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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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From Week to Week

O.K., chaps. Whoever hasn't, Mr. Churchill has "benefited from his 'holiday.'"

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Virginia Cowles is an American. She was Special Assistant to the American Ambassador in London from 1942 to 1944, and as such would have had access to Mr. Churchill's table as described in *The Sunday Express*. Her husband, Mr. A. M. Crawley, was Under-Secretary for Air in the Labour Government in 1950, but lost his seat to a Conservative in the following year (Buckingham). Can you understand a very great man—and particularly the very greatest Englishman that ever was (*vide press*)—better from watching him in his off moments (gold-fish, *etc.*) than in his even more 'public' life? We don't know. Surely a heaven-sent genius in war and peace is heaven-sent both ways. We surmise that the Prime Minister's press agents will regard Miss Cowle's disclosures with the advertisement experts' aphorism in mind: anything good said about you is good; anything said about you at all is good if not better.

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"We are for a Europe of nations, not for a Europe of denationalised peoples ready to become the prey of some stronger Power which cannot fail to emerge." Thus General Weygand who has emerged from the political obloquy cast over him after the end of the war. This young man of 85 is writing articles. He thinks the E.D.C. Treaty "involves the defence of France, and consequently the independence of her foreign and domestic policy." To him the supranational character of the E.D.C. is in contradiction with the idea of a Federal Europe and divides the French Army into two, one denationalised and managed by a supranational organisation, the other national, foreign to each other by being subordinated to different authorities, and with different armament, pay, and imbued with a different ideal. He says that Budget credits for equipment do not fully utilise the manufacturing potential of the country. *The Times* on December 4, said, under the heading "Unorthodoxy of M. Pinay," that his methods had met with hostility from orthodox financial circles on the ground, not that they were unsound, but that they were "likely to store up trouble at some later date, when M. Pinay might no longer be there to deal with it." The corollary of his renunciation of increased taxation was "not necessarily a reduction in capital investment." France has been dying for longer than Great Britain, and at any rate is not dead yet.

Again obtainable:

Realistic Constitutionalism

by

C. H. DOUGLAS

Notes for an Address by Major C. H. Douglas to the Constitutional Research Association at Brown's Hotel, Mayfair, May 8, 1947.

8d.

K.R.P. PUBLICATIONS LIMITED,
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PARLIAMENT

House of Commons: January 21, 1953.

(Continued).

Communist Agents (Infiltration)

Mr. Alport asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what evidence exists that Communist agents have entered territories in British East Africa; and how far their activities have contributed to the unrest existing in Kenya Colony.

Mr. Lyttelton: Up to now there is no evidence that Communist agents have entered these territories.

Apples and Pears Marketing Scheme

The Minister of Agriculture (Sir Thomas Dugdale): I beg to move,

That the Draft Apples and Pears Marketing Scheme, 1952, a copy of which was laid before this House on 3rd December, be approved.

This draft scheme is the third scheme under the Agriculture Marketing Acts to be considered since the war. It provides for the creation of a board mainly representative of the producers with powers for regulating the marketing of apples and pears in England and Wales. I need not discuss the general case for the use of these Marketing Acts to enable producers to promote improvements in the

production and marketing of their products, because I believe the principle is accepted by the great majority of Members on all sides of the House.

Despite progress in the last 15 years to 20 years, serious difficulties still face the apple and pear industry. To start with, outside a few specialist areas there are many growers whose orchards are poor and widely dispersed and often mere sidelines for the producers. Many of the orchards are old and inefficient. Although the best of our home-grown fruit can more than hold its own against all comers, much of the rest is of poor quality. The grubbing and replacement of many orchards is required, but this is an expensive operation, as are the installation of packing and grading facilities and cold storage.

Large numbers of home-grown apples and pears are still sold ungraded or poorly graded, so that high-grade imports offer formidable competition to our producers. Prices of apples and pears vary very sharply from season to season according to the yield and the volume of imports. The cider apple industry, which is dependent upon a single outlet, is particularly vulnerable. These are the difficulties which a strong central representative organisation of producers could do much to overcome, and if the scheme presents no ready made plan of operation it affords scope for an energetic board to devise practical measures for improving production and marketing.

The scheme I am submitting to the House tonight was submitted to my predecessor by the National Farmers' Union of England and Wales as promoters in February, 1951. A public inquiry into objections was held in July of the same year and the report of the Commissioner was received in August, 1951. In the light of the recommendations of the Commissioner I proposed certain modifications to the draft scheme which were accepted by the promoters. I now present a scheme for the approval of the House which I am satisfied will conduce to the more efficient production and marketing of apples and pears. . . .

. . . . I now turn to the powers which the board will have at the outset of the scheme. They are essentially regulatory in character and I shall refer to the more important of them. Under paragraph 67 the board has power to prescribe the terms on which apples and pears may be sold and also the form of contracts for them if sold growing or as grown on the tree. This is the usual practice with apples for cider making, for example.

