry out the experiments suggested. A second approach to the Ministry was made by me in 1947, after it had been shown that this flour was lethal to laboratory animals. It produced a second categorical refusal to carry out these human experiments from the Ministry in 1948."

The position of the Ministry is:—

- (1) They state that they have no evidence that agenised flour is poisonous to human beings.
- (2) They admit it is lethal to animals.
- (3) They refuse to carry out experiments showing its toxicity to men.
- (4) They refuse to accept the results of such experiments when performed by independent observers.

I communicated the results of Dr. Coghlan's experiments to Lord Horder, who is medical adviser of the flourmilling industry, and all that he would say was, "The symptoms might have nothing whatever to do with flour."

I should also like to draw your correspondent's attention to the admission in the citation (Federal Register for November 27, 1948; p. 6969) that experimental work on humans is limited. We must keep in mind the cumulative effect of a daily dose.—Yours truly,

Elizabeth M. Pattullo,

Member, Central Committee, S.H.A.

Sandyford, Kirriemuir, August 4, 1951.

Polish Armed Forces

Signed John J. Campbell, President, the following telegram was sent to the chairman of the Polish Soldier's Day Celebration to be held in Lauriston Hall, Lauriston Street, Edinburgh, on August 12:

"Scottish-Polish Society sends heartiest greetings on Polish Soldier's Day Celebration. British and American agreement on vital need for immediate reconstitution in Western Europe of Polish Armed Forces under Polish leadership would not only strengthen Western defence but also help to undo the dire folly of Teheran and Yalta. Restoration of Poland's historic shield against Asiatic invasion would bring fresh hope to millions of enslaved Christians behind the Iron Curtain and disturb profoundly Russia's aggressive designs. Best wishes."

The Social Credit Secretariat

NOTICE

Letters on Secretariat business which would normally be addressed to the Social Credit Secretariat or to Dr. Tudor Jones personally should be addressed as indicated below until October 1:—

Mr. Hewlett Edwards,
 Nether End,
 Austrey,
 Atherstone,
 Warwickshire.

Chemicals and Food Supplies

The following is the speech of Lord Douglas of Barloch in the House of Lords on July 4, the publication of which IN EXTENSO was forecast in THE SOCIAL CREDITER of July 14:—

Lord Douglas of Barloch rose to call attention to the dangers to national health arising from the increasing use of poisonous chemicals in the growing and preparation of foodstuffs, and to the need for strict control over all processes which may affect the natural quality of food; and to move for papers.

The noble Lord said: My Lords, only two or three generations ago, mankind existed upon naturally occurring foods, either eaten raw or prepared by such simple means as roasting or boiling and, in some cases, preserved for further use by smoking or salting. All that is now changed. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find any natural article of food which has not been treated with chemicals, had some part extracted, been exposed to high temperatures or preserved for long periods in cold storage, or otherwise processed or tampered with. I do not say that science can never find means of improving foodstuffs, but I do say that the addition of extraneous matters, and especially of synthetic chemicals, should be looked upon with the gravest suspicion and should not be permitted except under the most strenuous conditions. This subject has hitherto received too little attention in this country, and the steps taken to protect the public have been hesitating, partial and inadequate.

The gravity of the situation has been revealed in the United States by the well-organised and continuing work of the Federal Food and Drug Administration, which has listed no fewer than 842 chemicals used or proposed to be used in food. Some are no longer used because they were definitely found to be poisonous. The majority are still in use, some very extensively; and in many cases it is not clearly established whether they are poisonous or not. The absolute determination of the toxicity of a chemical added to food requires long and very complex investigations. The chemical may not be toxic in itself, but may combine with substances naturally present in the body to form toxic compounds. It may be very slow acting but cumulative in its effects. It may be one of those which are stored in the body, and the ill-effects of which become evident only after certain concentration has been passed. It may be a racial poison which interferes with reproduction or injures the next generation. Last year a Select Committee of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States was set up, with very wide terms of reference, to investigate the use of chemicals in the growing, preparation and handling of food. It has held numerous meetings and taken a large volume of important evidence, but so far as I know has not yet reported. Since this Motion was placed on the Order Paper, Sir Edward Mellanby, who was for some time the distinguished Secretary of the Medical Research Council, has, in a lecture on the chemical manipulation of food, drawn attention to the far-reaching implications of this practice and the need for action. I understand that his paper has now been published.

