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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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From Week to Week

Did anybody ever see anything more fatuous than the recent correspondence in *The Times* about bank charges and banking costs?

But, on second thoughts, it *may* be of interest to *The Times* to count the flies stuck to their fly-paper.

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THE TRAGEDY OF HUMAN EFFORT. If the Maginot line and the Siegfried line had been built along the English and Dutch coasts, the "B."B.C. would not be entertaining us with an 'Act' of God.

Fenlanders were warned and advised in *Social Credit* dated April 9, 1937. In 1936 Douglas said at Liverpool that it was essential to obtain agreement on policy, and if in any association such as a nation, it was not possible to obtain agreement on policy, then it became imperative that the association should break up into smaller units, until in any unity the policy was agreed.—Two agreed Fenlanders would do to start.

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Almost we agree with the lemming in the American humourist's sad story. You know it?—A Zoologist was sitting on a rock overlooking a Norwegian fjord. He sat quietly. The scene was wild yet peaceful. He fancied himself alone, and was astonished to hear a quiet voice saying, How are you? Looking around he saw no one, and, less peacefully resumed his meditations. Presently the question was repeated: How are you? But all the creature he saw was a lemming. He looked at the lemming, and, seeing him at last attentive, the lemming said: Don't you answer when someone speaks to you? The zoologist accepted the rebuke, and excused himself by saying that he had never before heard a lemming speak. "That," said the lemming, "is probably because you don't listen." "On the contrary," said the zoologist, "all my life I have taken a particular interest in lemmings, and certainly I should not have missed an opportunity of conversing with one had I known it to be possible, if only to ask a question which has always troubled me." "What is it you want to know?" asked the lemming. "I have always wondered," said the zoologist, "why it is that lemmings throw themselves into the sea." "What a remarkable coincidence," the lemming replied. "I, for my part, have made a life study of human beings, and there is one thing about them I have never been able to understand." "What is that?" asked the zoologist. "Why they don't," the lemming replied.

We have great sympathy with Dr. Geoffrey Dobbs who, in the October and November issues of *Theology*, published an article entitled "The Just Tax." His guns muffled, his aim was nevertheless impeccable. It was not surprising, therefore, that the Editor, the Rev. Dr. A. R. Vidler, should defend the position of the Church of England assailed by Douglas in "The Realistic Position of the Church of England" in the December issue of his periodical, without mentioning Douglas or Dobbs, whose opinions were identical. Dr. Vidler's article was entitled "The Welfare State from a Christian Point of View." The tenor is indicated by the following quotation:—

"There is no need now for Churches to agitate—as they should have done in the nineteenth century—for the introduction of elementary social justice, nor need they any longer seek to compete with the social services on their own ground. Churches should rather be now finding out how within the Welfare State they may become disturbing community centres where things are not made easy but are seen to be difficult, and where the dark and bewildering, as well as the glorious and reassuring, mysteries of existence, of which the Bible is the textbook, are revealed to the imagination of a famished generation."

We have never been able to understand what advantage lies in qualifying the word 'justice' with any adjective at all: if it needs qualification in the context of the speaker, then it isn't justice, whatever else it may be, social or otherwise. However, it is clear that any idea that Faith and Policy are connected is absent from Dr. Vidler's mind, and in the February issue of *Theology*, Dr. Dobbs points this out. The Editor comments:—

"The title of my article in the December number was designed to indicate that it purported to express *a* (not *the*) Christian point of view. I shall always resist the contention that only one policy, whether long-term or short-term, is consistent with faith in Christ or membership of the Church. Men cannot be compelled by legislation to feel love for one another, but in some matters they can be compelled by legislation to do a rough justice to one another and even to care for themselves. Christians may reasonably disagree about the extent to which such compulsion is salutary, and about whether in particular cases it should be approved or opposed, welcomed or resented. So far from regarding 'what every thinking Christian must by now surely agree to' as a perceptive summary of my article, I had hoped that it focused attention on a variety of open and important questions concerning where we ought to go from here (of which centralisation in the social services was one, but only one). I do not believe that the Welfare State is inevitably developing into totalitarianism. But it most likely would do so if a majority of citizens came to suppose that it must."

Had Dr. Vidler said: "I shall always resist the contention that Christianity is Christian" we might have pitied him; but we should have understood him.

PARLIAMENT

House of Lords: February 3, 1953.

