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THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY

JANUARY-MARCH, 1953

VOLUME XXIV, NUMBER 1

Notes and Comments:

**The Economic Aims of the Labour
Party**

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**The Labour Party and the Trade
Unions**

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**The Labour Party and Social
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**The Ideological Situation in the
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**The Labour Party in its Social
Context**

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**The Leadership, the Rank and File,
and Mr. Bevan**

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J O N A T H A N C A P E

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THIS is a special number devoted to a detailed survey of the Labour Party, and it is hoped, if possible in the following issue, to do the same by the Conservative Party. In 1946 a Labour government took office for the first time with an effective parliamentary majority; after six years of office it was narrowly defeated at the polls. To-day for the first time since 1939 an unadulterated Conservative government is in power. The moment is opportune for a serious survey of the two parties, their structure and anatomy, their principles and policies, their achievements in the past and their promises for the future. In the case of the Labour Party such a survey necessarily requires a consideration and prognostication of its future policy in the light of what the government of Mr. Attlee actually did in its six years of office. We have attempted to meet this requirement by getting experts to survey the most important fields of government and administration. Thus Mr. Gaitskell deals with economic policy, Professor Wootton with the social services, Professor Robson with local government, Mr. Strachey with nationalization, and Mr. Crossman with foreign relations. But there are other questions of great importance which are connected, not with government and governmental policy, but with the structure of the party itself or with the social structure of the country. For instance there is no doubt that the class structure of Great Britain has undergone profound modifications since the Labour Party first came into existence, and that these changes, usually ignored by communists and doctrinaire Marxists, must, or should, have a considerable effect upon the structure, policy, and even principles of a labour movement or Labour Party. This neglected problem is considered by Mr. Beales. Professor Cole deals with a very important structural problem, peculiar to the Labour Party, namely its relation to the trade unions and their position in the party's internal balance of power, a question which affects the party machine.

* * *

"The party machine"—the words probably for most people leave a nasty taste in the mouth. Abuse of the party machine is part of a widespread habit of lamenting or denigrating the party system. It is remarkable how common it is, even in this country, for people to talk glibly of the evils of the party system or of the "breakdown" of the party system and, with it, of parliamentary government and democracy. When these political lamentations

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are not the result of sheer ignorance, political and historical, they usually conceal the *Schadenfreude* or the wishful thinking of a reactionary. The party system is an instrument of social organization, of human government; like all human instruments, it can be used intelligently for its proper or for good purposes, or it can be misused ignorantly and unskillfully or maliciously for evil. The system is not the invention of doctrinaires, intellectuals, or professors of political science; it has grown "naturally", a secretion of political society, wherever and whenever men have begun to substitute democracy for autocracy. Democracy again is not, as reactionaries from communists and fascists downwards now tell us, a "mere word" or an unreal mystery; it is simply a method of political organization which ensures that the government of a country is both responsible and responsive to the people. Unless every one thinks alike and has the same interests, no government, whether of an empire or of a croquet club, can be responsible or responsive to the citizens or members unless there develops some form of parliamentary government and, within it, some form of party system. In the complicated society of a modern state, there is no known method of ensuring that government is not autocratic and irresponsible without a highly developed parliamentary system with an elaborate party system and machine.

* * *

To destroy the party system is to destroy political liberty and ultimately social freedom. But of course the mere existence of parties does not ensure liberty and democracy. Democracy and the party system only work where the party is based upon and stands for definite political and social principles which are understood and believed in by its members and translated into policy and action by its leaders. These conditions have never yet existed in a perfectionist sense and so the perfect democracy has never yet existed—and probably never will exist. But it is only ignorance or interest which inspires the false and sweeping generalizations about parties so common to-day, e.g. that there is never any fundamental difference between parties, that the system always degenerates into a struggle between "ins" and "outs", and that parliamentary democracy is therefore always a sham. On the contrary, all through the nineteenth century there were fundamental differences in political principle between conservatives and liberals and wherever these were allowed to develop in a parliamentary system of government, the political and social

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results, in liberty, equality, and humanity, were immeasurably superior to those in countries where vested interests contrived to maintain an authoritarian type of government.

