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THE BIG IDEA (VII)

By C. H. DOUGLAS

I have suggested that there is an attempt in operation, to impose a World Policy. That is to say, somewhere there is a body of men claiming to be a World Government.

If that suggestion has any grounds, two propositions appear to be self-evident. The first is that all discussion regarding Dictatorships and Democracies, is, to put it in the most charitable form, simply a discussion as to the brand of coating we prefer on our pill.

And the second proposition is that it ought by now to be possible to identify common factors in every country at war, which are evidence of action by an organisation concerned to impose a common policy irrespective of the ultimate "Victors." There are such common factors.

It is of course evident that this World Dominion is not yet absolute. Even if one believes, as I am coming to believe, that its apex transcends normal human activity, it is by no means necessary to accept the view that it is invincible and inevitable. Unless I am much mistaken, there are already signs of important unrehearsed developments, in regard to which the limitations of writing in war-time impose difficulties of description. That is another story.

The first and most obvious indication of a common policy is the similarity—the practical identity—of the methods by which all power is transferred from individuals to officials, who themselves have no initiative. I am not sure that the real character of these methods is generally grasped, even at this late stage.

It is commonly agreed that large undertakings find it very difficult to make rapid changes either in production or policy. To take a well-known example, the Ford Motor Company found it necessary to shut down the whole of its factories for six months, in order to change from the old Model "T" to a more modern type. Motor cars are, incidentally, one of the simplest problems of repetition production. Ford's difficulties were much more with items he did not himself produce.

But the bureaucratic socialism which by means of carefully prepared panic legislation took over the management of the whole of Britain at the outbreak of war, gaily assumed a task beside which the complete re-organisation, not merely of the Ford Company, but of the complete automobile industry of the United States, would be an amusement for an idle hour. Even presuming the practicability of unified direction of this colossal character, which, for reasons too numerous to mention here, is an assumption I should not be prepared to admit, experience, trained ability and physical

geographical arrangement are lacking.

With the usual premise that the valour of the Russians in defending their own country (whatever the effect—they are certainly not fighting consciously to defend ours) is worthy of whole-hearted admiration, I think a public disservice is done by suppressing the exposure of the inefficiency of a country of 170 millions, with an army double that of Germany, supposed to be laid out by the best transatlantic talent to be suitable for bureaucratic management, which has been preparing for war for twenty years, and yet has to apply for munitions to an effete and out-of-date country of 45 millions, which has successfully opposed single-handed the continent of Europe for eighteen months. That we have been able to supply them is certainly not due to socialistic management, which has not built up a single industry.

The object of this assumption of power, under the conditions foretold by P.E.P., had little or nothing to do with the efficient prosecution of the war. It was simply and solely the seizure of power by an international gang of Plotters, or Planners, who were perfectly aware of the dangers to their rule in Russia itself, and wished to extend it to this country before it was overthrown elsewhere. This rule, common to Russia and Germany, is specially evident in once-great Britain, in the case of bed, board, and clothes—the domain of the Ministry of Works and Buildings, under Lord Reith, the congenital monopolist of the "B".B.C., and the Ministry of Food under the chain-store enthusiast, Lord Woolton.

Private housing has little or nothing to do with the war—but it has been "nationalised." Control of bed, board, and clothes, is, of course, control of life itself. And centralised control of life is the groundwork of The Big Idea.

While contemplating the colossal inefficiency which accompanies, for example, the operations of the two Ministries just mentioned, it is convenient to examine this glorification of Bigness. Bigness for the sake of Bigness, you can't have too much Bigness: Bigger wars, bigger guns, bigger debts. One Big Union, Federal Union. Big Smash. Any ten prize-fighters weigh more than Shakespeare, therefore any ten prize-fighters are more important than Shakespeare. The Albert Memorial is bigger than any Cotswold cottage—grade accordingly. Passed to you for information and necessary action, please.

The first point to notice in regard this deification of Bigness, is that it is accompanied everywhere by the Lower Middle Class Revolution. I recognise the unpleasant impression that such a phrase may convey, but the French equivalent, *petit bourgeois*, which has been largely used in this connection, does not appear to be more descriptive.

As perhaps it is permissible to repeat, the real cleavage in the world to-day is a cultural, not an economic cleavage,

although the two may not be wholly distinct. The Lower Middle Class is a warped cultural class. To illustrate this, I should exemplify Lord Reith as representing the Scottish Lower Middle Class, and Lord Addison, and Mr. H. G. Wells, as types of English lower mediocrity. One characteristic of the class is blatancy, quite often joined with qualities much more admirable, and it appears to be specially and no doubt unconsciously, amenable to outside influence.