Life Peers Bill

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Viscount Simon: My Lords, I rise to move the Second Reading of the Life Peers Bill, the text of which is in the hands of your Lordships. It is a short Bill, and I hope it will be found that it is clearly drafted. The object of the Bill is to authorise the creation by Her Majesty, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, of a limited number of persons to be Members of this House during their lives, without transmitting their right to be Lords of Parliament to their heirs. The Bill suggests that ten should be the maximum number of Life Peers to be created in any year. If that maximum is thought to be too great, then the figure can be reduced in Committee. . . .

But, while that is so, since the passing of the Parliament Act, 1911, one very significant change has taken place. The reputation of the House of Lords as a useful, and, indeed, necessary element in Parliament has grown. It no longer claims to set at naught the deliberate and reiterated decisions of the popular Chamber, but it devotes itself to the work of revising and improving legislation and of suggesting amendments which the House of Commons can reconsider. This is the proper work of a second Chamber, which is necessarily subordinate to the popularly elected House. . . .

Viscount Samuel: My Lords, your Lordships to-day are invited to choose between three courses which are set out on the Order Paper. The first is the Motion of the noble and learned Viscount, Lord Simon, that we should agree to the Second Reading of his Bill to-day. The second is the Amendment of the noble and learned Earl who has just spoken [Earl Jowitt], to reject the Bill on Second Reading; and the third is an Amendment to be moved on behalf of the Government that this House should not at this stage pronounce either for or against Lord Simon's Bill but should await the result of conversations which are intended to be begun before long between the political Parties to see whether an agreement can be arrived at. . . .

. . . If, as I hope, the noble Viscount who is leading the House to-day is in a position to give definite assurances that the Conference will be held forthwith, and that the Government have an earnest desire to see it proceed to a successful conclusion, . . . it seems to me that the best course is that your Lordships should neither reject nor accept this particular Bill now but should leave the matter over for consideration until we see the result of the Conference. . . .

. . . If the Bill of the noble and learned Viscount were passed, it would still leave us with a Second Chamber swollen to the excessive dimensions of a membership of over 800 and rapidly increasing towards 1,000, a vast majority of whom do not attend your Lordships' debates, and four-fifths of them sitting by hereditary right. Even if we had ten Life Peers added every year it would be a long time, perhaps a decade, before the proportion was altered from four-fifths to three-quarters; this House would still be overwhelmingly an hereditary Chamber. A seat in the British Parliament would still be a matter of inheritance, like the ownership of a house or a farm. . . .

Viscount Hailsham: . . . Events in your Lordships' House sometimes follow one another with such kaleidoscopic rapidity that one's original intentions become inapposite. That has been the situation this afternoon. What started with the Second Reading of a Bill to promote Life Peerages up to the number of ten has changed miraculously, first into a debate as to the means by which the Bill can be killed without revealing the real motives underlying the action of either Party Front Bench—a most interesting and revealing discussion—and then into a somewhat academic debate on the general subject of the reform of the House of Lords. I should like to offer, with great diffidence, something to both parts of this debate.

I fully share the views of the two Front Benches that, ideally speaking, a reform of the House of Lords should take place after an all-Party Conference, whether agreement is arrived at in the course of that Conference or whether it is not arrived at, as I should personally expect to be the case. For that reason, and since the noble Viscount, Lord Swinton, who leads the Government this afternoon, has announced that invitations to such a Conference have now been issued, I must say it would be difficult not to proffer to the noble and learned Viscount, who proposed the Second Reading, the advice that the Second Reading should be, at any rate, postponed until the Conference has taken place. But, at the same time, I would say now that as between the alternative sponsored by the Government, of adjourning the debate, and the alternative of rejecting the Bill, sponsored by the Opposition, I should prefer the adjourning of the debate rather than the rejecting of the Bill, if only for the reason indicated by the noble Lord, Lord Teynham, who has just preceded me, that the rejection of the Bill, for whatever reason and however reasoned the argument, would be interpreted by the public at large as a rejection out of hand of the proposition underlying the Bill. And as the noble Earl, Lord Jowitt, was careful to make it plain that he did not reject the principle underlying the Bill, I think it would be a great pity if the Bill were rejected, even on a reasoned Amendment. Therefore, upon the purely practical problem with which we are faced, I myself feel that the noble and learned Viscount, Lord Simon, should take the alternative offered by the Government of adjourning the debate after a suitable discussion in order to enable the Conference to take place.