Let me explain now, with some examples, the nature and the gravity of this matter. There are two principle ways in which chemicals are added to food. One is as an incident of effecting another purpose. This happens when

insecticides, fungicides, and weed-killers are used in agriculture, and, in some cases, where fumigants or disinfectants are used during process of manufacture or where detergents are used for washing food or for washing crockery and food containers. The other is where chemicals are introduced with the express intention of altering the nature of the food or of preserving it beyond its normal life. Besides these there are the cases in which the quality of the food is altered by exposure to very high temperatures, causing chemical reactions in its constituents.

I do not propose to deal with the use of artificial fertilisers in agriculture, beyond saying that it is now admitted, even by hardened advocates of them, that unbalanced use of such fertilisers may easily produce a luxuriant plant growth which is also unbalanced: there may be too little proteins, and the human being or the animal fed upon this green stuff suffers injury to health or lowered resistance to disease. It is also of interest to note that lack of proper fertilisation renders the plants themselves more liable to fungus diseases and to attacks by insects or other pests, leading to increased use of insecticides and fungicides. It has long been common to use sprays or washes on fruit trees in order to discourage the attacks of mites or insects. A number of these sprays are probably harmless, although, in this whole matter, we should take nothing for granted. Some are definitely toxic; for example, lead arsenate, which, like other compounds of lead, is accumulated in the body with the possibility of its ultimately reaching a dangerous level.

I shall say no more about the older insecticides. It is the newer ones, and the enormous extent of their use, which give most cause for alarm. The most famous of these is D.D.T. which, since the war, has been applied to fruit trees all over the world without any adequate investigation of its effects upon health. It is highly toxic. Test animals—rats, for example—fed with 1 per cent. carbolic acid lived and did fairly well; those fed with one part per million of D.D.T. perished—and one part per million is equivalent to one teaspoonful in ten tons of food. Not only is D.D.T. highly toxic but it is fat soluble. Consequently, it may accumulate in the body fats, through repeated small doses, until toxic concentration is reached. Or, if this concentration has been approached and, owing to illness or for other reasons, the body is consuming its store of fat, the concentration then becomes toxic and the patient is attacked at the very time when his resistance is lowered. Not only is D.D.T. exceptionally toxic, but there is no known antidote. It is absorbed by plants and cannot be removed. Hence, all fruits and vegetables which have been exposed to D.D.T. are carriers of it to the consumers. Animals fed on hay or other food exposed to it are affected. Owing to its solubility in fat, milk is especially affected by it. The spraying of D.D.T. in cowsheds has been found sufficient to affect the milk, and in the United States dairy farmers have been officially advised not to do this. Butter sold on the New York market has been found with as much as thirteen parts per million of this dangerous drug. The fact that D.D.T. has such an affinity for milk constitutes a serious danger for infants, and for young children who are encouraged to drink large quantities of milk. Even breast-fed infants are not safe, for mother's milk has been found containing appreciable quantities of D.D.T. In passing, I may mention that D.D.T. has also been found in cigarettes up to as much as four parts per million—presumably due to the spraying of the tobacco leaf.