If a man comes into your house, and says loudly, "I don't care what you want to talk about, you are going to listen to what I think is good for you," he may be possessed of many good qualities, but your chief preoccupation is to get away from him. But if he returns and says, "You are going to have the kind of house I like, not what you like, and you will pay what I think you ought to pay, and you will not be allowed to build a hen-house unless I agree. And my friend across the way will say where you are to shop and what you are to eat, and which of you is to eat it and together we will tell you why God made you," then it is time to take notice and action.

This curious adulation of bigness is indisputably a common attribute of Socialism (under all its names), Big Business, and what we call vulgarity.

There is a prevalent idea that Socialism is a "Workers," Revolution, for the benefit of the craftsman. Nothing could be less true. The genuine craftsman, where he takes the trouble to understand it, detests it. The backbone of Socialism in every country (which is not to say its inspiration) is the Lower Middle Class, the type which yearns to have power without responsibility and looks to exchange its unenviable situation for a "safe government job." It was the Lower Middle Class who were the tools of revolution in Russia, it is the lower middle class who are the most enthusiastic supporters of National Socialism in Germany. "... National Socialism is not merely a political and economic upheaval, but a social revolution as well. To a very large extent it has brought the lower middle class to power... the lower middle class seems to be inordinately in evidence." (—LOTHROP STODDARD: *Into the Darkness*. The italics in the text are mine.) The coming revolution in Japan will be of the same nature.

The English Fabians, and their offshoot, the Planners, are in the main the same type. What then, is the characteristic of "bigness" which makes it a common objective in every country in which we can discern revolutionary propaganda at work? To say that it is efficiency is clearly absurd even if efficiency were urgently necessary. It would be as sensible to acclaim the superior efficiency of the Atlantic Ocean over Lake Derwentwater.

It is not difficult to find an answer. The attribute of size—so far as I am aware, the only attribute of size—which grows as size increases, is momentum. The larger the mass, the more difficult becomes a change of direction—the harder becomes the task of individual initiative. That is another objective of The Big Idea, because as the *Protocols of Zion* remark, "Nothing is so dangerous as individual initiative."

A second identifiable common factor is the appearance of plans everywhere designed to make people forget their historic attachment—as Mr. Curtin, the Australian Socialist Prime Minister put it so engagingly when he undertook to make Australians into Costa Ricans, overnight.

This feature is particularly significant, since it links up the present crisis with the French Revolution. The revolutionaries abolished the old Royal Provinces of France (just as an attempt is being made to abolish Britain's Counties by the appointment of Kommissars of Regions) and substituted "Departments" so arbitrarily that except as electoral divisions, they hardly exist to-day.

And a third feature is the systematic destruction or perversion of significant history, and particularly that form of unwritten history represented by hereditary experience.

(To be continued)

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PERVERSION

Sir,

An illustration of the truth of the last paragraph of *The Big Idea (V)* in your issue of the 14th came to my notice not long ago. In conversation with a young cadet, for whom I had done a small service, I learnt that he had recently got his degree via The London School of Economics. I drew him out and one of the many gems he produced was, "money is a store of wealth!"

This young man, prepared to die for "democracy," was clean and decent living; yet backed by the authority of the London School of Economics was opinionated and quite unreasoning in this. As for Social Credit it was just—well—rot. Evidently he had not been taught the elements of his science.

The tragedy of it is that he will be another unconscious instrument for perverting others for the greater glory of Evil.

R. GAUDIN.

London; February, 1942.

FROM WEEK TO WEEK

"We shall have to face it that Americans don't like us unless we are suffering."

—NATHANIEL GUBBINS in the *Sunday Express*.

Mr. Donald Nelson, the U.S. Chairman of the Production Board, observes that it is quite time Americans stopped talking about the wonderful things they're going to do in 1943 and 1944.

There are others.

Mr. Mitchell Hepburn, the Premier of Ontario, says the American Fleet is hiding from the Japs. The more polite phrase in common use is "gone into conference."

Gone, any way.

The Times of February 16 states that the French Canadians, who number about one-third of the total population of the Dominion, will vote almost unanimously against the release of the Government from their pledge not to introduce conscription for the Canadian Forces overseas.

It adds:—"The Alberta Legislature has passed a resolution protesting against the plebiscite, and declaring

that conscription of man-power cannot be effective without the total conscription of monetary, material, and national resources. In these circumstances the prospects of a majority in favour of the plebiscite are receding, and the Government may decide not to risk an adverse vote."