I must say that I thought some of the criticisms of the noble and learned Viscount, Lord Simon, by the two Front Benches, were both a little less than gracious and less than funny. The noble Viscount who leads the Government, speaking as he always does, with all the enthusiasm and vigour of an extinct volcano in violent eruption, seems to consider that criticism was to be levelled at the noble and learned Viscount because for forty-two years he did nothing about this problem. On the lips of noble Lords opposite that argument is inapposite enough, but on the lips of the noble Viscount, who for nearly twenty-five years of his distinguished career has been amongst the leaders of the Party which has coralled Lord Simon into its own counsels, it is less than gracious. The noble Viscount, Lord Swinton, was himself a member of those Governments which in successive Administrations used to urge out of doors the urgency of the reform of the Second Chamber but made themselves responsible when in office for the very policy of non-feasance

which they condemned. I thought it was rather less than funny for the noble Viscount, Lord Swinton, to level this argument against his noble friend. For my part, I, who played no part in any of those Administrations, feel that the arguments are entirely sound in so far as they are criticisms of successive Administrations in which both noble Viscounts played such distinguished parts; but in so far as they are designed as reasons for continuing delay on the part of the present Administration, I consider that they are a little less than convincing. When they are produced by an Opposition belonging to a Party, which for years stood for the abolition of the House of Lords, as a reason for continued delay in its reform, I am still less convinced of the cogency or sincerity of these considerations.

Both the noble and learned Earl, Lord Jowitt, and the noble Viscount, Lord Swinton, in glorious unison, turned and rent the unfortunate Viscount below the gangway because he ventured to bring forward his proposals now when the Government had so manifestly and sincerely promised to call a Conference, to which up to this afternoon no invitations had been issued. That is really a little too much to expect Back Benchers on either side to swallow. After all, it is not the beginning of all our political careers, humble though we may be. We are quite sure that those invitations would not have been issued this afternoon had it not been for the initiative of the noble and learned Viscount, Lord Simon. However much the two Front Benches may try to explain that Lord Simon's intervention was very inapposite, because they were always intending to do it on February 3 anyhow. I remain certain that we ought to be grateful to the noble and learned Viscount for having intervened in this particular way. Each Front Bench is completely convinced of the sincerity of the other. I frankly confess that I am not convinced of the sincerity of either. They are neither of them sincere.

I have studied this question with great interest, personally and publicly, for twenty years. Most people in any way interested in public life have at one time or another, with a great degree of frankness and cynicism, made known their own views to me, although it would be wrong for me to betray any of the confidences I have received. I can make only this confession to your Lordships, I am quite convinced that the Labour Party will, if they can, preserve the present situation, because they wish the composition of your Lordship's House to be vulnerable in the light of public opinion, and not as good as it ought to be, in order, in fact, to prevent your Lordships from discharging the responsibility which rests upon you by law. I am equally convinced that there are many members of the Conservative Party who will go on playing with House of Lords reform as a kind of façade—a kind of ritual dance—as Lord Samuel suggested, in order to prevent anything ultimately from being done. Indeed, it is less than twenty-four hours since a prominent member of the Government discreetly informed me that he was not going to have any change made if he could possibly help it.

So much for the sincerity of the two Front Benches: the Labour Party designing to retain an anomaly in order to abuse it, when it has nothing better to say for itself, and the Conservative Party designing to enter into a ritual dance for the purpose of avoiding a necessary reform. I hope that

the marriage which is proposed in a Conference between these two entirely insincere Parties will prove fruitful and produce a child of which the noble and learned Earl opposite will not desire to wring the dirty neck. I hope sincerely that the pressure of public opinion on this matter may drive both political Parties into a certain measure of decency, which so far I do not think they have shown.

(Lord Hailsham's speech, which we propose to print in extenso, will be continued next week.)

House of Commons: February 2, 1953.

Agriculture (Policy)

(The Debate continued: Mr. Snadden is speaking):

Fewer calves were being retained for rearing, milk production was static, and the laying birds were fewer. Only the expanding pig population held out any hope at all of our increasing our meat ration to any substantial extent. Pigs, again, are very dependent on imported feeding-stuffs, and, at the same time, the tillage acreage of the United Kingdom continued to dwindle.

That was the situation which this Government faced when they took office towards the end of 1951. Therefore, as my right hon. Friend has often stated, action had to be taken quickly to arrest this fall and restore confidence. So we did two things. We announced and published in a White Paper, Cmd. 8556—that is the last Price Review paper which I have here—a new expansion programme, the objective of which is to raise the net output by 1956 to a level of at least 60 per cent. above pre-war.