Other extremely toxic substances are now being used as insecticides, such as H.E.T.P., T.E.P.C., and parathion. They were invented by the Germans as war gases but not actually used as such. They are so dangerous that those who use them must be covered from head to foot with protective clothing. Already a number of fatal accidents have occurred to farm workers spraying with insecticides. This has engaged the attention of the Ministry of Agriculture, and a working party under the Chairmanship of Professor Zuckerman has recently reported this aspect of their use. Unfortunately, little is known of the effect of these chemicals on the foodstuffs to which they are applied or upon the health of the men and women who consume the foodstuffs. There are on record, however, at least two cases in which people have developed illness which appeared to be due to flour containing one part per million of parathion. The illness ceased upon another flour being used in which none of this poison was found.

I may also remind your Lordships that when fruit trees are sprayed about 95 per cent. of the spray falls on the ground; and if this ground should be used for growing other crops, those crops will receive a far higher concentration of the poison than the fruit trees. I do not know what the figures are for this country—perhaps the noble Lord who is to speak for the Government can say—but in the United States in the year 1947 no less than 150,000,000 lbs. of insecticides were produced. This is practically one pound per head of the population; and if only a very small fraction of that finds its way into the human body the cumulative results may be catastrophic.

Before I leave the agricultural side of this matter I should like to mention the use of antibiotics and hormones. As a result of treating an inflammation of the udder of one cow with penicillin, it was found that the milk was affected to such an extent that it destroyed the organisms essential for cheese making. The effect was so powerful that it persisted even when the milk was mixed with that of 200 other cows. I noticed recently a similar case reported from France, where the production of Camembert cheese had been frustrated for the same reason. An indirect result of consuming milk thus infected with penicillin or other antibiotics is that the consumer might perhaps become resistant to this remedy in such fashion that, if it were prescribed for some illness, he would receive no benefit. Another example of these new techniques is the use of a hormone powder called tuberite for the purpose of suppressing the sprouts of potatoes. I do not know whether it is for this or other reasons that in recent years it has become almost impossible to purchase potatoes of good quality in London. Other hormones are used as weed-killers, but it does not follow that, because they have a selective action on weeds, they do not affect other plants and the persons who consume them. It is well known that hormones are extremely potent in very small quantities and may have most dangerous effects.

These agricultural procedures are not confined to one country. Imported food is as liable to be affected as home-grown food. I have heard of oranges being sprayed with D.D.T., the fruit when picked being dyed and then waxed. I should not like to eat marmalade made from fruit so treated. Recently, I noticed that a proposal is under consideration for preventing the spread of swollen shoot disease among the cocoa trees of the Gold Coast. The principle of it is that the sap of the tree should be induced to imbibe

a poison that will kill the mealy bug by which the disease is transmitted from tree to tree. The idea is ingenious, but what effect will the poison have upon the cocoa bean, upon the cocoa derived from it, and upon the health of the consumers of cocoa and chocolate in this country and elsewhere? The effects of poisons used in agriculture received some attention at the Second International Conference on Crop Protection held in London in 1949. The Conference was presided over by the noble Viscount, Lord Bledisloe, who dealt with this matter at some length in his presidential address. He has authorised me to say that, but for an important and longstanding engagement, he would have been here to-day to take part in this discussion and that, without committing himself to any detail of the argument which I am addressing to your Lordships, he considers that this matter deserves the serious attention of the Government.

Let me now deal with the use of chemicals in the processing of foodstuffs. Flour is the outstanding example of a food subjected to chemical manipulation. Various chemicals are used to bleach the flour, because it is said that the public insist upon having an absolutely white bread. It is somewhat strange that they do not insist upon having many other articles of food bleached also. At any rate, it is clear that the public generally are quite unaware of the means by which this result is brought about, and of the toxicity of the chemicals used. Some chemicals are used for "maturing" flour in the space of a few hours, whereas nature takes weeks to effect this, and also for giving to inferior flour the characteristics of better flour. Others are used for the purpose of inducing flour to rise more, in order to produce a loaf which contains more air and water, two substances which may be rather dearly bought in this way.