The *Jewish Chronicle* of February 13 writes: "The Oxford Union Society is not the only body in the famous city over which a Jewish student has been called to preside. At the beginning of last term there was founded the Cosmos Society, which represented an amalgamation of the University League of Nations Society and the Federal Union Society. The first President was Mr. L. Jonathan Cohen (son of Mr. and Mrs. Israel Cohen), a Balliol Scholar . . . At a conference held in Sheffield the other week, and attended by over 100 delegates from 30 universities and colleges in all parts of the country, Mr. Cohen was elected President of the newly founded Students' Federation for International Co-operation." One of the Vice-Presidents of this organisation is the Master of Balliol.

It was stated recently in the House of Commons that eleven directors have been appointed in the Ministry of Works and Buildings since Sir John Reith took over what before was simply the Office of Works.

Presumably other staff has increased proportionately.

An interesting complementary figure for comparison would be the efficiency of the organisation to the people of this country: the ratio of results they desire which are produced, to the energy, including man-power, put into it.

The Securities (Validation) Bill was introduced into Parliament recently because numbers of people, in candid innocence, contravened a regulation which they did not know existed.

The particular cases concerned the transfer of securities. Captain Crookshank, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, explained that the difficulty arose "probably because it was not sufficiently appreciated that some of these transactions might occur without anybody being notified." He reminded his audience of the traditional ruling that "ignorance of the law is no excuse." It may not be. But when the law becomes so intricate and changes so fast that in practice it is incapable of being grasped by a minimum proportion of the people concerned, either it will become ineffective or it will become an imposed tyranny of the most arbitrary description.

MONEY

The proverbial root of much evil is in a constant state of flux and for that reason an ever fresh subject for discussion and thought. In orthodox circles money without a gold backing, real or alleged, was unthinkable within memory of people not yet middle aged. Nowadays almost all individuals look upon gold as a queer fetish of past generations. In our minds now there exists no longer that link between gold and money that years ago made the two words almost synonymous. So quickly do ideas change.

In these pages it has already been mentioned on several occasions that ration cards, tickets, and coupons are a rudi-

mentary form of money, incomplete but possessing many of its characteristics. Those coupons are permits to buy. Each type of coupon is limited to relate to only one kind of article: legal tender money is available to buy anything that is for sale. Coupons are limited money. For instance it might some day occur to the authorities to use the coupons so as to constitute a full discharge of debt incurred in purchase. This could be quite simply effected by everyone having to buy their coupons with money, and the retailers or wholesalers receiving credits to equal their coupon values. Such a scheme may be contemplated and this may account for the banks taking steps to get astride the flow of coupons. At present there is undoubtedly a duplication in function by coupons and money.

Civilisation has been an organic growth and is the sum total of countless and mainly minute contributions by individuals over the ages. Planners have had very little to do with it and as a rule have hindered progress, occasionally even putting the clock back. If the Planners who now inflict themselves on the world had had their way, no doubt the money system would have been a coupon system. For each kind of commodity, tea, meat, medical attention, beer, sugar, theatres, tobacco, train services, sago, bananas, etc., etc., there would have been a special ticket issued to each person. This would ensure "equality." It would also ensure a colossal amount of filling in of forms, of writing up of ledgers, of booking, and of balancing, apparently so beloved of present day "efficiency" experts. It would be possible to keep track of every sausage, to know exactly what every person consumed; in fact the possibilities for statistics would be limitless. The men whose minds work only in symbols and are impervious to reality would be in their glory. That Jones is a teatotalter, Brown a vegetarian, MacTavish prefers whisky to beer or tea, and Atkins has no time for the theatre are their respective misfortunes and at best an opportunity to pass legislation containing double, treble and quadruple negatives, not unknown in recent Acts of Parliament. And this hell on earth would have constituted the Planners' ideal—and indeed, one they are probably now aiming at.

Try to picture the world as it would have been under those conditions. Then suppose that a genius had arisen who had thought of a universally acceptable ticket, money, to take the place of specialised coupons. What a howl of derision, what cries of "impossible!" "madness!" would have burst from the Planners and their satellites. Why! no one would know how many dog biscuits had been consumed last week! no one would know anything! the muddle!! the chaos!!! No effort would be spared to prevent a practical experiment to see how it worked, even if all the people in, say, Alberta were prepared to try it and take the consequences. The newspapers would print lengthy and involved technical discourses by well known Planners and a garbled version of the new proposal. We know all the other tricks that would be played and if the reader has nothing better to occupy his mind with he can people this fantastic world with Stamps and Hitlers, and Reiths, not forgetting the modest Benjamin Cohens, and visualise what they would do and how the people would react.

On the other hand it would be as well if, instead, we all put our minds to work on the problem of preventing such a hideous nightmare from becoming a reality. We are well on the way towards it.