* * *

The verdict of history will, we believe, be that in the twentieth century the British Liberal Party finally destroyed itself by compromising or betraying the fundamental principles of liberalism, a process which was initiated with disastrous results to Britain and the world by Joseph Chamberlain. The Labour Party succeeded the Liberal Party, after the suicide of liberalism, as the political opponent of conservatism. It stood for objects and principles fundamentally different from those of the Conservative Party in several departments of social policy or organization, e.g. as to the right economic organization for a modern state, equality of opportunity, vested interests, "imperialism" and the rights of "subject" peoples, collective security. The articles in this number show, we think, how these principles moulded the policy and actions of the Labour Government during its years of office. Mr. MacRae in his article has the courage to state categorically his opinion that at no period of the world's history has the human race developed a society more civilized politically and economically than in Great Britain to-day. What he says is true, and it is also true that the standards of political and social decency to which we have attained are directly due to the beliefs and ideals of liberalism and socialism. The Labour Party in office, no doubt, fell short in many respects of its ideals, but, in so far as it succeeded, it did so by translating those beliefs and ideals into policy and practice through democracy and the parliamentary system.

* * *

Every one agrees that much remains to be done. The party stands, electorally and spiritually, in the trough of a wave. There is nothing surprising in this. The Labour Party took office at a moment of supreme difficulty. Private memory of public events is incredibly short and few people now remember that in 1945 nearly every one of knowledge and judgment thought that the difficulties of post-war reconstruction were so appalling that any government and party which had to deal with them would find the task impossible and destroy themselves electorally. The Labour Party made its mistakes, but it has behind it a record of extraordinary achievement. That the electorate is aware of this is

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shown by the polls at the last two elections. But the gruelling of events and the mere fact that the government carried through its social programme so successfully and so completely have had their effects in the weariness of leaders, disillusion of the led, a vacuum in ideas and ideals, and consequently a tendency to schism. Under these circumstances that the party should have a few years in opposition should be of advantage both to the party and to the country. What the Labour government actually did or did not do is in many cases open to strong criticism, as Professor Robson's article shows. But events have proved that the fundamental principles of Labour are socially sound. There is no need to "rethink" them, but what requires hard thought is how they are to be applied in a Britain transformed into semisocialism by the implementation of Labour's first "five-year plan" and in a world racked by the strains and stresses of war and ideologies. The articles in this issue are, we hope and think, a beginning in this process of "hard thought".

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A word must be said about the tendency to schism. It is, naturally and rightly, endemic in the Labour movement. It is showing itself at the moment in the controversy between Bevanites and anti-Bevanites of which so much has been made in the daily press. It is considered by several of the writers in this number. The important thing to remark is that the differences between the two sides are about important things, but they are not differences about principles. In all parties there develop a Right, a Left, and a Centre formed by temperament rather than intellect or principle. On the Left are those who want to go fast and talk at the top of their voices, on the Right those who like to go slowly and cautiously. The quarrel between Mr. Bevan and Mr. Attlee is the eternal quarrel between Left and Right—an eternally healthy quarrel. But it is exacerbated and confused by a fortuitous and extraneous political problem, rearmament and its effects upon our economic situation and our foreign policy. Here the differences are certainly not about principles, but about degrees, e.g. how much we can afford to spend on rearmament. Like all domestic quarrels, this one is complicated by personal questions. Unless it is healed, as in fact it should be, it will damage the party electorally; if it becomes more embittered, it may well spread from persons to principles. Only in that case will it cause a serious split in the party.

THE ECONOMIC AIMS OF THE LABOUR PARTY

By HUGH GAITSKELL, M.P.*

THE British Labour Party has never been encumbered by a precise and rigid collection of dogmas set out in the works of the socialist Fathers. If in discussing socialism we refer to Karl Marx or Robert Owen it is usually for historical interest rather than to produce a quotation which clinches the philosophical argument.

Nor have we ever been much interested in the disputes about "scientific" and "utopian" socialism. To tell the truth, we were never much impressed with either. Marxism we looked on as an interesting sociological theory which like most such theories contained a lot of half truths, which its exponents insisted on promoting to the status of the one and only true Gospel. In any case the Marxist hostility to idealism and its emphasis on inevitability—which was claimed to be so scientific—did not somehow suit a practical and rather unimaginative people like ourselves. Moreover, those fierce footnotes, exploding with hatred and oddly at variance with all the scientific jargon, made little appeal to men and women nurtured in the traditions of Christianity as expounded in Non-Conformist chapels.

As for utopianism—whose influence on the British labour movement has certainly been greater than that of Marx—its weakness in our eyes was not idealism but the remoteness of some of the ideals, the unreal assumptions about human behaviour and the lack of common sense applied in trying to achieve them.