The most widely used of these so-called "improvers" of flour is nitrogen trichloride, commercially known as agene. After this chemical had been in use for about a quarter of a century, its toxic effects were discovered by Sir Edward Mellanby. The remarkable thing is that this discovery, like many other notable scientific discoveries, was made almost by accident. Professor Mellanby noticed that dogs which were being kept for another experiment were developing nervous disorders, which became progressively more grave and ended in epileptic seizures and death. In a research which is a classic of its kind, he traced the cause of the illness to food made from flour which had been treated with agene. His results were published in December, 1946. They were taken notice of immediately by the Food and Drug Administration of the United States, which caused independent investigations to be undertaken.

The results, which confirmed Mellanby's findings, were published on November 22, 1947, in the Journal of the American Medical Association, together with a letter from the Chairman of the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council to the Commissioner of Food and Drugs advising him that the treatment of flour with agene should be discontinued.

Lord Hawke: Before the noble Lord leaves that particular subject, may I ask him whether the results of the researches in America showed that this particular substance were deleterious to the human stomach?

Lord Douglas of Barloch: I will come to that point in a moment. The use of agene has been discontinued in the United States. It took several years longer for a decision

in principle to be reached in this country, and only a few weeks ago the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food stated that about 90 per cent. of the flour consumed in this country was agenised. By way of excuse, I suppose, for this delay, it has frequently been stated that there is no evidence of injury to human beings arising from the use of agenised flour. There is abundant evidence that it is toxic to dogs and other mammals. Some people may be able to believe that nature by some queer chance has given human beings a special immunity from a poison which until some thirty years ago, their bodies had never encountered. That notion flatly contradicts the whole principle of evolution and the adaptation of man to his environment.

Lord Hawke: May I interrupt the noble Lord once more; I think he is taking his argument rather far. It is important that the British people should not believe that 90 per cent. of their bread is poisoned. Salt is quite toxic to the domestic fowl, yet the noble Lord and I can swallow salt. If I swallow sharp bones they would simply kill me, but they do not kill the dog. Surely the noble Lord cannot claim that a dog's interior and that of a human is the same in every respect.

Lord Douglas of Barloch: The noble Lord will perhaps remember that the whole basis of medical research is conducted by means of experiments upon animals, and the results of those experiments are not to be disregarded. It is true that in this particular case nobody has identified anybody as having died because of eating agenised food, but the cumulative effects over many years may reveal themselves in quite unexpected forms, and I, for one, at any rate, take care to procure bread made from flour which has not been chemically treated. It has now been discovered that the toxic factor in agenised food is a compound formed between the agene and the protein in the wheat. This illustrates the important fact that, even if a chemical used in the treatment of food is in itself relatively harmless, it may combine with some of the numerous substances of which food is composed to form a new and extremely toxic product.

I have dealt with this question of agene in some detail because, as the noble Lord says, almost everyone has been exposed to it, because it exemplifies the subtle nature of the perils arising from chemicals in foodstuffs, and because authoritative warnings about its possible danger seem to have been completely disregarded. In 1927 the Departmental Committee on the Treatment of Flour with Chemical Substances reported on the use of chlorine as a bleaching agent. They pointed out that it reacted with various constituents of the flour to form additional products, and that no harm to the body was likely to result from the chlorine itself but that the compounds formed might "act injuriously." They also pointed out that it might "irremediably impair the nutritive qualities of the flour" by affecting the vitamins which are present in small quantities and are very susceptible to mere traces of chemical reagents. The Committee went on to say that these observations applied also to the use of nitrogen trichloride, or agene, which is very highly reactive and on which they had evidence that its action on the protein of flour was probably similar. That was twenty-four years ago.