H. R. P.

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FUTURE OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. G. M. Young, writing in last Sunday's *Sunday Times*, wondered whether "behind the mask of antique deference to Parliament the features [of Mr. Churchill] were not setting themselves for another part." Evidence of departure from those 'forms of the constitution which are the essence of the constitution' exists only in the appointment of the Leader of the House of Commons by the Crown, and in the appointment of a non-member of Parliament who was a high civil servant to ministerial office over the head of his former political chief.

People who (like Lord Baldwin) think that constitutional changes cannot occur in this country unless they effect it are, of course, quite right. That Mr. Churchill is looking in that direction yet, is another matter. Compare the anti-Chamberlain campaign with the anti-Churchill campaign, important differences are noted at once, the chief being Mr. Churchill commands effective powers of resistance to the unanimous voices of the 'free' Press, and Mr. Chamberlain didn't. Does Sir Stafford Cripps's appointment provide a facade behind which Mr. Churchill's conversion to communism can be conducted without indecency; or does it provide for our richest communist a position sufficiently exposed to be slightly uncomfortable now and likely to become more uncomfortable later? Wherein the Churchill policy differs from the Eden-Cripps policy cannot be stated without knowing what the Churchill policy is. Sir Stafford Cripps's promotion may even savour slightly of the cynical, as does, now we look back upon it, Mr. Churchill's suggestion that we might see here 'the face that launched a thousand ships,' or Mr. Roosevelt himself. The Government (which is, up to the present, a continuous institution) cannot go on getting into danger in the House of Commons; and Mr. Churchill may be saying to himself "Let me but lead The Band, I care not who leads the House of Commons."

Interest in Sir Stafford Cripps centres in those well-known features of his history which are not likely to be brought to the memory of 'the Workers.' The chief interest for them is his reputed membership of an 'upper' class, and his great possessions, features which cannot but ensure complete identity of interest between him and the masses now about to become state-wage-slaves instead of just wage-slaves.

Sir Stafford is known as the "Red Squire" of Filkins, Oxfordshire. Lady Cripps is a grand-daughter of the founder of Eno's Fruit Salts. Mrs. Sidney Webb is Sir Stafford's aunt.

That Sir James Grigg's reputation for ruthlessness has caught the notice of the "free" press is not necessarily anything against him, any more than that he hasn't an old school tie. He was a wrangler at Cambridge (St. John's) and headed the Civil Service examination list. As a financial wizard he may be "second only to Sir Otto Niemeyer," as is asserted in quarters accustomed to reverence this species of black magician; the qualification does not prove that what Commanders in Chief cannot do Paymasters General can.

For us a *coup d'état*, of whatever conceivable description, would not materially alter anything, whoever instigated it. The situation might be better or worse; but the medicine would be 'the mixture as before.' The substance of politics is policy, and determination of policy must be removed from the hands of those who now exercise it before anything sensibly different from what the world now experiences occurs.

T. J.

TOUGH MAN

The following is an extract from an article *The Toughest Man in The World* by Westbrook Pegler, which appeared in the *Minneapolis Star Journal*:—

"With all his faults, the man who happens to be our war President is one of the toughest men in the world. We have the comfort, at least, in a terrible hour, of knowing that the head of our nation is not only a hard fighter, but a tricky fighter, too—as many private citizens and groups have had cause to complain since 1932.

"This may sound disrespectful, but even in the present solemn hour I submit that in a brawl with Adolph Hitler—who is, after all, the principal enemy—it is well to have a man in the White House who will not bother to break clean or keep his punches up.

"We are fighting as foul an enemy as history has produced, and a political leader of the stylish oops-sorry type would be a great handicap. But we all have reason to know that when our man warms up to a scrap, anything goes.

"I predict that before this is over Hitler will be looking to the referee and yelling 'foul', because he tore up the rule book himself, and that fact gives Mr. Roosevelt the right to use all the Hitlerian methods of the enemy, and to improvise a few tricks of his own. If that's not unthinkable—well, this whole war is unthinkable.

"But Hitler made the war, and the Japanese struck our country a sneak punch on a quiet Sunday morning while the envoys of Japan were sucking wind and grinning peaceful remarks to our Secretary of State.

"This is going to be, as it has been, up to now, an utterly ruthless, dirty war, thanks to Adolph Hitler, and the amenities of civilisation are going to be waived.

"Before long the American people will be in a mood to approve any brutality that may be used on the enemy's civilians and civilian hostages, because the savagery of the Germans and the Japanese will make this country war-mad.

"We all know that most of the arguments that the America First crowd used against President Roosevelt were true. He put us into the war against Germany by evading the Constitution, and his promises that American boys would not be sent to a foreign war were campaign trickery to get himself re-elected. But we may thank him for it now and be glad, because he tricked us into a great advantage which otherwise would have been lost."