This is a normal provision in marketing schemes and is necessary to enable the board to improve marketing conditions and to safeguard producers' interests. Its main effect is to enable the board to negotiate with buyers for uniform and satisfactory terms and conditions of sale on behalf of producers. An important modification of this provision, which was inserted at my instance, provides that the board may not prescribe terms of sale requiring the buyer to conform to resale price conditions.

Then there is the power under paragraph 68 to fix minimum prices on the sale of apples and pears for the various processing . . . uses, of which the principal is cider manufacture. In the past, the individual producer has been in a weak position for bargaining with the processing industries, such as the jam manufacturers and the cider makers. On occasions, the producers have had to accept a very low price

indeed. The board's powers under this paragraph will certainly strengthen their hand.

In addition, the same paragraph gives the board power to require that apples and pears shall not be sold for direct human consumption at a price less than the lowest minimum price fixed for sale for any processing use. This provision is designed to protect the minimum prices fixed for processing; otherwise fruit might be sold at throw-away prices, nominally for the fresh fruit market, but actually to be diverted to processing.

The board also has power under paragraph 69 to determine from time to time the descriptions of apples and pears that may be sold for purposes other than processing. The purpose of this is to enable the board to enforce minimum quality standards in apples and pears sold for dessert and cooking purposes, and so to increase both production and marketing efficiency.

. . . The three powers to which I have referred are probably the most important in the scheme in view of their possible impact on the interests of persons other than producers. For the reasons I have given I am satisfied that they are necessary if the scheme is to achieve its object. Moreover, there are important safeguards under the Act and in the scheme which will prevent any arbitrary use of them by the board. . . .

Mr. Coldrick (Bristol, North-East): . . . In the first place, I suggest that the very fact that the National Farmers' Union have to come to the Minister to ask for these powers is positive proof of their own incompetence to organise their own industry. I venture to suggest that if we suggested, from this side of the House, that miners should be allowed to control the mining industry, to fix the prices and to decide the agency through which they would sell coal, there would be a hue and cry from the opposite benches on the ground that we were establishing a form of tyranny. Yet the Minister calmly comes here this evening and indicates very blandly that he intends to ask the producers themselves to take a poll to decide among themselves whether they will establish a board exercising all the powers which are contained in this scheme.

What are those powers? First, they can decide that they will fine any grower who has an acre of ground devoted to the growing of apples or pears. They can similarly impose a charge upon anyone who has 50 apple or pear trees. Consequently, we are going to give a power of compulsion that we deny to any other organisation in this country.

Some time ago there was terrific heat generated in this Chamber because the Durham County Council decided that only people belonging to a certain association could be employed by them, and the Minister's aid was invoked in order to destroy that power. Now we are very calmly proceeding to say to a certain organisation that it shall have power to compel every grower of apples and pears to be a member of the organisation. Furthermore, it can then proceed, if it feels disposed, to enter into property, to enter into houses, or places that may be established, in order to see if there has been any infringement of regulations set up by itself, and if there is an infringement, it can then proceed arbitrarily to fine the recalcitrant member.

Sir Ian Orr-Ewing (Weston-super-Mare): I am sure the hon. Gentleman does not wish to mislead the House, but

has he not overlooked one particular point, that if the producers themselves do not like the scheme on which we are asked to give a vote tonight, they need not enter into it at all, and that if they do not like these proposed powers they need not vote for them, and that equally if, having accepted these powers, they do not like the way the powers are exercised, they can smash the scheme at any time?

Mr. Coldrick: I submit that that is the most specious form of reasoning to which one could resort, because one is virtually appealing to an interested body to decide whether it should arrogate to itself these powers to do these things. Would any intelligent person imagine that any body of people, if given the choice suggested here, would not vote as undoubtedly most growers will vote on this occasion? I candidly confess that if we were thinking purely in terms of self-interest, those of us associated with the Co-operative Movement ought to be backing this, because we own one of the largest orchards, if not the largest orchard in this country. We have one with 1,600,000 trees. It has to be sprayed against pests by helicopter.

Therefore, if we spoke purely in terms of seeking to raise prices and to enjoy all the privileges of a monopoly market, of course we should be sponsoring this proposal; but I say that Parliament would be neglecting its duty if it did not proceed to offer the maximum measure of protection to the consumers against the rapacity of people who want to organise scarcity when it suits their purposes in order to raise prices, and for that reason we are strongly opposed to the whole conception of the marketing boards as established at the present moment. . . .