I want to make a point which I think is of great importance. We made it perfectly clear at that time that this figure was not a final goal, but one which we believed to be reasonably possible having regard to the fact that the check to expansion to which I have referred, particularly in cultivation and tillage, had to be reversed before we could proceed to increase production. That is a very important point.

Secondly, in our Price Award, we announced price increases and also new or continued production grants or subsidies to enable the industry to achieve the objective laid down in the White Paper. At that time, the Government attached the greatest possible importance to the decline in our tillage acreage throughout the country, and so we brought back the ploughing up grant, and since then we have extended its scope.

Next, we brought in a fertiliser subsidy, and there we took care, as the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Grimond) will remember, to ensure that the subsidy was particularly adapted to the needs of the small farmer and the crofter, and in order to encourage the rearing of more calves we brought in a calf subsidy. Through our Marginal Agricultural Production scheme in Scotland—and here I come to a point raised by the right hon. Gentleman—we increased assistance to rearers of hill cattle by offering them £3 a head in order to cover the cost of winter keep which is the principal problem relating to the maintenance of cattle on the hills in Scotland.

. . . The most direct incentive, of course, was provided by increasing commodity prices at the Annual Review when special emphasis was laid on beef. A year has not yet

(Continued on page 6.)

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Saturday, February 21, 1953.

Control by Beggary

Sweet rationing has gone, egg rationing has gone and sausages are to be free from control by ministerial order. Rationing can end at any moment, resulting in a fall in prices, not a rise.

Rationing and price-fixing were never *both* necessary except to satisfy a lust for control, while developing a multiplicity of mechanisms for exercising it. The "cure" of unemployment by creating vast bureaucratic services, all actively destructive instead of productive, was merely an alternative to other social wastes on the grandest scale.

The 'Conservative' administration is now bent upon dressings its window, and the need coincides, by accident or design, with the reduction of available purchasing power to a point at which the consumer cannot buy more than the administration allows him, because he can't pay the price. To say that x£-millions can now be devoted to rearmament because x£-millions' worth of labour is released from bureaucratic employment is nonsense. That is not how the book-keeping is done. Nor is it how bombs are made. Bureaucrats can't make bombs, and would prefer not to try. It's not their line of country.

The suggestion to the contrary may make preparation for war more popular, but only for a time. The *natural* effect of improvement of process is falling prices accompanied by rising incomes, the disparity taken up by increased consumption in either quantity or quality according to individual preference. As it is, falling prices will be accompanied by still further increasing taxation—in other words falling incomes. This disparity will be taken up by wider and wider separation of producing power from individual control over the policy of production: The will of "The State," not mine, be done.

The newspapers have begun discussing whether the development of atomic physics has anything to do with the weather, and evidently wisdom congregated in the local is to be permitted to say that it has, or might have. This is a straw in the wind. Another straw is the story that Jews are fleeing from the Communist Party in England. It would be interesting to know whether they are seeking refuge in the wrath to come or in the wrath which has come. Things are not what they seem. In (anti-Semitic) Russia, 'popular' clamour directs itself against the . . . States on the ground of the 'murder' of the Rosenbergs (Jews).

The age of confusion is here.

"Si on le laisse faire"

The Editor, *The Social Crediter*,

Sir,—When in France last year I asked a Frenchman of the educated class if he thought that Pinay was an honest man and would really help France to regain stability and prosperity.

His considered answer was revealing. . . *Oui, si on le laisse faire.* Evidently "On" has disapproved of his good intention to help France, and the sometime Rothschild banker has supplanted the honest little Frenchman concerned for the welfare of his country more than for the welfare of the banking industry.

In England Mr. Eden bleats in the House of Commons that General Eisenhower's stopping of shipping to China (and thereby stopping of the ammunition firms' exports to that country) may have "political repercussions." Does he remember that Ambassador Dodd said in his diary that "I can't forget the published reports that American and British arms manufacturers defeated the League of Nations peace efforts more than once. Soon after coming here [Berlin], I learned that the French munition makers had helped Hitler to power." Who prompted Eden to his remark? "On"?

Sunbury, February 9.

E. Bloomfield.

S.C.S.

Certificate of Associate: Examination

Candidates for the Certificate of Associate of the Social Credit Secretariat (the elementary grade certificate) in England and Canada will receive their papers by April 2. There is still time for more European candidates to enter. They are reminded that a fee of 10/6 is payable in advance to cover the cost of their examination. The method of conducting the examination is as follows:—

Each candidate receives an envelope containing (a) an undertaking to be signed that he has complied with the Rules. (b) a clear statement of the Rules. (c) a sealed envelope containing the Examination Paper, four questions, all of which must be attempted, the answers to be written and posted within 14 days of *receipt* of the paper and within 24 hours of *opening* the envelope containing it. Candidates may consult any books or papers they please, but may *not* discuss the subject matter of the paper with anyone else, nor any related topic. The signed undertaking covers these points.