MYSTICISM AND POLITICS

(A review of Mr. Aldous Huxley's book, "Grey Eminence" commenced last week.)

The child who had begged to be sent to a boarding school for fear his mother might turn him into a molly-coddle, grew into a young man hungry for a life of confinement and enforced inactivity—hungry for it precisely because he knew it would be most difficult of all for him to bear. Total retirement from the world of men "must have seemed the final and absolute sacrifice of self." After tasting successively of learning, travel, courts, war and diplomacy, François became the pupil of two significant persons, Father Benet of Canfield, a Capuchin, and Mme. Acarie, a woman "who possessed that profound insight into character which comes to men and women of advanced spirituality, and which is technically known as the discernment of spirits." In all that concerned his personal religion, Father Joseph "remained to the end of his life the faithful disciple of Benet of Canfield." He was a mystic. "Couched in whatever language and formulated at whatever period, mystical theories are based upon the empirical facts of mystical experience." What are the 'empirical facts of mystical experience'? Objectively, the claim of mystics is the claim to have known God, as distinct from knowing something about God. Concerning Father Joseph, Father Benet had "taught him the theory and practice of his own kind of modified Dionysian mysticism; and the young Capuchin had brought to his devotions that obsessive, hallucinatory preoccupation with the sufferings of Calvary which had haunted his mind from earliest childhood." The road he followed was "the road of mortification, mystical orison and intensive, hallucinatory practice of the passion of Christ." He burned with "the holy ambition to become a saint. . . . That Spartan taste of his for the uncomfortable and the strenuous continually manifested itself, sometimes in the oddest ways. For example, it was his custom, during certain of the prescribed periods of prayer, to worship standing bare-footed on the flagstones. When sleepiness overtook him (which it sometimes did, as he was in the habit of shortening his nights with contemplation) he would combat it by standing on one leg. The practice was not generally approved of in the seminary; but when warned of the dangers of excess, the need of discretion even in matters of piety, Father Joseph would answer that the Kingdom of Heaven is taken by violence, and continue his prayers to the accompaniment of excruciating muscular strain." It may be interposed here parenthetically that the idea of taking "the kingdom of heaven by violence" (Blavatsky: *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II. p. 244.) is alleged by Theosophists to be Promethian, and the ground of the curse pronounced by Zeus, and by Jehovah-Il-da-Baath against Satan. It is curious that the exact words should have been used, even in French, by the Christian mystic.

Whether it is the Will of God or the will of Satan that the kingdom of heaven should be taken by violence, it was certainly Father Joseph's will that the unification of Christendom should be effected by force. The old crusading motto, *Gesta Dei per Francos* (God's deeds by means of the French) was transformable, in practice, into *Gesta Francorum, gesta Dei* (The deeds of the French are the deeds of God); and returning home from fruitless negotiations with the Spaniards, designed to promote a great international expedition against the Turks, Father Joseph

composed a long lyrical rhapsody on the liberation of the Greeks from Turkish bondage. It contains the stanza:

*Si pour te soulager, l'univers je tournoie,
C'est trop peu pour mes vœux;
Dans une mer de sang il faut que je me noie
Pour éteindre mes feux.*

(If, in order to succour thee, I overturn the whole world, it is all too little for my wishes; to quench the fires of my ardour, I must drown me in a sea of blood.)

Mr. Huxley remarks that few political idealists have spoken so frankly about the consequences of their idealism. "The reason, it may be, is that few political idealists have spent half a lifetime brooding upon the torture and death of a man-god, by comparison with those sufferings those of ordinary human beings are so infinitesimal as to be practically negligible." The cry for the destruction of the Turk soon changed into one for the humiliation of the Hapsburgs. In the meantime, a remarkable epic in four thousand six hundred and thirty-seven lines had been composed by Father Joseph, who took two printed copies (the only known to have existed) to Rome in 1625, one for Urban VIII and the other for Cardinal Barberini, his nephew and papal secretary of state. This amazing work is the *Turciad*. The numerous defects of grammar, syntax and scansion said to have been detected by the Abbé Dedouvres have no bearing upon either the politics or the mysticism of Father Joseph. But Mr. Huxley is at some pains to explain how it is that one who unquestionably "had had direct unmeditated experience of reality" and "had described the soul's union with God" came, a few years later, with no sense of incongruity, and in the conviction that in doing so he was "serving, and in some way telling the truth about, the God whom he had dimly apprehended in the act of contemplation," to pen a description "almost uniquely preposterous." At the end of the work, Christ calls for the Duke of Nevers. "The Archangel Michael picks up the last of the Palaeologi from where he is sitting on the platform of angels' wings, swoops into the arena and deposits him, more dead than alive with terror, at the foot of the thrones. After the Virgin has comforted him with a few reassuring words, Christ proceeds to harangue the duke at some length reminding him of his imperial origins and the duties they impose upon him, reminding him also of his faults and that a crusader must be a man of exemplary conduct. Much moved, Nevers vows to devote the rest of his life to a crusade against the Turks. Whereupon the Virgin invests him with the insignia of the Christian Militia."

