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Common Sense and The Vote

by HEWLETT EDWARDS.

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For ten years nothing could stand against the armies of Napoleon. In 1808 the Duke of Wellington (then General Wellesley) suggested the diversion of a minor expeditionary force, to Spain. "This simple expedient, born in May, 1808, somewhere between the Irish Office and his house in Harley Street . . . raised on the smooth surface of the Empire the 'Spanish Ulcer' which ultimately drained its strength."¹ The Duke's fancy—his *light horse*—eventually broke the *heavy brigade* of Napoleon Bonaparte.

The Heavy Brigade

During the last decade of the nineteenth century the London School of Economics was founded by Fabians, the project being supported (and later endowed in a bequest of some half million pounds) by Sir Ernest Cassel, who was then, in association with Jacob Schiff² and Messrs. Kuhn Loeb of New York, a major focus of financial power. The plan was put into effect by Sydney Webb³ and Lord Haldane, who made it clear that "Our objective is to make this institution a place to raise and train the bureaucracy of the future Socialist State"—but it was one thing to prepare these socialist servants of monopoly, and another to put them into effective control of national affairs. The solution of this dilemma was stated without scruple: "Only in war, or under threat of war, will a British Government embark on large scale planning";⁴ and, after the comforting substantiation of the required war, this idea was confirmed by Mr. Anthony Eden: "It seems that our New Order must be built through war, but it will be built just the same."

Indoctrinated bureaucracy was duly injected into the Administration, the most recent of a series of similar changes, each of which has followed a policy which is unmistakable. In 1930 Professor H. J. Laski⁵ laid it down

1. Phillip Guedalla: The Duke.
2. German-U.S.A.-Jewish financier.
3. Later Lord Passfield. One of the originators of the Fabian Society.
4. Planning 1938. The journal of 'Political and Economic Planning,' an organisation mainly staffed by Fabians: First Chairman, Israel Moses Steff (Vice-Chairman of 'English' Zionist Society, Director, Marks and Spencer).
5. Son of Nathan and Sarah, nee Frankenstein. Fabian, Chairman of Labour Party, 1945. Addressing the Royal Institute of International Affairs (see later note) in 1930, "It follows there must be constructed in the State a Revolutionary Party [which] can only maintain itself in office as a result of dictatorship, that the strategy of dictatorship is the organised control of the whole machinery of social life; religion, which is the opium of the people: education . . ." as above quoted.

that "education is the clear foundation upon which the minds of men can be controlled," and this suggests the means for the "control of purpose" advocated by Archbishop Temple⁶. *Control* of the individual is the dominating policy; of his mind and his purpose—yes—the control of his activities already being pretty well in hand.

It would be redundant to quote instances of the imposition of this policy; they are innumerable, and each in violation of the essence of the British Constitution, whereby under it, "a man is free to live, by no man's leave, underneath the law." It is this condition which is to be destroyed. Shadowy influence is everywhere, behind the parliamentarians in the initiation of legislation, in the drafting of Bills, and among those who draw up the Party programmes. At this point the policy to be injected becomes emulsified for the digestion of electors, whether it is presented in the mould of ideology, or pulped with current catchwords which may be construed as some aspect of what the ordinary man does want. Mr. Eden's "Nation of Property Owners" strikes a note resounding as Big Ben and hollow as an egg-shell, while Mr. Churchill's recent reference to the "pure and mobile thought" of the U.S.A. electorate is above the common sense which observes the gyrations of their President in the effort to capture their votes. To say that 'strings are pulled' is crude representation of the ceaseless flow of propaganda which inculcates just that blend of misinterpreted facts, noble sentiments and delusive proposals which will carry over into law some further binding down of the ordinary man to the will of those who want it so. In the outcome—the calculated sequence of a false relationship between men and things—is to be found the deployment of the *heavy brigade*.

"The one essential about common sense is . . . the decisive exercise of judgment; whether to do this thing or that, whether to do either of them or nothing at all."⁷ Inadequate knowledge of facts, distortion of information, unscrupulous propaganda, the debased use of words, confused thought; all are contributory to a deterioration which amounts to paralysis in the use of common sense by the ordinary man.

Decisive exercise of judgment is that *policy formation* which is the function proper to an individual, as an elector.

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6. Member of P.E.P.