Obituary

We regret to announce the death at Norwich on February 10, at the age of 91, of Mrs. Elinor Jones, widow of the late Rev. Lewis Jenkins Jones, Unitarian Minister, of Glasgow. Mrs. Jones was, until a year ago, a regular reader of *The Social Crediter* since its commencement. She is survived by a son (Dr. Tudor Jones) and a daughter (Mrs. Muriel Greenhill).

Nursing Fathers

by H. SWABEY.

Isaiah's prophecy, (49, 23), *And kings shall be thy nursing fathers and their queens thy nursing mothers*, neared fulfilment at the beginning of the century. The Kaiser's intimates held an excellent position to further the design. Edward VII ascended the throne. But apparently the plan needed war and revolution for success, and then another war and more revolutions.

Sir Sidney Lee died before completing the volume on Edward VII's Reign, yet the chapters he finished surpassed the interest of anything in his first volume. Edward objected to the Declaration, worded in 1689, which he had to read and demanded the modification of what he considered as an insult to his Roman Catholic subjects. It was not amended until three months after his death.

Chapter 2 deals with constitutional issues. Lee says that popular theory "erroneously" regards the King as one of the Estates of the Realm, and merely permits him to "offer suggestions." He holds that "the advent of Pitt marked the end of personal rule." Queen Victoria often wrote to a minister, "Never would she consent," yet always signed.

"Gladstone held the old Whig idea that a constitutional sovereign was a mere automaton He wrote in 1878, 'It would be an evil and perilous day for the Monarchy were any prospective possessor of the Crown to assume or claim for himself final or preponderating, or even independent, power in any one department of the State.' (*Gleanings of Past Years*.) . . . Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury felt bound to yield to the wishes of the Crown as far as the constitution allowed, and in all but very great matters Queen Victoria had her way. . . . The extreme Whig doctrine which interpreted the sovereign as a puppet was as repugnant to him [Edward] as to his mother." Lee carefully disclaims in his preface any responsibility on the part of George V. for the work: his views may have been less or more "constitutional" than those of his forebears; and clearly such an emasculated kingship would be far less of a nuisance to real centres of power than a republican president.

Edward "realised that the strength of a minister's position in regard to any objection from the sovereign as to his course of action lay in his power to resign his office if the sovereign declined to give way to him." Among Edward's prerogatives was the veto, "but this prerogative had not been exercised since 1707." Edward determined to uphold such prerogatives as survived, against the determination of his ministers, "especially his Conservative ministers, to uphold the all-embracing power of Parliament." The Crown was forced to surrender "most of the great prerogatives" during his reign. "By some curious irony it was the Conservative party, the traditional 'Church and King' party, which during Edward's short reign, made the most resounding attacks on what was left of the royal prerogatives. Even the two great prerogatives of the dissolution of Parliament and of the cession of territory were challenged by Mr. Balfour in 1904-5. . . . 'Crown' appointments became the patronage of the Prime Minister. However much the King disliked a parliamentary bill, it

is doubtful whether he would ever have dreamt of exercising the dormant royal veto. Only one great prerogative was not tested—the prerogative of the declaration of war."

The above demonstrates the absurdity of what is called the "party system" or the "balance of parties," in the constitutional theories advanced by Disraeli and, possibly, in our time, Lord Hailsham.

In such an unchecked assembly as the House of Commons, the politician knows no loyalty save to his clique and its interests, and the rivalry of parties is for power, not for principle. The 'conservative' endeavour has repeatedly been to *outdo* their rivals in destructiveness. Before he took over, Disraeli described "the great conservative party that destroys everything." Blackstone, on the other hand, described a House of Commons that was checked by the other two Estates of the Realm, and that contained a system of checks within itself through the divergent interests of the members, town, country, scholastic, *etc.* The balance of parties forms a perverted and cynical substitute for genuine constitutionalism of a genuine trinitarian nature. Blackstone pointed out also that heredity balanced election, while the suffrage preserved some mean between numbers and wealth. Balfour "condemned forcibly Lord Rosebery's endeavour to form a middle party." (1903.) The King in the previous year had successfully opposed Balfour's candidate, the American Admiral Mahan, for Cambridge Regius Professor to succeed Lord Acton, as he desired a British subject to fill the post.