For the last 50 years at least socialist thought here has been for the most part practical and positive, concentrating on the two questions, "What do we want?" and "How do we get it?" The answers to the questions have of course changed from time to time as some of the things we want have been achieved and others no longer seem relevant. For example, in the early days the repayment of the national debt figured high in the list: nobody feels the same about this now. But basically our economic aims spring from a desire to get rid of certain evils which exist

* Chancellor of the Exchequer in the late Labour Government.

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under what we call capitalism and which, we believe, must continue to exist under capitalism. Hence our conclusion that we must change from a capitalist to a socialist society.

The major economic evils—for so they seem to us—are insecurity, inefficiency and injustice. Correspondingly our major economic aims are full employment, high productivity and social justice. We want in short a classless society, where such differences in income—or wealth—as exist are based on genuinely acknowledged merit or need and not on the accident of birth, where there are more jobs going than people seeking them and where our economic activities are so organized as to give us the best results for the efforts we put in. I fully realize that the economic philosophers could start punching holes in this statement of aims. But this is not a philosophical essay, and I believe that what I have said does correspond pretty well with what most labour people would like to see.

I realize too that one and perhaps two of these aims are shared by Conservatives. Certainly the Tory Party would claim to be as keen on high productivity as we are and some of them, though not always convincingly, would protest their acceptance of the need for full employment. That leaves however two major differences between the parties—and in the economic field these *are* the two major differences. First the Tories do not share our enthusiasm for social justice, equality, the classless society—call it what you will. It is not surprising that this should be the great divide. For in all socialist theory in every country and in every century, the one common feature has been the indictment of injustice and unfairness in capitalist society. Secondly, apart from this fundamental difference in aims, there is a disagreement about means to the other two aims—full employment and high productivity—which is so important and so mixed up with what are really different emotional attitudes that it comes near to being, itself, a difference over ends.

This second difference is broadly that we believe that the achievement of these aims requires a very substantial degree of public intervention, control and ownership too, whereas the Tories, though they now accept some of our arguments, still hope and work for a predominantly *laissez faire* economy.

It may appear surprising that apart from a reference to public ownership in the previous sentence, I have not so far included “the nationalization of the means of production, distribution and exchange” in the fundamental aims of the Labour Party. The

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difference between means and ends is, as I have just implied, not always clear, but it seems to me that nationalization—even in a comprehensive form—falls into the former rather than the latter category. Nationalization should not be looked on as something which is good in itself, but as something which contributes to the economic aims which I have already put forward. It is true that at an earlier stage in socialist thought nationalization was regarded as the one supremely important means to achieve these aims. To-day it still is important as a means, but its relationship to socialism is by no means the same.

The reason for the change is that the full implications of parliamentary democracy are now understood and accepted and that these include the necessity both for a gradual extension of public ownership and for the payment of fair compensation to existing owners. There is little doubt that in the 19th century, socialism and wholesale nationalization were looked on as almost, if not quite, identical because the transfer to public ownership was assumed to take place more or less simultaneously in every industry, and without payment of full compensation. The chief evil of capitalism was, as I have said, always injustice, and injustice in turn was regarded as due to the payments of profits, dividends, and interest—unearned income. Therefore, the argument ran, take over the means of production, stop this flow of unearned income altogether (save perhaps for compassionate allowances), pay the worker the full product of his labour and introduce the just society all at once.

But if the transfer to public ownership is gradual and full compensation is paid, this argument falls to pieces. Full compensation implies that the owners of the industry to be taken over should not be penalized as compared with other capitalists; hence the transfer to public ownership does not stop the flow of unearned income: all that happens is that it takes the form of a rather smaller and more certain flow of interest payments instead of a larger but much less certain profit income.

The case for paying compensation in full need not be argued here. Apart from any moral objection to the confiscation of property without regard to the wealth of the individual, there is the practical difficulty that private firms in other industries not yet, but due to be, taken over would retaliate in face of the threat of confiscation by reducing investment and getting out as much as they could while they could. And this simply does not square with the efficient operation of the private sector which is

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obviously to be desired throughout the long period of transition, inevitable under democratic conditions.