. . . Consequently, in the interests of those concerned in the growing of apples and pears, if we want to do the best by them and by our people, one of two courses ought to be adopted. Either we should establish an independent board representative of growers, distributors and consumers, in order that all would have confidence in the judgment of the board; or, if we are not prepared to do that, the Government should take upon themselves the responsibility of insisting upon grading and packing, and there should then be a controlled and guaranteed price operating through the Ministry of Food rather than through the Ministry of Agriculture. In that way we could create the type of organisation necessary.

. . . We all recognise that if we continue what we are doing now, we shall have a plethora of these boards established. We want grading, packing and scientific marketing, but it must be fairly obvious that, with seasonal crops, a board set up for each commodity will create processing plants or factories, whatever it may be, which will be idle for the greater part of the time. It looks as though it would be far better to have one general commission entrusted with the responsibility of creating all the plant, machinery and so on essential for operating schemes of this character.

Although we will not press this to a Division, I sincerely hope that those entrusted with the responsibility for this great industry—if that is the correct term to apply to horticulture as represented by apples and pears—will consider these points in the interests of the growers as well as of consumers. Otherwise I am confident that within a short time such enmity will be generated among consumers and distributors that all these marketing schemes will be destroyed. . . .

House of Commons: January 23, 1953.

House of Commons (Conduct of Business)

Mr. H. Hynd (Accrington): I beg to move,

That this House calls for the establishment of a Select Committee to inquire into the possibilities of improvement in the House's methods of conducting its business.

I should like to say how gratified I am at the interest that this Motion has aroused in the Press and elsewhere. . . .

Mr. Christopher Hollis (Devizes): . . . What is new is this. We have now moved into a new era where there is a new type of legislation and, therefore, we have to readjust our machinery to meet this new problem. It is not entirely a matter of Parliamentary procedure. I agree with the hon. Member for Rossendale that this House, like all other societies, can only exist if people are obedient, not merely to its rules but to its conventions. That is an important point with which I entirely agree.

. . . The hon. Member for Bilston (Mr. Nally) has suggested that we should revise the time-table. Other Members have suggested that we should find some other methods of taking our Divisions. There are obviously arguments for and against those suggestions. All we are asking for at the moment is that there should be an inquiry into the subject so that we can weigh up the balance of the arguments.

We can learn a lot of things from the experience of other countries. Last week, when I was at Strasbourg, I found myself at luncheon sitting next to a Norwegian Member of Parliament, and I discovered that, according to their system, at an election when a Member is elected a substitute is also elected. Thus if the Member has to leave the country on public business, he informs the Speaker and a substitute can then vote for him and speak for him in his absence. I am not certain whether we should accept such a suggestion here, but, at any rate, if we consider the experience of foreign countries we find that there are a large number of things which they do differently from us. We do not want to copy all of them, but there is no harm in considering them and seeing what we can learn.

The most important thing on which we have to make up our minds is this question of what use we can make of the Standing Committee and what use we can make of the Committee of the whole House. I confess that my sympathies are with the hon. Member for Rossendale. I am doubtful how suitable an instrument is a Committee of the whole House for considering details of complicated and controversial Bills. There are perhaps 30 or 40 Members who take part in these debates, and then from time to time when the Division bell rings the remainder of us come in and vote without having listened to the debate.

Reference has been made to the farce of the system of a postponed Division when Members vote the next day, not having listened to the debate. But that is precisely what happens already. The vote takes place and the vast majority of voters have not listened to the debate. Most of us who have served on Standing Committees will agree that the debates in Standing Committees are on an enormously higher level because they take place in an intimate atmosphere and

(Continued on page 7.)

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Saturday, February 7, 1953.

Air Crew

We have been instructed and admonished.

"For a movement like yours," said our mentor, "the only possible condition of success is an organisation which is modelled on an air-crew." "Yes?"

"Yes. On the ground they are anything you like, officers and men. But once they are off the ground, they are in a world entirely theirs. There reigns a discipline which transcends discipline. They and they alone have their destiny in their hands. Each knows perfectly his task and moves to perform it by instinct rather than by order at the given signal. They all are thinking different things at once, but everything they think and do serves the same end. Each has his task and perhaps no one there knows how to perform it but himself and whether he does it well or ill. Yet they are bound to one another and a common intelligence animates them. Each is *primus inter pares*, first among equals, functionally differentiated, all their functions but one function—to raid, and to return after the raid."

"And if not?"

"If they don't return?"

"If they fall short."—"Oh, of course they may never get back to their base. If they do, the fellow (he may be a very nice young fellow) the fellow who wasn't one of them—he's grounded. He doesn't go up again. Sometimes he doesn't mind. Sometimes it makes him miserable. But, in any case, he's grounded."

We looked at our mentor, and wondered.