"The fact is, of course," remarks Mr. Huxley, "that human beings find no difficulty at all in entertaining, successively or even at the same moment, convictions which are totally incompatible with one another. . . . Complete consistency comes only with complete one-pointedness, complete absorption in ultimate reality."

This is hardly the point. 'Complete absorption' in God, must surely mean knowing God, knowing nothing else but God, and knowing nothing else but God all the time—a condition to which no mystic has ever pretended. Whatever may be the state of other mystics, Father Joseph seems only to have known the will of God while he was knowing the will of God (and nothing else); but at other times, he was engaged (or absorbed) in diplomacy, but not wholly, for he could then *try* to know the will of God at the same time. "When he angled for Father Joseph's soul, Satan baited the hook with the noblest temptations: patriotic duty and

self-sacrifice. But a man cannot serve two masters. . . . Because he still persisted in identifying the French monarchy with the ultimate reality apprehended in contemplation, Father Joseph failed to connect the plight of the Pomeranian cannibals with his own and other European statesmen's infringement of the first two Commandments. . . . Father Joseph was able to justify his diplomatic activities in two ways: in the first place, it was his patriotic duty to do these things; and in the second, he always *tried his hardest* to practice 'active annihilation' in God, while he was doing them." Mr. Huxley knows that Father Joseph was 'lured away.' "Father Joseph's intention was to combine the life of political activity with that of contemplation, to do what power politics demanded and to annihilate it in God's will even while it was being done. In practice, the things which had to be done proved unannihilatable, and with one part of his being Father Joseph came to be bitterly sorry that he had ever entered politics." But it must not be forgotten that it was Richlieu's conviction that the friar was "a living conduit, through which there flowed. . . . a power from somewhere beyond the world of time and contingency." There are two meanings of the statement that Richlieu knew how important it was for a politician to cover his actions with the prestige of religion and morality. There is the pragmatic meaning. A deeper meaning is rarely perceived, namely that all political action is inseparable from whatever intuition of reality is present in those who undertake it. The mystic alone supplies political motive raised, as it were, to white heat, and *in the absence of any other motive as intense, the mystical motive must inevitably be the ruling motive.* Not only 'total war,' but all war employs all the force available, and, quite naturally, does not ignore the strongest force. Mysticism is inseparable from politics. "Sacriligious are the arms wielded by a sacred hand. When the mitre commands the soldier, it is the soldier who commands the mitre." Mr. Huxley says the whole political history of the Church is summed up in those phrases. But it is the whole of political history that is summed up in them. The power of the saint is the power to see God. The power to "take heaven by violence" is not the power of the saint, nor is the power to impose God's will on non-saints. The power to impose is the power of imposition. The life of Father Joseph shows, if it shows anything, that the same man may be a saint and a sinner (some might add that he usually is); so that making more saints need not really mean making fewer sinners. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. . . ." And it is among publicans and sinners that correct modes of association must be devised. They are only prevented from being by imposition. But imposition cannot throw out imposition, nor Satan Satan.

PARLIAMENT

FEBRUARY 17.

SUPPLY (COMMITTEE): BROADCASTING

(74 columns)

Mr. Pickthorn (Cambridge University): . . . I do not think that it ["political warfare"] will have considerable importance until Germany has suffered at least two first-rate setbacks. Up to now she has not suffered more than one, if one. Until that moment comes, until the propaganda

hammer really can be striking on places made soft by military defeat, there is really only one thing that is of the least use to us. That is that we should build up a reputation for truth, and, hardly less necessary, for dignity. We heard talk at the beginning of the war about "a cad's war" and gangsters to fight gangsters and so on, but that is complete rubbish; if it is complete rubbish in the management of strategy and the handling of weapons, it is not less so in the use of words. Until we are in a position to command great military victories I do not believe that anything which we do over the wireless will do us much good in Germany, except to establish a reputation for truth and dignity. . . .