Does the case for nationalization, then fall? By no means, though it needs to be thought out and restated. It is still a necessary means to the achievement of socialist ideals, because it contributes in various ways to all three of the aims I have mentioned. It helps the move towards greater equality because it prevents people from making any more private fortunes in the industries taken over, because the flow of interest is smaller than the corresponding profit incomes, because on the whole, via the pressure of public opinion, it puts a brake on the payment of very high salaries (though the need to compete with private industry sets a limit to what can be done here). It helps the maintenance of full employment and higher productivity because of the greater control over investment which it places in the hands of the government. It assists the government to determine the direction of investment and so to carry out more easily specific plans for economic development. It leads to greater efficiency because it makes possible the economies of large-scale administration and production—especially important in some industries—without the establishment of a private monopoly. It thus avoids the evil of a great concentration of private power without responsibility to the community and escapes the danger of restrictive policies being followed because of the desire to maximize profits. It leads to the enforcement of higher standards of safety, health and welfare for employees, and it creates at least a framework for the development of industrial democracy.

Thus, although nationalization is certainly not the be all and end all of socialism, the extension of public ownership yet plays an essential part in the strategy of the Labour Party. But how far should it go? The answer surely must be—as far as is necessary to achieve our major objectives. Exactly where the line should be drawn is a matter which will depend partly on how far we use other means to get to our goal, and partly just on experience.

Certainly the frontier will have to be pushed out further than at present; and in deciding where to push it out we should clearly select those industries where the case on merit is strongest—as indeed we have done so far. But on the other hand we ought to consider whether there are not some parts of the economy which we shall always in the foreseeable future prefer to leave in private or co-operative ownership—such as retail distribution, farming (as apart from land owning), the small builder, garages,

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etc. And if we so decide, it would be very much better to say so and to make it plain that we wish to encourage small businesses of this kind. Politically one of our dangers at the moment is that we tend to be regarded as a party opposed to the energetic enterprising small man who wants to get on, whereas in fact through our policy of full employment, better education, training schemes, and in many other ways we are all the time providing far wider opportunities for the individual than ever before.*

So much for the fundamental economic aims which we, all the time, set before us. But a government does not govern in a vacuum. When it comes into power it inherits a particular set of historical circumstances and a host of problems which have to be dealt with; and throughout its life it will have to spend a large part of its time and energies in coping with new developments which probably could not have been foreseen. This is particularly true in the field of foreign and economic affairs, especially in a country so much affected by overseas events as Britain.

For this reason policy must also be fashioned as we go along; and in meeting new situations new aims come to be accepted. The most obvious instance of this at the present time is the balance of payments, both the overall U.K. balance and the dollar-sterling balance. Although even before the war this was a problem, it has recently come to dominate the whole economic situation. Thus a solution to the balance of payments problem must be added to the list of our economic aims. Indeed, we know perfectly well that without a solution the other aims cannot all be achieved.

To take this analysis through the next stage and to study in detail the problem of how we reach our objective—the aims within the aims—is impossible in the scope of this article. If I try to deal with them all, there will be no room to say anything useful about any of them. I therefore propose to concentrate on two only—full employment and equality and to leave out, except in passing, productivity and the balance of payments. The choice is arbitrary, but the subjects I propose to pursue happen to be the more distinctively socialist of the four. Even so I can do little more than present an outline to indicate the way the mind of the Labour Party seems to me to be shaping.

* I have sketched here the case for nationalization to-day. Of course there are also difficulties and problems. One of the most serious—which many in the Labour Party do not fully appreciate—is the difficulty of finding people who are good enough and also willing to take on the colossal jobs of large-scale business administration.

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There is fortunately much thought and discussion taking place within the party at present. Several books by leading labour economists are being written and there is a prospect that the 1950's will see a renaissance of British socialist thought comparable to the blossoming of ideas which occurred before, during and just after the first world war.

Our attitude to the problem of full employment has been greatly influenced by the "Keynesian revolution". Indeed one might almost say that just as the early Fabians were influenced by the Ricardian theory of rent and its development by John Stuart Mill, so their successors to-day have been influenced by the "General Theory of Employment" and subsequent academic thought based upon it. By this I mean not that the Labour Party talks in Keynesian jargon of "marginal propensities" and "liquidity preferences", but that it believes that the problem of unemployment in a closed economy can be solved at least to a large extent by regulating total demand.

It would, for example, be agreed that the general level of spending can easily be increased by budgetary investment and credit policy, and that by a combination of these policies it would be possible to prevent a depression internally. But it so happens that this was not the problem the Labour Government had to face. In the immediate post-war situation our problem was how to prevent inflation and avoid a balance of payments deficit while at the same time maintaining full employment.