The Coronation Service

A reader to whom we are indebted for a never failing succession of valuable services has sent us a copy of *The Coronation Service* by Dr. Francis C. Eeles, a distinguished doctor of letters and of laws, (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., Ltd. 7/6 net.). The author disclaims originality, saying that he has only attempted to gather from well-known sources the information required by any one who wishes to know a little about the Coronation Service, its meaning and history, and all the interesting and unusual things that are done in the course of it. Without attempting to review it, we note its appearance, and, incidentally, from a brief reference to previous works, that the most recent work "for the student within reach of a good library" seems to be L. G. Wickham Legg's *English Coronation Records* (London,

1901). That is half a century old, and antedates by five years the date of the *de facto* sale of the British Empire in the estimation of some first-rate experts in political observation. "The latest date at which a check could certainly have been applied successfully to our dissolution as a pre-eminent force in world culture."—a gloomy view. Such books as Dr. Eeles's may suggest that, with Mr. Churchill's assistance we have reached bottom, and may be (in intention at least) on the rebound. But *revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras, hoc opus hic labor est* ("to retrace one's steps and to see again the light of day—there lie toil and trouble." The descent is easy.

"Jews Behind the Curtain"

Headed as above, the following letter appeared in *The Economist* for August 9 last:—

"Sir,—An article in your issue of June 21st fails to give a single fact in support of the statement that 'Jews once more find themselves a discredited and threatened minority.'

"Where is there discrimination? Perhaps among the 20 per cent. of Stalin prize winners, who are Jews? Is there discrimination, for example, in the editorial board of the Diplomatic Dictionary published by the Soviet Foreign Office? Out of the eleven members of the editorial board four are Jews and nearly half the contributors are Jews. One needs only to look through the file of the recent issues of the *Voprosi Ekonomiki* the leading Soviet Economic Journal to see the high number of Jewish contributors. The same applies to Soviet literature, to *Voprosi Istori*, *Prawda*, *Izvestia*. Criticism of the Israeli Government has nothing whatsoever to do with criticism of Jews. The Soviet Government and Communist Party have always maintained a critical attitude to the Zionist movement and particularly to its right-wing leadership. Whether certain Jews wish to emigrate from Russia to Israel no one knows, except your correspondent.

"With regard to Yiddish publications in Russia the facts are plain. As a result of the war the former compact Jewish communities in the Western parts of the Soviet Union have largely disappeared; many Jews have migrated into the interior of the Soviet Union and the more they become integrated in the economic life of the country the less they have recourse to Yiddish as a language. A similar process is taking place in Britain and America, and last year the only Yiddish daily paper in Britain, the *Jewish Times*, ceased publication for lack of support.

"It seems that, at the moment, in the campaign of the West against the Soviet Union anything is justified even if the statements made are founded on fiction or plain nonsense.—Yours faithfully, CHIMEN ABRAMSKY.

"London, N.6."

Coronation Visitors

Overseas Social Crediters visiting England this year are asked to write to the Social Credit Secretariat at 49, Prince Alfred Road, Liverpool, 15, if they desire to make contact with its personnel during their stay. Arrangement can then be made for them to do so without uncertainty.

Monsieur Antoine Pinay's Fight Against Political Parties and Resistentialism

by DRYDEN GILLING SMITH.

(Conclusion)

The strategy of the resistance leaders, many of whom had done their best to sabotage their country's war effort in 1939-40, was not directed towards any possible military successes. The terroristic outbursts which they directed against small groups of occupying Germans, could only have one result, and that was no doubt the result intended, savage reprisals by jittery troops never quite certain when they were going to be assassinated. Of course this was a complete stab in the back for the only form of resistance possible after an appeal to violence had been proved unsuccessful (by the military defeat and armistice in 1940), the diplomatic resistance offered by the Vichy Government. One can only assume that it was the express object of these self-styled 'resistance leaders' to make the task of the Vichy government impossible, to prevent its bargaining for any concessions, and to provoke the nearest thing to a reign of terror on the part of the Germans, so that the French would be driven wholesale into the arms of the 'Resistance leaders,' who would thereby gain the necessary power to effect their *coup d'état* after the Germans had been driven out by the allied armies. One can only assume that this was their express object, because this was in fact what they succeeded in doing. *This of course is no reflection on the thousands of valiant men who fought in the resistance armies after the savage German reprisals, which often made life in the Resistance the only alternative to deportation or the firing squad.* They were merely dealing with the effects of causes they could not be expected to understand. Many of these people who were regarded as politically unco-operative were killed, during the disorders of 1944 onwards, by other members of their own resistance groups, and later declared to be the victims of German atrocities.

A private letter from a man who once held an important juridical position under the government, which he continued to serve after it had moved to Vichy, and was for the latter 'crime' dismissed in 1944, illustrates the plight of many others who have had their careers similarly broken. He is one of the more fortunate ones who have recently been reinstated, though he now only occupies a very junior position in a small provincial town. He writes "I do not know whether it is this gap of seven years or a change in my own views but the administration of 'justice' has never seemed to me more ignoble, unjust and even absurd, dependent on so many imponderable factors that make one wish that one had never been mixed up with it."