7. W. L. Burn: Common sense in Politics in *The Nineteenth Century*, August, 1946.

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From Week to Week

Mr. R. W. Bonner, Q.C., Attorney-General in British Columbia's 'Social Credit' Government, favoured the *Vancouver Sun* with a letter setting out the National Social Credit Party's policies. The *Vancouver Sun* (November 20, 1956) quotes the following: "Social Credit believes that the knowledge and understanding of a national financial system that will adequately protect the country's economy at all times is still far from complete.

"At the same time, it is realised that the mechanism of this system is so intricate and so delicate that only through a gradual process of evaluation in the light of greater experience and understanding can it be improved.

"The Social Credit movement believes that a sound currency is essential to Canada's economic development . . ."

This is more even than the *Vancouver Sun* can stomach. It comments:

"Shades of Major Douglas, the man who wrote *Credit Power and Democracy*, who was Social Credit's saint and prophet! Shades also of 'Bible Bill' Aberhart who was Douglas' disciple and planted his creed in Alberta! Whirling like Dervishes in their graves they must be at this insult to their memory—not even a mention of their names.

"What rank ingratitude! What apostasy! The Attorney-General of a 'Social Credit' government talking about finance like the Royal Bank of Canada's James Muir!

"General Clark, Mr. H. R. MacMillan, Mr. Austin Taylor and those other Vancouver pillars of orthodox finance, how pleased they must be with the Honourable R. W. Bonner, Q.C.!"

Waal, waal, waal!

As reported in *The Times*, April 23, 1957, the address by Sir Herbert Read to the conference on "Education through the Arts" at the Festival Hall on April 22, was of the highest excellence.

We regard the contemporary educational system as a greater menace to the future of Man than the alleged hazard of radiation from atomic explosions. And we regard it as just as deliberate as the persistence in an economic system which produces one catastrophe after another.

Organisation

"It is one of the consequences of the obscure and uncomprehended state of helplessness to which the individual has been reduced by prevalent conditions that most people, when they think about putting into practice any idealistic conception, think of the problem in terms of organisation.

"People even speak seriously of the organisation of prosperity, as if prosperity were something reducible to formulae, and as if all would be well if only the right organisation could be brought about. That is bad enough, but it becomes worse when the bringing about of the right organisation is not distinguished from the imposition by some kind of authority of a sufficient degree of organisation.

"The worship of organisation has gained such strength that it has among its adherents a large number of comparatively intelligent or at least intellectual people. Its chief advocates often exhibit a conscious intellectual superiority, which is evidence of nothing more than their own lack of humility. It is impossible for anyone seriously to regard organisation, planning, and the like as the proper foundation for human society unless in his heart he despises the mass of mankind."

—Lord Northbourne in *Look to the Land*.

COMMON SENSE AND THE VOTE—

(continued from page 1.)

This is the basic factor in any system which approaches the reality of democracy, and it can only be operative in the choice between practical, well defined alternatives. This is the antithesis of what exists, for the keynote of elections is confusion, not clarity; they are contests between catchwords, slogans, vast generalisations and diffuse abstractions; to some phase of which the elector will surrender—or else he gives it up and will not vote. Mr. Burn's analysis is evidence of a technique of perversion which has reduced the political system to an effective bar between the ordinary man and his common sense—the common sense which is at once his compass and his arm. So bereft he is unable to take part in the formation of directive policy, and must submit to the imposition of other policies, alien to his own. Only the reversal of this process of perversion can develop a political system in which the elector can exercise his once his compass and his arm. So bereft, he is unable to common sense, and to this reversal there is but one alternative—the fixation of that system as the façade of the Managerial or Servile State. There are few conclusions so obviously substantiated.

Probably the most debilitating factor of current political action is the irresponsibility of those concerned. Freedom—the ability to choose or to refuse—is primary; but it is common sense that a man should be simply and directly answerable for his actions, it is that which binds him back to facts. This is dependent on action being open and avowed: it is the free expression of opinion which is a part of the English tradition, not the secret ballot which dates from 1872. At the present juncture it is not easy to find many who will admit to having put the present government into power, the elector hides behind the secret ballot when

it suits him; Party members are screened by 'Party decisions,' and those who enact so many regulations *per diem* are shrouded in an anonymous service. Such devices are so many channels for the exercise of power without responsibility, evasions which are foreign to native genius. The rejection of such devious expedients is a part of the restitution of a responsibility that is valid; which on the one hand gains corresponding advantage for sound judgment, and on the other, *pays*, and knows when it pays, for that which is not sound.