The general principle of our policy in these circumstances was to continue both monetary and physical controls—the former to be used to keep the level of home demand high enough to ensure full employment, the latter to prevent this developing into inflation and upsetting the balance of payments. Thus while imports were for the most part controlled by state purchase and quotas, private investment was regulated by building licensing, public investment by direct Government decision, the prices of essentials were held down by controls and subsidies—with the concomitant of rationing to ensure "fair shares"—and industry was guided to some extent by raw material controls and again by building licensing. This apparatus of controls achieved, in effect, two objects—first, by protecting the economy from inflationary pressure naturally set up by a very high level of employment, it made that high level possible; and secondly by holding back supplies of luxuries from the home market (the austerity policy) in order that there should be a greater supply of

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essentials—it involved some redistribution of real income in favour of lower incomes. Thus we had council houses before expensive flats, imported timber before American clothes, cars exported to buy essential imports instead of being delivered for motoring at home.

Looking back on all this, I see no reason to modify the general principles of our policy. Quite apart from humanitarian motives it is hard to believe that we should have achieved such a remarkable increase in production and productivity without the full employment policy. And it is, I think, quite certain that if we had not had the controls we should have been obliged—in order to protect our balance of payments and check the rise in prices internally—to hold back production by our credit and budgetary policy and deliberately to create a higher level of unemployment.

Just how much higher it is hard to estimate. Some would say that with 3% out of work (600,000) the economy could run without controls; others that we should have to approach or even go beyond the 5% (1 million) mark.

This does not mean, however, that the problem of maintaining full employment without inflation is solved. There were undoubtedly weaknesses in our policy, and some difficult questions will have to be answered. Before turning to these, however, I must make some further reference to the balance of payments problem.

The deflationist school paint a picture of Britain in chronic deficit because of a too high level of employment and its inflationary accompaniment. But the facts do not bear this out. To begin with it is quite unreasonable to assume that we ought to have been in balance in 1946 and 1947. In view of the position we were left in at the end of the war when lease-lend stopped so suddenly, it was perfectly natural that for a time we should run a deficit while we were both restocking (filling up the pipeline) and building up our export trade. And it was in order to enable us to do this that we obtained the post-war loans from the U.S.A. and Canada. In the years 1948 and 1949 we had in the one case a small deficit and in the other a small surplus. In 1950 we had a surplus of £240 million. In 1951 this became a deficit of £500 million. In 1952 we shall probably have a small surplus. This can hardly be described as a picture of chronic deficit. It is true that the surplus of 1950 was partly due to the running down of stocks and work in progress that year, the correction of which was one of the causes of the deficit of 1951. But the main cause of the

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deficit of that latter year was the quite extraordinary change in the terms of trade against us—a change which was all the more difficult to handle because of the extreme suddenness with which it took place. I can understand the criticism that we were too slow in adjusting our plans to meet a new situation. But what I cannot understand is the notion that it would have been easier to deal with the situation if we had no import controls and had relied solely on monetary policy. All that can be said for this *chronic* inflation doctrine is that if we had deflated more and had more unemployment and less production, and if consumption had been reduced by this as well as by lower imports or higher exports, then we should have had an even larger surplus in 1950 and a larger cushion to take the strain of 1951. But I cannot agree that this justifies the sweeping generalization, so often made in some quarters, that our system of full employment plus controls has failed and that we must return to pre-war orthodoxy and rely on monetary policies only.*

And now for some of the real weaknesses in our policy and some, as yet, unsolved problems. In the first place the experience of these last years shows clearly, I think, that while it is possible through monetary policy and physical controls to prevent excessive inflationary pressure from the demand side, it is more difficult to stop a "cost" inflation. If wages rise faster than productivity, then, except in so far as the advance is at the expense of profits, it is inevitable that prices will rise too. Much has been said and written on this subject in recent years. Sometimes the danger is exaggerated. But few people would be so bold as to say that there was no problem. It is partly a question of education, partly a matter of institutions. There is no simple solution, but I believe it can be handled, given real co-operation between the trade unions, the employers, and the government.

Another rather more difficult problem arises in connection with controls. The last Labour Government took over a complete set of wartime controls, gradually discarded those which were not needed, and retained the others. When the next Labour Government comes into power, most of the controls may have been swept away; setting them up again will not be so easy as merely maintaining them. Moreover, in some cases the public may not take kindly to the idea at all. Are we, for example,

* I cannot deal here with the long and tangled story of the dollar balance of the Sterling Area since the war. There were in my view serious weaknesses in the management of the sterling area at this time, but that does not affect the conclusion of this paragraph.