From a totally different source, *France Réelle du Sud Ouest*, one learns that "The Union of Independent Intellectuals reminds its members that at a time when public opinion was indifferent it denounced the scandal in jurisprudence which resulted in the law of the 5th September, 1948, which instituted collective penal responsibility (*i.e.*, it was no longer necessary to prove each individual's guilt), an innovation by which France, the one time 'Mother of law,' surpasses even the 'jurisprudence' of Nuremberg, and places herself juridically on the same level as the most barbaric communities of time past." One should notice that

even in such nationalistic circles where little love is lost for the Germans, the infamy of the Nuremberg proceedings has been appreciated.

After its attempt to start and right the wrongs of seven years 'liberation' and re-unite the two divided camps into which so much of the population has been split, after its success in 'saving the franc' in spite of the Communists, the Socialists and the de Gaullist parties and after the continued success of Pinay's Independent supporters in bye elections, why did his government fall? The Achilles Heel of his administration lay in the parties, the lesser of the party evils, which he was forced to use, the M.R.P. and the Radical Socialists. They were able however to overturn his government the moment it showed signs of becoming dangerously independent, so that it might threaten in due course, to persuade the electorate to return a Parliament of Independents capable of governing without the aid of any parties. M. Mayer of the Radical Socialists has now taken over promising to carry on Pinay's policy, hoping no doubt that it will be a good vote-catcher for his party. One can be fairly sure, bearing in mind M. Mayer's supposed racial origins and the comment in *The Economist* for January 10th, 1953 that "M. Mayer's own contacts with Washington have been developed over a lifetime in International Finance," that M. Mayer's policy will at most be a parody of that pursued by M. Pinay. The latter has had the good sense to refuse the post of Minister of Finance in the new Mayer government.

Of these two parties on whom M. Pinay depended the M.R.P. or Popular Republican Movement are rather akin to "We Liberals" of the internationalist school. Led by the dapper little diplomat M. Bidault they have played their party cards extremely effectively since the establishment of the 4th republic, bargaining their block vote with every would-be Prime Minister for the best seats in the cabinet. By so doing they have made sure that though 17 governments have been and gone since the war the generally execrated M. Schuman has remained at the Foreign Office for over five years and is now only replaced by his party chief M. Bidault. Apart from Schuman the M.R.P. had six other seats in the Pinay cabinet (Independents 9, Peasants 3, Radicals 9, M.R.P. 7, U.D.S.R. 2). That there were some honest deputies among the M.R.P. ready to leave their party-power-politics is suggested by the report in the Bordeaux daily *Sud-Ouest* on December 24th, 1952, that several of them had condemned the anti-Pinay coup of their leaders and intend as a result of this to resign from their party.

An example of the orthodox M.R.P. mentality was given in the speech by M. Bidault at a meeting of the '*Comité d'Action de la Résistance*' in December. These committees, whatever their origins, have, like the peace movements in other countries, fallen almost entirely into the hands of the Communists, who make no secret of their allegiance to a foreign power and do everything possible to undermine French sovereignty. M. Bidault's talk was part of a national campaign to protest against efforts to "throw discredit on the Resistance" and in it he took pains to present himself as still the arch enemy of the 'collaborator' (One should notice that his 'arch enemies' are not Germans but other Frenchmen, and also remember that he himself was freed from a German prisoner of war camp in 1941 by the personal intervention of Marshall Pétain). His party is not averse to handing over French coal and steel to a committee

partly controlled by Germans and he himself expresses the desire to collaborate with those working for the U.S.S.R. "Whatever our differences, let us remember that we have been united. Let us never cease to strive for that unity which we once possessed." A fanatical effort to make peace with the present enemies of France accompanies a reiteration that *he* will never join forces with the ex-Pétainists.

A journal *L'Observateur* provides another example of this Liberal brand of Resistentialism. It gives credit to the French Resistance Movement for teaching the native population of Tunisia to resist their French 'oppressors' who are described as 'one time Fascists and Pétain satellites' (the reader should by now have realised that 'Fascist,' 'Pétainist' and 'Collaborator' are interchangeable terms of abuse directed against anyone in a public position who did not or does not subscribe to the tenets of Resistentialism). *L'Observateur* demands that the French Minister Resident be brought before the High Court as responsible for the current disorders. It is ironical after reading this criticism and an account of the attack which the Asiatic bloc have been making in U.N.O. against the French administration in North Africa, to learn to what absurd lengths the French have gone to give their North African possessions the same treatment as Metropolitan France. In recent years the French as a nation have been very worried about their birth rate and successive governments have embarked on a policy of giving very large family allowances, so large in relation to current wages and salaries that the favourite Music Hall joke deals with the father of ten children who leaves his job to bring up his family entirely on the proceeds of the *Securité Sociale* (the individual's contribution to the latter in direct *Securité Sociale* payments comes to more than £2 a month). The native populations of North Africa are largely Mohammedan and can therefore practice polygamy. The chief restriction on this practice is the price they have to pay for each new wife. Now with the advent of family allowances the whole thing is regarded as an investment. The children of the first wife bring in money from the state to buy second, third and fourth wives and so on at a similar rate of increase! (the allowance per child gets bigger the more you have).