Prominent among the King's friends ("if not the King's greatest friend") was Ernest Cassel. This son of a Cologne banker had started his "astounding financial career" as an apprentice to the Elzbachers of Cologne. Then he became Louis Bischoffsheim's confidential clerk: "He was ambitious, and wanted to get to England." He acted as Hirsch's executor, came to London and met the Prince: later, "the King used to visit him" at his home, and became godfather to his grandchild Edwina, "now Lady Louis Mountbatten." Cassel "practically controlled the King's investments," and was created a Privy Councillor in 1902. Other honours followed. Three Sassoons helped to make up "the King's inner circle of friends." Albert was created baronet in 1890, Edward Albert, "who had married Aline, the daughter of Baron Gustave de Rothschild," succeeded him in 1896. Their half brothers were Sassoon, Reuben and Arthur. "With Edward Albert, Reuben and Arthur Sassoon, the King was most friendly . . . There was some criticism at the time of the prominence in the King's circle of his Jewish friends, but they were more than balanced by friends of British aristocratic descent." Walpurga Paget noted, *In my Tower*; "The King as King is much more useful than he was as Prince of Wales. He has a great deal of ability, but is always surrounded by a bevy of Jews and racing people. He has the same luxurious tastes as the Semites . . . Still, he is a *chormeur* and very able."

The King applied his experience and his personality to foreign affairs, although he was frequently frustrated. The Kaiser, for instance, knew of the conditions of peace offered the Boers (1902) before Edward. "He had been informed by an excellent authority in South Africa . . . that unconditional surrender would no longer be required." The King was annoyed that the Kaiser's sources of information were

better than his own. But the terms at least demonstrate that the magic phrase, *unconditional surrender*, was not invented by Roosevelt, and that wiser statesmen had rejected the idea. It may also be noted that the Japanese ambassador urged, during the Anglo-Japanese negotiations (1901-2), "that it was a matter of life and death for them to keep Russia out of Korea." The Kaiser tried to make amends, and his Foreign Secretary (von Richtofen) said that "by refusing to receive the Boer Generals, as in 1900 he had refused to receive Kruger, [he] had shown an excessive consideration for England."

The German Ambassador, Mettermich, complained that "the feeling in certain circles and especially in the press has been aggressive. Particularly *The Times* is a disturber of peaceful relations and will not let emotions lie quiet." The King felt the same, and sent a confidential friend to the newspaper to ask the editor to modify its attitude (March, 1903). "*The Times*, however, answered: 'It would always be ready to obey His Majesty's wish, which could rebound to its honour; but in this particular case, it is completely out of its power to follow the request of His Majesty. It had entered upon a course, careless of any opposition, and its attitude towards us was to be altered under no circumstances.' The King was 'very deeply disappointed and grieved' at his inability to qualify the newspaper's policy." The King tried to maintain friendly relations with the Kaiser, "in spite of the growing alienation between the press of the two countries." Baron von Eckardstein mentioned a conversation with Chamberlain, who "complained very much of the bad behaviour of the German press towards England and himself."

Balfour succeeded his uncle, Salisbury, in the middle of 1902 and retained office until the end of 1905. At this time, "Language of unusual violence was employed towards Mr. Balfour by Mr. Churchill and Mr. Lloyd George." Balfour retorted that the "one plain test" whether the Government could carry on was the support of the House of Commons. The *Spectator* complained that Balfour's argument was based on "an entirely novel view of the Constitution." The Government had in fact been defeated by three votes some months previously. The King "demurred to the inference that he counted for nothing when the question of dissolving Parliament arose in circumstances which admitted of doubt as to the course which should be taken. The King was displeased that his Prime Minister should assert implicitly that the House of Commons could insist on a dissolution. But Mr. Balfour was unrepentant."

The King was able, however, to assert his authority when asked to sign an incomplete Warrant consolidating new rates of army pay. He refused until he was satisfied that no officer would suffer under the new regulations. He "had been fighting in the interest of the army, not only against the War Office, but also against the Army Council and the Treasury, and had won his point that however desirable economy might be, it should not be practised at the expense of the more promising officers in the army." (1905.)