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to reintroduce food rationing, if this has meanwhile been abolished? Of course the need for it would not arise unless and until the rise in incomes (together possibly with the revival of subsidies) caused shortages at the prevailing prices. But if we do not favour the idea—because of the political disadvantages—we shall have to be careful not to create the conditions in which it becomes necessary.

We ought also to examine more closely the relationship of negative controls to efficiency. There is no doubt that raw material shortages, carried beyond a certain point, have a very bad effect on production. Again, whenever quotas have to be fixed in relation to past records, they tend to militate against the young, enterprising firm. Can we find some better system of deciding allocations between firms?

I would be inclined, myself, to the view that the key physical controls in the private sector, without which we could not carry out a full employment policy, were foreign exchange, import and building licensing and price controls, but that we should aim at normally confining ourselves to these. This means that we should try to adjust our monetary and credit policy so as to make it unnecessary to have many other physical controls—except occasionally the allocation of a scarce raw material.

This brings me to the third question on which more thought is needed—the part to be played by credit policy generally and the rate of interest in particular in the planned economy. This is an extraordinarily complex matter on which economists have written a vast amount. Perhaps the prevailing view among the left wingers to-day is that credit policy is of vital importance, that there should be more direct control of the size and character of the assets held by the banks, but that the use of the bank rate is both too crude and too expensive a weapon to be relied on; we should therefore do best to rely on selective credit policy, encouraging bank lending in the case of one industry and discouraging it in the case of another. In general, I share these views, though I have doubts on two points—the capacity of the branch bank managers to administer the selective credit controls and whether the level of stocks and work in progress can be effectively controlled in this manner.

For there can be no doubt—and this is really my fourth problem—that one of the weak parts in our whole planning machine was our inability to watch sufficiently closely the movements of business inventories and to influence them in the way

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we wanted. Partly this is just a matter of adequate statistical returns, but it is also a question of what instruments of control can be used. It can be argued that had we had the knowledge and the controls, we should have had neither such a large trade surplus in 1950 nor such a large trade deficit in 1951.

Finally there is one general limitation on the kind of controlled economy I have been describing—the controls are almost all *negative*. They are designed to steer the economy the way the government wishes by stopping people from doing things. This is, up to a point, the natural type of control in the private sector for the simple reason that you cannot force people to lose their money. It provides, as I have already suggested, one of the arguments for nationalization. But more attention needs to be paid to the question of what positive inducements can be provided for the private sector. The two most obvious are subsidies and guaranteed purchases. Both of course have been used—especially in agriculture. Initial allowances at different levels for different industries have also been suggested. The difficulties of using these in a big way as instruments of planning are primarily political. There is a danger that the pressure of vested interests rather than the needs of the economy will decide how and where and for how long they will be used. This, however, is part of a wider problem which emerges in one way or another if you attempt to go beyond a plan to keep the general level of demand at an adequate level.

It will not be denied, even by those who dislike official statistics, that in the last 12 years there has been a substantial advance towards greater economic equality. This has come about, I suggest, in at least four different ways. First and most familiar has been the striking increase in the taxation of high and middle incomes. This was introduced during the war but has broadly been continued in the post-war period. The income tax concessions made by the Labour Government since 1945 were designed, as far as possible, to benefit the lower taxable incomes. Secondly, there has been the substantial increase in free social services which though available to all are, for various reasons, not always used by better off people. In this respect the expenditure on education has been relatively more valuable to the cause of equality, because the middle classes still tend to pay for their own education, while in the case of the health services, for example, they have themselves been perhaps the greatest beneficiaries.

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Thirdly, there has been a steady rise in the share of wages and salaries in the nation's income. Between 1946 and 1951 the rise in total wages and salaries *before* tax was 60%, the rise in farm incomes 50%, professional earnings 33%, small businesses 9%, and rent, dividend, and interest received only 5%. Even allowing for a small increase in the working population, and the fact that these figures relate to personal income and therefore exclude undistributed profits, the change is sufficiently remarkable.*

Fourthly—but much less important—there is the point made earlier in this article that real incomes of the better off have been held back by such measures as rationing and import and building licenses.

But though there is undoubtedly much more equality to-day, the process of breaking down class barriers and introducing equality of opportunity has certainly not gone as far as socialists desire. What, then, are the next steps to be taken towards this end?