For so 'suppressing' the native populations the French administrative authorities should, according to *L'Observateur*, be put on trial. This paper adds: "I know that this demand is illusory to-day but I am making an appointment. One day there will be an independent liberal power in France, and then the hour of reckoning will sound."

After the Liberal M.R.P. group the other main party on which M. Pinay depended was the Radicals and Radical Socialists, not to be confused with the Socialists proper (the S.F.I.O.). These can be found in the background of most coalitions since the war. They had 9 seats in the Pinay cabinet and they have provided M. René Mayer, the Prime Minister of the new government. In spite of their name they are roughly the equivalent in their outlook to the Conservative Party in England. They were at one time considered to be the official party of Grand Orient Freemasonry *Démodé* as the *avant-garde* they find themselves, like it or not, in opposition to the new *avant-garde* which had supplanted them. In this capacity they have no doubt opened their ranks to many men of different stamp from that of the early day members. The Party's current 'Order of the day' blames the de Gaullist R.P.F. for the governmental

crisis but shares the latter's enthusiasm for constitutional reform (One is justified I think in questioning the type of constitutional reform likely to emanate from such a milieu). The Party declares its willingness to join in any effort to "reduce prices, increase production and economise on national expenditure . . . Faithful to the Atlantic Pact it pronounces once more in favour of European 'Confederation' and hopes for a re-division of defence contributions between the allies. The internationalist element is in the foreground and one can see the difficulty which M. Pinay must have had to pursue a nationalist policy when he was dependent for his parliamentary majority on both the Radicals and the M.R.P. One is left wondering whether the attempt to call things by their proper names is better practised by calling radical-socialists *Conservatives* (as in England) or by calling Conservatives *Radical-Socialists* (as in France).

A word here about the Socialists proper (the S.F.I.O.). They can only fight on their record—and what a record! They did their 'socialising' in the days of the popular front, and those who wanted to do any more became Communists. A few old faithfuls remain but the rest of the population finds the record of a party, which so helped to demoralise and weaken France in the years before 1940, rather nauseating. In return for services rendered the Socialists have gone into honorary retirement. Instead of being raised to the House of Lords (as in England) one of them has been made President of the Republic. M. Vincent Aureol who recently announced that he "stands by the principles of primitive Christianity, which are those of the French Revolution" !!! is generally known as 'old gaffer Vincent' or 'Vincent the buffoon.' He is a national joke and apparently only the Rothschilds take him seriously. While I was recently motoring, with some French companions, along a wooded and be-villa'd highway on the Basque coast, someone pointed to one villa that was older, larger and more pretentious than all the others. "That," I was told, "belongs to 'old Vincent.'"

"But," someone else interrupted, "I thought it was owned by the Rothschilds."

"Same thing" was the reply.

These three parties together with the Communists, who await their chance to turn France into a Soviet satellite and the de Gaullists, who await another national disaster to enable them to return to power, make up the French Party System (outside which no politics are important in the eyes of the English press).

Happily for the French there is a considerable body of Independent and Peasant Deputies in the National Assembly. M. Pinay was one of these. After the fall of his government they held a meeting under the presidency of M. Ramarony, who is widely respected as one of the leading French barristers. Later they issued a *communiqué* stating that they were in favour of a government, based on national unity, which would provide a political amnesty (*i.e.*, release the countless numbers of political prisoners still held on charges of 'Vichyism' and 'Collaboration'), will continue *M. Pinay's* policy of conserving and improving the French individual's purchasing power, and will give priority to the building of houses (since the war France has built 289,240 new homes as against Great Britain's 1,127,313—figures from the journal *Sud-Ouest*) and re-equipment of agriculture "the fundamentals of any national economy." As for foreign

affairs they approve of the principles of the Atlantic Pact but (unlike the Schumanite M.R.P. and the Radical Socialists) they emphasise the necessity for safeguarding French sovereignty and the independence of the army.

The A.R.S. Deputies (*i.e.*, those who had left the de Gaulle party in order to support Pinay) also issued a *communiqué* after the fall of the Pinay government. It stated that the *groupe d'Action Republicaine et Sociale* "salutes with gratitude the President of the Council, M. Antoine Pinay, for his courageous, sincere and patriotic policy, interrupted at the moment when it was about to carry out the next stage of economic expansion and social betterment, which would at last make possible the recovery of monetary stability."