As relations with Germany tended to deteriorate, the King worked for an entente with France: "From the Revolution of 1689, with but few intermissions, England and France had been persistent enemies." In the event, "France abandoned well-nigh all her claims to financial control in

Egypt, which had been a fruitful source of controversy." But (1904) when all arrangements had been made, Balfour "promised that the assent of Parliament should be invited in the form of a Bill. . . . The King took exception to such a procedure on the constitutional ground that "power to cede territory rests with the Crown." Balfour said how anxious he was to preserve the prerogative intact and to avoid legislation which would take up valuable time. Nevertheless, he declared in Parliament that "there can be no cession of any territory of His Majesty's without the consent of Parliament." The King complained that Balfour had treated him with "scant courtesy." The result was that "one of the last remaining great royal prerogatives, the power to cede territory, was taken over by Parliament."

Everyone seems to have approved of all that was done, except Lord Rosebery who predicted that the agreement would sooner or later lead to war. France, said Delcassé, "had to choose between their Egyptian dreams and the claim to recover some day the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine: as sensible men they chose the latter." The last article of the Moroccan Convention concerned the management of the Egyptian National Debt. These articles were kept secret until the end of 1911. The Germans later accused Edward of encircling them. But he told a friend that taking any step which would provoke a European war would be "a crime against humanity which would exceed in heinousness anything known to history."

The Press was a constant irritant. Lord Salisbury complained in 1901 of "what is called public opinion here. The diplomacy of nations is now conducted quite as much in the letters of foreign correspondents as in the despatches of the Foreign Office." During an incident of the Russo-Japanese war (Feb. 1904-June, 1905), the King thought that "the unbridled language of the British press was much too strong" (Lee) and complained, "The Press has become so violent that it may drag us into a war before we know where we are." A war scare between Germany and Britain "found a virulent outlet in the popular press" (Lee) at this time, and the King had an interview with Coeper, the German Naval Attaché in London, during which Coeper remarked that the scare "was probably due to the appearance of certain newspaper articles combined with the recent redistribution of the English Navy. His Majesty replied that the Press was mad in all countries; and instanced what the St. Petersburg newspapers had recently written about England, which was quite untrue." (Coeper.)

(To be continued).

PARLIAMENT—

(continued from page 3).

passed since these measures were announced, and it is obviously far too early to expect startling results. But we can say that already encouraging signs are visible. Of greatest significance is the reversal of the alarming downward trend in tillage. If we cannot reverse that fall, we cannot expect to expand the livestock of the United Kingdom.

In 1952—our latest figures are the June returns—taking the United Kingdom as a whole, there were 170,000 more acres under tillage than in the previous year. Looking at cattle, the numbers of heifers in calf have been increasing—I particularly extracted these figures—more calves are being

retained for rearing, sheep are recovering very fast after the disaster of the 1947 storm, and although I cannot say it for England and Wales, I can say for Scotland that the number of ewes today is greater than at any time since 1940. As for pigs, we all know that pig numbers today are the highest on record.

A year ago the rate of expansion had slowed down to a point where it was stationary; indeed, there were distinct signs that our production was going to decline in spite of the announcement of the four-year expansion programme. Now, as a result of the measures we have taken, and with the co-operation—and I emphasise this—of the farming industry, of which I am very proud to be a member, we appear successfully to have passed the critical point and are moving towards the objective laid down in our policy statement to which I have referred in the White Paper.

... It is quite true that there has been some apprehension in the minds of farmers regarding the future. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] Yes, but I think that there has been exaggeration about the strength and weight of it. I am admitting that there has been some apprehension in the minds of farmers about the future because we are about to move from the straight-jacket of control into a freer economy. It is equally true that some farmers are afraid lest in the change-over the Government may run away from their responsibilities under the 1947 Act which, in Section 1, guaranteed prices and assured markets.

We recognise the apprehension of those who share these fears. They have lived so long under controls that it is only natural that there should be some fear when some major change of this character is to come about. I want to say to the House that there is no foundation for these fears. I think that everybody desires—and I am quite certain that the vast majority of farmers desire—to see as much freedom as possible.

Mr. Frederick Peart (Workington): Freedom to go bankrupt.

Mr. Snadden: It is certainly an essential feature of the policy on which the Government took office that when possible we should shake off controls and move into a freer economy. It is the Government's belief that such an objective, apart altogether from its general effect on the financial position of the country, gives opportunities for the exercise of enterprise that are lacking in an economy of controls. It would be very unwise of us if we swept away all controls in a day. Everyone knows that. In my opinion de-control requires as much careful planning as the imposition of controls. We recognise that. . . .