The *rule of law* "means that the government in all its actions is bound by rules fixed and announced beforehand—rules which make it possible to foresee with fair certainty how the Authority will use its coercive powers in given circumstances, and to plan one's individual affairs on the basis of such knowledge . . . within the known rules of the game the individual is free to pursue his personal ends and desires."⁸ This theme is developed to show how 'planning' in the modern sense necessarily takes away freedom; and the State, embodied in the bureaucrat, soon finds itself in the position of telling each individual what to do.

From this it follows that, in principle, the only subject matter proper for legislation is the establishment and preservation of an agreed rule of law. That is to say, law relating to the conservation of Rights and their adjustment as between individuals (JUSTICE) and provisions against external aggression (DEFENCE), for it is such law that lays down the "rules of the game" within which "a man is free to live, by no man's leave."

Opposed to this is law concerning economics ('house-keeping') which immediately brings in the bureaucrat to "tell each individual what to do." Within this sphere it is (or was) the accustomed practice for the individual to choose and buy what he wants; so making his *economic vote*, the producer building up his programme of production, according to that choice. Therein lay an 'automatic' regulation of the producer by the consumer, that is, the control of economic policy by the ordinary man. The economic vote is an instrument of unusual precision which, with simple adjustment, would fit the national economy without effort or friction. This instrument is being scrapped; it is not in line with the regnant policy of *control*, for individuals to have this freedom. The use of money—easily convertible to the distribution of goods and *freedom*—is, therefore, for the ordinary man, to be restricted, hence the perpetuation of direct forms of control in rationing and so forth. The comment of every woman, "But it costs (so many) coupons . . . points . . . units , , ,," is evidence of the debasement of money.

Such measures involve a multiplicity of orders, telling the individual what he must do. By undermining the economic vote the control of his own affairs is taken from him, and the direction of control is reversed, for it is now the producer who controls the consumer.

Measures which diminish the integrity of the economic vote have been accompanied by an increasing advertisement and use of the political vote; to the effect *e.g.*, that the only

recourse left to the man who wants to buy a banana is political.

Deployment upon this front is enough to render 'the vote' suspect; doubtless the counting of heads has its uses, but its limitations are more obvious. It is to be noted that the decision obtained from any electorate cannot be more than 'yes' or 'no' to whatever issue may be put before it; the initiative necessarily remains with him who puts the question. Further, one issue, one vote; that is, the vote is of its nature *unitary*; it is outside its range to deal with requirements which are multifarious (as is the subject matter of economics). Moreover, any approach to a positive *unitary* objective—such as *freedom*—being unavoidably abstract, is so wide open to the attack of interested propaganda that the certainty of its perversion is not open to question. There is no grip for common sense in such abstract proposals as 'Nationalisation' or 'A Nation of Property Owners,' and the elector—like the lady who remarked "These Post Offices ought to be Nationalised"—will vote for either, neither, or both.

But such considerations involve the assumption that answers given by electorates are the result of a sound and balanced appraisal by individuals. This is rarely the case, for the elector has been forced away from what he understands—by the reiterated presentation of that which he cannot understand. The hypnotic magic of words is used to focus his ideals upon some phrase; which being interpreted (at some later date) is found to mean some further encroachment upon his liberty. Such persuasion is not directed to common sense but to the vague currents of mass emotion, the quality of which he who runs may read. In penetrating research Gustave le Bon has made it clear that the *group mind* is invariably a barbarian mind. The Will of *The People* (note the abstraction) can never be the Will of God. The last place to look for common sense is *The Crowd*.

The perfidy which is apparent in an 'Appeal to the People' is a matter of observation; the caravan moves on with little regard for the barking of dogs. Beveridge offers his mess of pottage; his rejection merely ushers in Mr. Griffiths with more pottage, and the reception of surrendered birthrights proceeds according to plan. The pertinaciously epidermal activities of the present 'opposition' only confirm a variety of minor indiscretions *e.g.*, of Bismarck (speaking of national socialists, "We march separately but we fight together") and of Montagu Norman ("Nationalisation?—we welcome it"). The ballot may be full of sound and fury but in its effect on regnant policy it signifies nothing. That is not to say that it is useless, a façade is something one can move behind, but in present practice the major function of the vote is to provide *minorities*; minorities stamped as 'authorised' objectives for suppression and control. For is not a Majority Vote the 'Voice of Democracy'?