The difficulty we have in criticising what is said is that for the most part we do not very well know what is said. We can only criticise from a partial knowledge of what is said. . . . I have done my best to get lists of people who speak to foreign audiences in general, and to German audiences in particular, and to look through them and see what sort of people they are. I have not a staff of secretaries, and I cannot honestly pretend that I have really drawn up a statistical report on the matter. My impression, therefore, may be slightly false, but I do not think that it is more than slightly false. It is that almost all, or at least very many, people who broadcast, and particularly those on the characteristic, the *leit motio* broadcasts, things like "Democracy marches" or "Britain speaks," the leading articles of broadcasting—a high proportion of people who speak on them are of one kind, those whom one might call the pinkish leftish intelligentsia. The list I am about to read as characteristic is a haphazard list, but I do not think it is far wrong: R. Crossman, Wickham Steed, A. J. Cummings, E. M. Forster, Francis Williams, J. B. Priestley, V. Bartlett, Noel-Baker, C. E. M. Joad. That is the kind of opinion which has a far larger share of what is said over the ether for Britain than it can ever have had in this country. That creates a false impression; it conveys an impression which it is the Government's duty not to convey. . . .

The Germans know perfectly well what we are fighting now. It is not a great war, but part of a great war that began in the 1860's, and will finish heaven knows when. It is a long and bitter campaign that we are fighting. The last war was a campaign in it which we won. Now Germans know well enough what they think of the errors made by this pinkish leftish body of opinion on that sort of historical question. It is almost a mathematically provable falsity to give the world a notion that that current of opinion influences a larger part of this country than it does. And it's a foolish falsity, for it would not help our case in Germany if this particular chatter-gang were larger and more listened to than it is. . . .

Captain Plugge (Chatham): . . . If we had had a medium-wave station operating there [at Gibraltar] all the time, and all our propaganda could have been sent on a medium wave to North Africa, there might have been a great change of attitude on the part of the French Colonies. I believe they could still be brought on our side if we made the effort. There is no risk of life involved. May I ask the Minister why a station cannot be put up in Gibraltar? I feel that I could build one there to-morrow which would operate in three months.

I am told that there is not enough electric current in Gibraltar. It all depends on the power of the station. There is enough power in a bed-room to run a station of 100 watts. A station there would have a great effect in

Spain, because so far as we can find out the whole of the broadcasting system, and the Press, in Spain are under German control and all we can do is to rely upon a British whispering campaign in Spain. Therefore, I again ask the Minister whether we could not build stations at Gibraltar, at Malta and in Cyprus. Perhaps this is not a matter for the B.B.C. Perhaps such a plan should be organised by the Government themselves, but we want our short-wave transmissions to be re-broadcast locally, and if there is not a station to re-broadcast them locally, and we can build one, we should do so. . . .

FEBRUARY 18.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN AND HOUSE OF COMMONS DISQUALIFICATION BILL

(31 columns)

[In bringing up the Act of 1941 for renewal the most important Amendment introduced by the Attorney-General provides that the number of persons exempted from disqualification at one time shall not exceed 25. The recommendation of the Select Committee which recently reported on the Act, that the certificate which the Prime Minister issues in operating the Act should state, in addition to what it states already, that the Member's retaining his membership in the House was required in the public interest, was rejected.]

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam (Newcastle-on-Tyne, North): . . . His [the Attorney-General's] argument seemed to me to be that it was a matter entirely for the Member of Parliament to decide whether he accepted an office or whether he did not in the public interest, and that really it was not fair to him or to the Prime Minister that the Prime Minister should say that it was in the public interest that he should retain his seat and at the same time take up an office which prevented him, or might prevent him, from doing his Parliamentary duties. He suggested that in most cases, indeed in all cases, he said, the constituents of Members of Parliament who have been placed in this position have raised no objection. It seems to me extremely difficult for constituents as a whole to voice their opinions in this matter. I look upon the whole question as one of real, material importance. I disapproved entirely of the view that was expressed by the Prime Minister that it was possible for a man to hold his position in the House of Commons and at the same time to do work of urgent national importance outside it:

It seems to me more and more clear that if a man is to be asked to retain his seat in Parliament and do other work, it should be made amply clear to his constituents that this is really in the public interest, because otherwise it is not fair on the Member of Parliament. It seems to me completely unfair that a man should be placed in that position when it really is in the public interest that he should take up a new job which prevents him entirely from acting for his constituents. . . .

Major Sir George Davies (Yeovil): . . . If it is a question of the appointment, as was picturesquely indicated by my hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Pickthorn), of a publicity officer or something of that sort, it is possible to combine such offices and for a Member to be a fairly constant attender at this House and to that extent be properly representing his constituency. But if he

is sent to an overseas job for the duration, it brings up a very different consideration. It is idle to think that any form of referendum could be made to his constituents, because not only is it impossible to make such a reference to his supporters, but it is also impossible to make reference to his opponents, for they are his constituents if not his supporters, and they are equally disfranchised if he can no longer give his proper time and attention to this House. . . .