My Lords, flour deserves our attention because in the form of bread, cakes, biscuits, pastry and otherwise, it is the most important element of our diet, especially of those who are less well off, and also because it is the deliberate

intention of the flour millers, with the assent of the Ministry of Food, to substitute other so-called "improvers" in place of agene. Let us hope that after another twenty-five years have elapsed it will not be revealed that the substitute, too, has toxic effects. Flour and its products have been particularly unfortunate in the number of chemicals used upon them. In addition to the bleaching agents and improvers, there is a large class of substances euphemistically known by trade names as emulsifiers, softeners, and fat-extenders, which are used in baking bread and cakes or in the preparation of patent flours and cake mixtures. I could not attempt to enumerate or to describe all these substances without keeping your Lordships here for many hours. Let me take but one example. Certain chemicals called polyoxyethylene stearates are used and sold under the name of bread softeners, upon the plea that they produce a larger loaf and that they displace part of the lard used for shortening. They are known commercially under various trade names, such as S-541, "Sta-soft," and so on. One manufacturer alone in the United States during a period of a little over three years sold more than 7,000,000 lbs. of one of these products. But another manufacturer after experimenting upon rats, hamsters, and rabbits, discovered that this substance was highly toxic. It affected the kidneys and caused testicular and gastric troubles. I will only add that the use of bread softeners has been banned in the mental hospitals of New York State. But the health of those outside mental hospitals is also important. The very nomenclature of these things is deceptive. "Fat extenders" are substitutes for fat and reduce the nutritive value. "Anti-staling agents" are food preservatives enabling bread and cakes to be kept longer by the manufacturer or vendor before reaching the consumer, but nevertheless it has not been proved that the food does not deteriorate by keeping.

Then in addition to the kinds of chemicals I have mentioned there are whole classes of sweetening agents used as substitutes for sugar, flavouring agents, colouring matter or dyes. Of the sweeteners I may mention P.4000 and dulcin. These have been found to be definitely toxic, although dulcin at least was in common use for many years. Among the substances which have been used as colouring matter were a class of Azo dyes which are known now to be toxic and to be a cause of liver tumours in test animals. One of these dyes was long used under the pleasant name of "butter-yellow," but is now known to be carcinogenic. Mineral oils have been used in the preparation of foodstuffs. Not only do they have no nutritive value, but because of their capacity for absorbing and immobilising certain vitamins they actually deprive the body of essential elements in the diet.

Lord Hawke: When the noble Lord speaks about their being toxic and depriving the body, and so on and so forth, is he referring to the human body or an animal body?

Lord Douglas of Barloch: I am referring to the human body. If your vitamins are absorbed by a mineral oil and taken out of your food and rendered useless to you, that is injurious to the whole body. Let me give one illustration of a drink, as distinguished from a foodstuff. Drinks are perhaps not expected to be very nutritious, but we do not expect them to be poisonous. Among the most popular drinks in the United States (and I notice that they are beginning to gain a market here), are the cola drinks. They are composed of phosphoric acid, sugar, caffeine, colouring and flavouring matter. Although the amount of phosphoric acid may appear to the uninitiated to be small, this acid is so powerful that it

rapidly affects the teeth and dissolves the enamel. At the United States Naval Medical Research Institute human teeth were put into a cola beverage, and within a very short time they softened and started to dissolve. They became very soft in forty-eight hours. Experiments upon living teeth in animals showed that the drinking of cola beverages immediately began to erode the teeth, and ultimately they eroded down to the gums.

I will not multiply examples, of which I could give your Lordships many, but let me draw attention to the fact that one article of food may at different stages have chemicals injected into it for various purposes. The wheat or flour may have been affected by D.D.T. used as an insecticide; it has probably been treated with agene or other bleaching agents or improvers. The baker may add to it fat-extenders, emulsifiers or anti-staling agents. A cake-mix may also have added to it, in addition, flavouring or colouring matter. The sum total becomes rather alarming. Moreover, other articles of food consumed by the same person may contain still more chemicals. The manufacturers of these chemicals will say, and, no doubt, honestly, that they have no evidence that the things they are selling are harmful to human beings. We know now that this is not true in the case of many chemical additives to food which have been used for many years, and we have no right to assume, without the most stringent proof, that it is true of the others.