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Electricity (Generating Capacity)

Mr. Nabarro asked the Minister of Fuel and Power what increase in installed electrical generating capacity took place, in megawatts, during 1952; what was the aggregate installed capacity of the British Electricity Authority at 31st December, 1952; and the average cost per megawatt installed, £/megawatt installed, of the newly installed capacity in 1952.

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd: 1,550 megawatts were installed in 1952 raising the aggregate installed capacity of the British Electricity Authority to 17,165 megawatts at the 31st December, 1952. The varying circumstances at each station at which the plant has been installed make it difficult to calculate an exact average but it is of the order of £60,000 per megawatt.

Coal Consumption

Mr. Nabarro asked the Minister of Fuel and Power whether he will state the coal consumption per unit of electricity generated by the British Electricity Authority as an average for each of the calendar years 1946-52, inclusive; and what improvement is envisaged in 1953.

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd: Following is the information:

					Pounds of coal consumed per unit generated by the steam stations of the British Electricity Authority (a)
1946	...	...	...	...	1.43
1947	...	...	...	...	1.42
1948	...	...	...	...	1.40
1949	...	...	...	...	1.39
1950	...	...	...	...	1.37
1951	...	...	...	...	1.35
1952 (b)	...	...	...	...	1.31

(a) Including the coal equivalent of the small amounts of coke consumed at steam stations.

(b) Provisional.

There are too many uncertainties for me to assess the amount of further improvement to be expected in 1953.

Sales

Mr. Nabarro asked the Minister of Fuel and Power to state in convenient form the comparative sales of electricity in each of the calendar years 1946-52, inclusive; and the increase or decrease per cent. in each year's sales compared with the year immediately preceding.

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd: Following is the information:

SALES OF ELECTRICITY IN GREAT BRITAIN, 1946-52.

					Total Units Sold (Million kWh)	Percentage increase compared with previous year
1946	...	...	...	...	34,798	11.0
1947	...	...	...	...	35,858	3.0
1948	...	...	...	...	39,281	9.5
1949	...	...	...	...	41,370	5.3
1950	...	...	...	...	45,912	11.0
1951	...	...	...	...	50,909	10.9
1952 (a)	...	...	...	...	52,700	3.5

(a) Estimated.

Private Generation

Mr. Nabarro asked the Minister of Fuel and Power now to state the policy of Her Majesty's Government towards private generation of electricity independent of the grid, in view of the observations and recommendations of the Ridley Report.

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd: As private generation is often economically desirable, I consider that where it is clearly so there should be no discouragement of it and where there is any doubt the industrialists concerned should be free to make their own decisions. I am therefore glad that the British Electricity Authority have recently announced the intention of the boards to implement the recommendation in the Ridley Report that restrictive conditions on the use and installation of private generating plant in contracts for the supply of electricity from the grid should be abandoned.

Mr. Nabarro asked the Minister of Fuel and Power, in view of the acceptance by his Department of Recommendation 35 of the Ridley Report on the public and permanent abandonment of restrictive conditions upon private electricity generation, he will give a direction to the British Electricity Authority under Section 5 of the Electricity Act, 1947, to publish the action taken by it to implement this recommendation.

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd: No. The British Electricity Authority have already published an announcement on the implementation of this recommendation by the electricity boards.

Power Stations (Thermal Efficiency)

Mr. Nabarro asked the Minister of Fuel and Power the average thermal efficiency of British Electricity Authority power houses in 1952; and what directions he will give under Section 5 of the Electricity Act, 1947, to improve coal utilisation arrangements at power houses.

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd: I am informed by the British Electricity Authority that the average thermal efficiency of their generating plant in 1952 was 22.6 per cent. This figure is based on returns for the months January-November and an estimate for December.

I do not propose to issue any general direction on this subject. It is clear from the regular annual improvement which has taken place that the British Electricity Authority are fully alive to the need to improve the thermal efficiency of their generating plant, and much of the development and research covered by the general programmes settled in consultation with me under Sections 5 (2) and 5 (3) of the Electricity Act, 1947, is directed towards this end.

Load Factor

Mr. Nabarro asked the Minister of Fuel and Power the average load factor of British Electricity Authority power houses in 1952 and what directions he will give under Section 5 of the Electricity Act, 1947, to improve the position.

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd: I am informed by the British Electricity Authority that the average load factor on their

generating plant in 1952 was 48 per cent., and I have no present intention of giving a general direction on this subject. The Authority are no less anxious than I am to improve the load factor and I am at present discussing with them the methods by which the use of electricity at off-peak hours may be further encouraged.

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