One wishes that the A.R.S. Members would set a better example by defining their terms more clearly, that is by emphasising the difference between "monetary stability" as seen from the point of view of the individual and the international banker's conception of "sound money" (which usually means the opposite). During the past 35 years the French have been robbed by inflation to the tune of at least 160 : 1, and this ratio takes no account of the increase in buying power which OUGHT to have taken place as representing improvements in productive processes during the same period of time. That is since the money value of these improvements has not been distributed as a national dividend, it OUGHT (had it not been stolen) to be represented by increased buying power of the monetary unit (though this method of distribution is not one to be recommended). What it amounts to is that the financial policy of successive French governments has robbed the individual Frenchman not only of his share in his country's economic development but also taken away 160 francs for every single franc the individual has been allowed to retain. Inflation is a vicious form of tax and its implications are best understood if it is always considered as a tax. The danger at the moment is that the bulk of the French people are ready to accept ANY policy that is a change from this continuous inflation, and run the risk of being offered the disease of "Orthodox deflation" (to cure them of their present one) with its stifling effect on the production of real wealth. It is refreshing to find that M. Pinay himself does not seem to have any illusion about deflation "as a perfect cure for inflation." Instead he has kept his attention on what is really important in the function of a money system. *Aspects de la France* for the 2nd January quotes him as *refusing to support any financial policy which prevents money from carrying out its function as a just and equitable measure*. He has refused the post of Finance Minister in the new René Mayer government.

M. Pinay's success in governing for nearly ten months in spite of the Parties and the smear cries of 'Vichyite,' in spite of the Communist disorders within the country, a full scale war in Indo-China, native troubles in North Africa and strong pressure from the money power to devalue the franc; his success in gaining the respect of the monarchist and traditionalist elements of *le pays réel* and in winning unparalleled admiration in every quarter of a country, that had never heard of him this time last year, *ought to provide an elementary lesson in the possible* to those numerous would-be statesmen who occupy government posts in every country, and who claim to be well meaning but powerless to resist 'trends' or 'the pressure of events.'

PARLIAMENT—

(continued from page 3).

because the Divisions take place among Members who have listened to the debates, which gives reality to them.

I should be inclined to favour sending almost all our legislation, except perhaps the Finance Bill and constitutional Bills, to Standing Committees. There is the problem, it is true, at the moment about the narrow majority. As a general rule, however, now that we have the rule that a substitute can be put in for illness of a Member, even with a narrow majority a Government can carry its way on a Standing Committee. On special occasions when it loses the day on an important matter of moment it can, as has already been said, reverse the vote on the Report stage.

Mr. de Freitas: Would the hon. Gentleman agree, from the experience which we shared at Strasbourg, being on the same Standing Committee, that there is something to be said for the system by which, at a plenary session, a rapporteur gives an account of what happened in the Committee and saves a tremendous amount of repetitive speeches?

Mr. Hollis: If we were to develop all the possible suggestions, it would take all the morning and afternoon. I hope the hon. Member will be fortunate enough to catch Mr. Speaker's eye so that he can develop that interesting suggestion. I shall not delay the House with any more suggestions, but I will sum up the present situation as I understand it. . . .

. . . Nevertheless, whatever time is chosen it seems inevitable that we shall have to have a review of our procedure before very long. There are, as has been said already two Select Committees in existence. Whatever the Select Committee on Delegated Legislation may advocate in detail, it is quite certain to advocate changes that will inevitably involve an entire procedural re-organisation of our business.

I would ask my right hon. Friend if he can give consideration to a suggestion which seems to me to be the simplest way out of the difficulty. The Select Committee on Delegated Legislation has been set up but, as I understand it, has not yet met. I can quite see the objection to having too many Select Committees at the same time; they might get in each other's way. But why should we have too many going on at the same time? Why could not the terms of reference of the Select Committee on Delegated Legislation be so extended that they are given authority to consider the more general problems of procedure? That would help to satisfy everybody. If my right hon. Friend could comment on that point, I should be most grateful.

Mr. Malcolm MacPherson (Stirling and Falkirk Burghs): . . . My hon. Friend the Member for Widnes (Mr. MacColl) gave a pertinent example of the way in which important matters are left out of consideration in this House simply because the House has not got the time. This is not a post-war problem; the problem existed before the war. Delegated legislation is one expression of it. Lord Hewart's book was produced away back in 1929 or 1930.

Since the war the situation has greatly intensified. We have added a great deal to the responsibilities of government and of the House in supervising government. We have dropped certain things. We have dropped the India Office, for example. But what we have added is, I think, far greater

than what we have dropped, not merely in the establishment of Ministries which did not exist before but in the great increase in size, volume and importance of economic matters and the increasing amount of time that the Government and the House have to give to those things.