There is, I think, a growing feeling that techniques of simply increasing taxation on incomes still further and expanding social services with the proceeds is not an adequate answer to our problem. Much nonsense, to be sure, is talked about the harmful effects of taxation on incentives to work. The more serious economic objection to still higher taxation lies, more in the difficulty that beyond a certain point it causes people to reduce saving or to dissave instead of to cut their consumption. But it is the political difficulty which seems to me the most important one. For the amount which can still be transferred from higher incomes, i.e. those paying surtax, is now relatively small. If by some fiscal device, all incomes in excess of £2,000 a year were taken by the revenue, the additional yield was estimated in 1951 to be only a little over £50 million compared with a total budget of over £4,000 million. Any attempt to raise large additional sums by income tax on the usual lines, over and above the increase of revenue at existing rates which may be expected as the national income grows, must involve higher taxation on middle incomes—say £500 to £2,000 a year. Moreover we must face the fact that people do not like having too much of their money being spent for them on free communal services and too little being left to them to spend as they like.

* The fact that the index of share values shows no significant rise in this period suggests that the ploughing back of undistributed profits did not offset the sharp relative fall in property incomes.

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While none of us would deny the practical necessity for free communal services in some spheres, and while, because of the redistribution effect, they have up to now undoubtedly contributed to greater equality, beyond this there is in my view no special reason why socialists should favour all such services as against a fair distribution of the money involved which the recipients can spend as they wish.

And here we come up against the problem of how far it is desirable to equalize post-tax *earned* incomes still further. How much more, for example, should a chairman or managing director receive in "take home money" as compared with the lowest paid labourer in the industry? No doubt this is in part dependent on public opinion—and, as opinion changes, so the differential can change. But it would be worth while enquiring what sort of standards would be considered appropriate to-day. The present range, apart from a few exceptions, is of the order of 7 or 8 to 1. Should we try and narrow it?

For my part I would say that our strategy in the next stage towards greater equality ought to be directed not to narrowing still further the differences in earned income so much as at three other matters—"expenses", education, and the distribution of unearned income and the property from which it is derived. For I believe that these are three of the major causes of inequality to-day and that in tackling them we should enjoy a good deal more popular support than by proceeding along the more familiar road of higher taxation on incomes—earned and unearned alike.

The extent to which people can claim and be granted "expenses"—especially for entertainment—has been the subject of comment for a long time, and, though its quantitative significance may not be very great, it gives rise to irritation and cynicism among the vast majority who do not enjoy these privileges. The problem is not at all an easy one. It is difficult to decide where to draw the line and it is almost impossible to check in every case whether it has been drawn in the right place. But some idea of the way in which the more excessive allowances could be stopped was given in one of the amendments which the opposition put down to the 1952 Finance Bill.

The education ladder is, of course, very much wider than it used to be. But the fact remains that differences in education are still a major cause of differences in economic and social status and that these differences in education are to a too great extent

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still related to the position of the child's parents. There are those who go to the secondary modern schools and leave at 15, there are those who go to the secondary grammar schools and leave at 17 or 18, there are those who go from the grammar schools to the universities—and there are those who go to the "public" schools and may or may not go on to the universities.

I am no educational expert, but it seems to me that if we really want equal educational opportunity for every child, then we need two major changes—one within the state education system and one about the relationship of private to state education. As regards the former, we ought surely to try to eliminate the kind of class structure that often exists between the secondary modern and the secondary grammar schools, and we ought more and more to try and ensure, in so far as there have to be differences in the amount of education given, that, throughout, these are determined solely by the ability of the child.

On the second point, we have to face the fact that the desire "to do the best for your child" is a very powerful and natural emotion which it would be foolish to ignore or suppress. But it is also true that this desire operating in our present educational system does produce great inequalities of opportunity. It seems to me that if we are not to prohibit "private" schools—to which there are objections—the only course is to improve the quality of state education until it becomes mere foolishness for people to pay to have their children educated privately. The expense of "private" education is so high to-day in relation to post-tax incomes that parents can often only afford it by drawing on their capital—capital which the vast majority of the population do not possess except in very small amounts. Thus to some extent the question of greater equality in education is bound up with our third major problem—that of the distribution of property.

It is important to tackle this, in the first place because the distribution of property is much more uneven than the distribution of income and because, as far as is known, the move to greater equality seems to be going more slowly here. But it is also important because without doubt the capacity to spend capital is an important cause to-day of inequality of living standards. It is important, finally, because, in so far as it is mostly based on inheritance or luck, the unequal distribution of property is all the less justifiable. How then should it be tackled? I can only briefly record my general views. I believe that there is still everything to be said for concentrating on the point at which

wealth is inherited. It seems to me that public opinion which would react against a capital levy, except in very special circumstances, does not really support the handing over of large accumulations of wealth from one generation to another. Exactly how our present system of death duties should be reformed so as to make it more effective, I cannot discuss here.