The origin of the deterioration of the political system lies in a synthesis of interests which are supposedly antagonistic. Congressman MacFadden⁹ has drawn attention to the connection of the Fabian Society, *via* P.E.P., with the Foreign Policy Association of New York, which has

8. Dr. F. A. Hayek: *The Road to Serfdom*.

9. For twelve years Chairman of the U.S.A. (House of Representatives) Banking and Currency Committee.

the close attention and support of Bernard M. Baruch¹⁰ and Felix Frankfurter. The conjunction between 'Labour' and Monopoly was ventilated in the House of Commons by Mr. Austin Hopkinson: "Big Business in collusion with the Labour Boss is preparing a brave new world for these young men [the fighting forces] when they come home." The early stages of that collaboration lie in the Mond¹¹-Turner¹² conferences of 1926 and were "towards the adoption of a Cartel-Trades Union 'Democracy' in which the ordinary individual, and even his House of Commons, becomes an unimportant factor awaiting absorption or elimination," and it is notable that "since his [Turner's] conferences with Mond the T.U.C. has never authorised a strike."¹³ Moral atmosphere is provided by Dr. Arnold Toynbee: "All the time we are denying with our lips what we are doing with our hands."¹⁴

Finance (with those who stand behind it) in collaboration with Socialism; Cartelists (with similar familiar names) in collusion with Labour Bosses;—in these relationships is the proximate origin of the anonymous force embodied in the *heavy brigade*. It is not of great consequence to the individual citizen whether he arrives at the Managerial State *via* Monopoly, or at the Servile State *via* Socialism, nor is this of much concern to those who move towards the assumption of finally centralised and irresponsible power.

It is often said, without realisation of what lies beneath the surface, that 'the world is going mad'; and there is something in it. Only the ordinary man by use of his compass and his arm—his common sense—can reverse the process. But he cannot *vote* with common sense unless the issues presented for decision (at elections) are reduced to such as common sense can deal with. This manner of summing up a proposition—its consequences and its costs, whether this is what you want, and whether this is what you want to pay for it—forms a medium in which the ordinary man is still capable of the decisive act, and wherein he is accustomed to take direct responsibility, profiting if he 'buys well' and losing if he does not.

The Light Horse

The separation of power from responsibility, the use of law to enforce 'The New Despotism,' the deification of the Majority,—all converge upon the policy of *control*. Where is the National Institution which challenges these? The Political Parties, the Trade Unions and the 'City' are the very pillars upon which they stand. The 'National' Press co-operates with the 'British' Broadcasting monopoly in tactics of suspense and bewilderment, to induce sub-

10. American-Jewish Wall Street financier. Stated that he was "probably the most powerful man in the world" during the 1914-18 war.
11. Alfred Moritz Mond (Lord Melchett), Zionist Jew, Chairman of Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd.
12. Ben Turner, afterwards knighted. Labour M.P. Was then Chairman of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress.
13. C. H. Douglas: *The Brief for the Prosecution*.
14. At Copenhagen, 1931. Was speaking for and is Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs ('Chatham House') subsidised by both Coalition and Socialist Governments.

mission. The Universities apparently concur. The Church?—The *heavy brigade* seems irresistible, but so did the armies of Napoleon against Wellington's *light horse*.

There is one thing which still may avert the stabilisation of tyranny, and that is the quality, the simple, independent, forthright character of the ordinary Englishman. Neither is he without sense, horse sense, common sense; but in political application this has been made impotent. He *cannot* vote with common sense except by such electoral revision as will release it. Specifically:—

- 15^{cc} (a) The secret ballot to be abolished, and replaced by an open, recorded, and published vote.
- (b) The Party System to be retained.
- (c) Prior to an election, each Party to put forward an outline of any legislative proposals together with both the cost to the taxpayer and a designation of the interests and specific individuals affected.
- (d) The cost of Legislation by the successful Party, together with the proved loss to any individual not having voted for the successful Party, to be borne solely by those having recorded votes for the successful Party, and any reduction of taxation directly attributable to specific legislation to be shared as to 25 *per cent.* by recorded supporters of the unsuccessful Parties, and 75 *per cent.* by the supporters of the successful Party so long as it may remain in power, after which the gains shall be equalised."

Such provisions shear a path through both perversion and fatuity.

15. *The Social Crediter*, March 16, 1946.

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