[A new clause amending the form of certificate issued by the Prime Minister when appointing an M.P. to an Office of Profit under the Crown was brought up by Mr. Pickthorn. Mr. Maxton (Glasgow, Bridgeton) explained it:—]

Mr. Maxton: The Prime Minister has arrogated to himself the power to say that the hon. Member for Bridgeton may go to Timbuktu physically and still remain a Member of this House. What the Select Committee are saying is that the Prime Minister ought to say in explicit terms to the House, and not to the man concerned merely, that it is, in the view of the First Lord of the Treasury, speaking for the Government, desirable and in the public interest that he should go to Timbuktu, and that not only is it desirable in the public interest that he should go to Timbuktu, but in the public interest that he should retain his seat in the House of Commons.

Mr. Silverman: That would be dangerous.

Mr. Maxton: The reason for the appointment of the Select Committee was that this whole thing was dangerous, but it does not make it more dangerous to make the thing explicit instead of implicit. The purpose of the new Clause is to impress on the Prime Minister the serious thing he is doing. . . .

Question, "That the Clause be read a Second time," put, and negatived.

Bill reported, without amendment; read the Third time, and passed.

FEBRUARY 19.

Oral Answers to Questions (33 columns)

PRODUCTION (REGIONAL ORGANISATION)

Major Lyons asked the Minister of Supply, as representing the Minister of Production, whether he will now arrange to establish regional executive production councils, meeting weekly under the chairmanship of each Regional Commissioner, to ensure administrative decentralisation, acceleration of decisions and economy in money and manpower, and on which supply Departments and all other appropriate Government Services are represented?

Sir A. Duncan: My Noble Friend has under review the organisation of production in the regions, and has appointed an *ad hoc* committee under the chairmanship of Sir Walter Citrine, composed of representatives of the British Employers' Confederation, the Federation of British Industries, the Trades Union Congress General Council, and of the regional boards, to advise him on this matter.

Major Lyons: In view of the urgency of the matter can this gentleman get to work immediately? Will he have the powers suggested in my Question?

Sir A. Duncan: I understand that he was appointed yesterday and that he has already got to work. . . .

SUPPLY: ARMY ESTIMATES (109 columns)

The Secretary of State for War (Captain Margesson):
 A second point upon which I should like to make a few remarks has been referred to many times in the public Press and is now finding some expression in the newspapers of the United States. I refer to the general suggestion that while we are very willing to accept arms and equipment from any and every source, we are not so willing to send our soldiers out to fight with them. With all the emphasis at my command I deny this insidious and wholly false accusation. A figure has been quoted to me as current in America which purports to show the number of Imperial troops under arms in Libya, and it has been stated that only an insignificant fraction of these troops are British. . . . The proportions of British troops are very far from what our critics would like the world to believe. Of the total troops in the Middle Eastern Command nearly half come from this country, rather more than a quarter from the Dominions. India finds something over a tenth, and the balance is made up of Colonial and Allied contingents. . . .

Now as to the composition of the Eighth Army during this present battle. Fifty per cent. of all the troops employed were British. Nearly one-third were provided by South Africa and New Zealand; more than a tenth by the Indian Empire. There was also a small number of Australian troops, and the remainder of the Force was completed by units provided by our Polish, Free French and Czech Allies. All the armoured tank brigades were British.

Mr. Garro Jones (Aberdeen, North): I really think that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is not greatly clarifying the matter if he describes troops coming from these Islands as British. Does he mean by that troops coming from England, Scotland and Wales?

Professor Savory (Queen's University, Belfast): And Northern Ireland?

Captain Margesson: I mean troops from the United Kingdom. I repeat that all the armoured tank brigades were British. The armoured car regiments were from the United Kingdom, except for two from South Africa. Let us look at the casualties. Of every 100 men killed or wounded in the land fighting since the beginning of the war up to January, 1942, about 70 have come from this country.

.... The number of returns submitted on the average by an infantry battalion has been reduced by more than 30 per cent., and the decision to complete only one attestation form for each soldier, instead of two, is saving tons of paper and much clerical labour. We can and will do more in this direction. There is much more to be done, and we are progressing along these lines. The policy of decentralisation is one to which we are definitely committed, and to the extent that its success must depend upon the exercise of initiative by lower commanders, it is a step which carries with it the possibility of breakdown in individual cases. It is a step, therefore, which is open to many theoretical and some practical objections. But I am satisfied that it is in the interests of the Army as a whole and as a great administrative organisation it is a step which ought to be taken and one which the House will fully approve. It is, moreover, a step which will smash bottlenecks and speed up the working of the machine by securing that decisions are taken promptly at a level proper to their importance.

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