If we concentrate our attention purely on what we in this House do, we are apt to mistake the proportions. Suppose we look at what is happening elsewhere in the Commonwealth. If we look at the Parliament of Australia or the Parliament of Canada we find institutions which are vigorous and lively Parliaments, and yet they have nothing like the amount of subject matter or the range of territory to cover that we have. Neither of them has to administer the Scottish Department—although there are some people in Scotland, I believe, who feel that it might just as well be administered from Ottawa. I do not share that view, but I believe it is held by some.

The Parliaments of Australia and Canada have no responsibility for colonial affairs. They do not administer education, they do not administer anything connected with local government. In foreign policy and in quite a number of other matters their burdens are far lighter than ours. Yet in spite of that, they are not weak Parliaments. They are vigorous, lively organisations. I suggest that if this House shed a certain amount of its responsibilities elsewhere it would not, through that action, in any way suffer as an expression of democratic ideas and methods.

The difficulty is to find the proper way of shedding the load. One suggestion which has been fairly fully canvassed today is that of making greater use of specialist committees in connection with individual Departments. I do not like that suggestion. I came across it first in recent times in an article written by the hon. Member for Devizes (Mr. Hollis). I did not like it then and I do not like the appearance it has taken on today. I think the final judgment on it was given by the right hon. and gallant Member for Kelvingrove (Lieut.-Colonel Elliot). He put his finger on the lack of connection between the Committees and what he called the "wind of public opinion." I think that is the answer. One would not quite trust a system of that sort.

A second suggestion, which has not been discussed today but which I think is within the range of practical politics, is to devolve a great deal more work than is done at present upon another place. When I think of Parliament as two Houses working together I often picture in my own mind the old bicycle of the 1890's—the penny-farthing—but if one talked of the two Houses today as a penny-farthing one would have to correct the proportions. The penny would be immensely bigger and the farthing immensely smaller because, whatever we say of the quality of the work done in another place, the amount of it is very small indeed.

In order to give the other place more work it would be necessary also to give it a broader and sounder democratic base. One would have to reform its membership radically as well as reform its powers. There is a further danger, though not a fundamental objection, to that as a method of reform. In general Parliamentary experience elsewhere the tendency has been for second Chambers not to be vigorous and lively bodies. I am afraid that has been the tendency whatever care has been taken in thinking out the membership and methods of working. The tendency has been for those bodies to be either dead or half-dead.

Mr. Godfrey Nicholson (Farnham): Not in France.

Mr. MacPherson: Not in America, either. There are exceptions and it may well be that with our inherited and still existing Parliamentary skill we might be able to overcome the difficulty; but the difficulty is there. A reformed second Chamber would be a very difficult thing to bring into being as a lively and vigorous organisation.

The third possibility is one which was touched upon by the right hon. and learned Member for Montgomery—devolution to other legislative bodies inside the United Kingdom. He mentioned Wales, Scotland and London, which all seem to me to be possibilities. We could perfectly easily consider shedding the load fairly considerably to such bodies, in the main in connection with those topics which did not involve the major economic interests of the country.

When the hon. and learned Member mentioned Northern Ireland, however, I thought he chose out of the whole range of the Commonwealth the one really difficult example, because the Northern Ireland Parliament is, in the public mind, rather bedevilled by other considerations which are not essential to the question of legislative devolution. But if he looks beyond Northern Ireland, to Australia, Canada and a large number of other countries both inside and outside the Commonwealth, he will find that it is a system that works widely and well.

Devolution of that sort, with a Parliament meeting in Wales or Scotland for, say, a couple of months in the year—not by any means a full-time legislative organisation—is a system which we could hardly fail to make work, for the very obvious reason that it is working effectively and well in so many other countries. All the problems inherent in it—the financial relations between the centre and the sub-Parliament and all the other relations between the two—are already well understood from previous examples. That seems to me to be the most likely avenue of major improvement in the conduct of our business.

In conclusion, I would point out that it is not necessary and, in fact, not wise to assume that in a period of this sort—a post-war period which, as has been said, is also the end of an era—that, while we have to make considerable changes in the economic life of the country and in various other aspects, we can coast along on the existing legislative machinery without trying to undertake very considerable changes in it. The likelihood is that if we do not adjust ourselves a little in order to bear the heavy strain, the machinery will suffer a good deal.

Over the years which we can see ahead of us—the next 10 or 20 years—it is very likely that we shall be under considerable strain in matters of economic policy and foreign policy. In order that we should have a legislative system which can take that strain, we should be well advised to consider fairly radical alterations, including the possibility of shedding some of the subjects, such as health and education, to sub-Parliaments, thus reducing the load on this Parliament, which could then concentrate on major topics and could give them much fuller attention.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided: Ayes, 50; Noes, 71.