The fact is that man, having a relatively much longer life than animals used in medical research, may in the end suffer serious injury by the continued ingestion of relatively small quantities of these alien substances; and such effects are very difficult to detect. It is, however, significant that there has been an increase in recent years in the incidence of diseases having a neurological component, and dis-duodenal ulcers, schizophrenia, and disseminated sclerosis. It will be remembered that agene, for example, has a neurological effect upon test animals. Some may believe that men have become less able to cope with strain and worry, but it seems to me reasonable to assume that there are more definite and specific reasons for the increase in such diseases. Another significant fact is that the number of yearly deaths from cancer in this country is more than three times as great as it was fifty years ago. It has been definitely established that certain chemicals which have been widely used in food give rise to cancer of the liver and other organs in animals. In human beings, it is very difficult to establish the actual cause of cancer, but the rise in the number of deaths from this disease in a period in which the use of chemicals in food has increased so rapidly gives ground for reflection if not for anxiety about the future trend of events.

Let me proceed to draw some conclusions. The first is that the law relating to the sale of food is defective in that, as a general rule, the onus of proving that something injurious has been added is thrown on to the consumer or on to the authorities responsible for food inspection. I have pointed out to your Lordships the difficulties of proving this, and the long time which may elapse before such proof is forthcoming: in the interval the poisonous article is put on the market with impunity. I would go further, and say that with few, if any, exceptions the use of chemicals in the preparation of foodstuffs should be prohibited. This principle is well stated in the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Treatment of Flour with Chemical Substances, published in 1927. The Committee said:

"The object of maintaining inviolate the purity of the flour supply we regard as inspired by sound instinct, and we think that the responsibility for relaxing the principle is a very grave one, particularly at a time when research is beginning to throw new light upon the existence and properties of the more subtle constituents of foodstuffs."

They also said:

"Our view is that flour should be the product of milling wheat without the addition of any foreign substance."

These seem to me to be wise words, and applicable to all foodstuffs.

As a corollary, it should be made an offence—if it is not so already by Statute or by Common Law—to use any kind of chemical (such for example as fat-extenders) as a substitute for a natural foodstuff. Secondly, all food should be labelled with a precise and clear statement of what it contains, and stating the quantity or proportions of each constituent. This is doubly important if the addition of any chemicals is permitted. The third conclusion to be drawn is that this matter should be under the supervision of one strong, well-staffed and well-equipped central department free from association with any trade influences. It should not be left to the unco-ordinated efforts of sanitary inspectors, medical officers of health and public analysts to try to detect the use of chemicals and their potential dangers. Local authorities have insufficient resources for discharging such complicated and difficult functions. Even if they had adequate resources, to leave such matters to their unaided efforts would result in a wasteful multiplication of effort.

The toxicity or otherwise of these articles can be discovered only by prolonged and expensive experiments, because among the questions to be answered are these. What is the cumulative effect over years, or over a lifetime? Does the chemical affect reproductive capacity? Is it a racial poison? It is beyond the wit of any private organisation or of local health departments to keep pace with the ingenuity of the chemist and the food manufacturer. Many associations of food producers have research organisations, often assisted by Government grants, constantly engaged upon devising new methods of treating foodstuffs for the purpose of increasing the sales and the profits therefrom. What is needed is a central department free from all dependence upon commercial research bodies. The proper Ministry appears to me to be the Ministry of Health. The Ministries of Food and of Agriculture are in a sense concerned, but neither of them deals with the whole field, and both of them have associations which could conceivably be a handicap in undertaking this new task. I am therefore suggesting that the Government should take energetic and immediate steps to set up such an organisation, and to pass legislation prohibiting, or at least severely restricting, the use of chemicals in the preparation and as ingredients, of food, and requiring a full and accurate disclosure of the substances contained in all articles sold as food which do not literally and completely conform to the description by which they are sold. I beg to move for Papers.

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