But it is quite certain that any really vigorous effort to attack the problem in this way would encounter one very serious obstacle—avoidance by gifts *inter vivos* and by spending out of capital. It would therefore be essential to anticipate this by counter measures. As I have indicated, the problem of dissaving is already a serious one for those who wish to preserve full employment without inflation and also press on to greater equality. And gifts *inter vivos* are to-day already a frequent method of avoiding death duties. It is therefore necessary to find some method—possibly through fiscal reform by which we can effectively put a stop to both practices. If we can find this and overcome the administrative and political difficulties which its introduction would involve, we should then be able to maintain a sufficiently high rate of saving in the community and so provide ourselves with a secure base from which to make another great advance towards the just society.

THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE TRADE UNIONS

By G. D. H. COLE*

THE federal structure of the Labour Party, with the trade unions holding an overwhelming majority vote at the annual conferences by which it is finally controlled, has been the subject of much debate. It has been attacked as involving the party's subordination to a sectional interest, and praised as making it always in the last resort responsive to working-class needs and aspirations. There have always been a few socialists who have lamented trade union control as preventing the emergence of a fully socialist party; and always a few trade unionists who have hankered after a party all of their own, with no door left open for

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the entry of middle-class politicians. But most socialists and most active trade unionists have accepted the "labour alliance" (Keir Hardie's phrase) as a good thing, and have disputed only, if at all, concerning the relative weight to be assigned, under the party constitution, to the various elements of which it is made up.

The trade unions have been, in terms of numbers and voting power, the major element ever since the Labour Representation Committee was formed in 1900. But the character of the federation to which they belong has changed quite out of recognition. In the early days, up to 1918, the Labour Party was a federation of a number of trade unions with two socialist societies—the Independent Labour Party and the Fabian Society—and a number of miscellaneous bodies, mostly local Trades and Labour Councils. Only after the new constitution of 1918 did the local labour parties become an important element, sending many more delegates than the socialist societies, but hardly less insignificant in voting strength to the trade unions. Only in 1937 did the local labour parties acquire the right to elect their own representatives—increased in number from 5 to 7—to the National Executive; for till then these representatives had been elected by the whole conference, including the trade unions. Meanwhile, the secession of the Independent Labour Party in 1932 and the expulsion of its successor, the Socialist League, in 1937, had left only the Fabian Society to represent a national socialist movement distinct from the party itself. These changes meant in effect that the Labour Party had ceased to be a federation of trade unions and socialist bodies and had become instead a federation of national trade unions and of local labour parties which consisted partly of individual members and partly of affiliated branches of trade unions.

Overleaf, for a few selected years, are the figures showing the affiliated membership under three headings—trade unions, socialist and miscellaneous bodies, and individual members of local labour parties. No figures are available for the third category before 1928.

Thus, in effect, the local labour parties replaced the socialist societies as the second main element, and instead of the party being made up mainly of two groups of national organizations, it came to consist of one national group—the trade unions—and one local group—the constituency parties. This was a most important change. The trade unions had in the Trades Union Congress and its General Council a permanent organization both

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(Thousands)	Trade Unions Affiliated Membership	Socialist Societies etc.* Affiliated Membership	Local Parties Individual Membership
1900	353	23	—
1906	975	21	—
1914	1,572	33	—
1919	3,464	47	—
1926	3,352	36	—
1928	2,025†	32	215
1939	2,214†	3†	409
1945	2,510†	8	487
1951	4,937	7	876

for forming and focussing opinion and for representing their collective views when they so desired. The local parties, on the other hand, had no such central agency as the socialists had possessed at an earlier stage in the National Administrative Council of the I.L.P. Their only formal link was in the group of members they elected at conference to the party Executive; and these members, even if they had wished to act together, were in a minority on the Executive and would at once have been accused of disloyalty had they attempted to form a separate cabal. In fact, they never did so; for most of the seats were usually won by prominent national politicians who were unlikely to be all on the same side in any important controversy, and some of these politicians by no means wished to see any distinct focus of leadership created on the basis of the local parties.

I do not mean, of course, that in party affairs the trade unions habitually acted together, or that there was as a rule a trade union *bloc* in opposition to the local parties. Usually, on any important issue, some trade unions voted on one side and some on the other, and there was a similar division among the local parties. It was, however, the case that, at any rate in matters of international policy, the trade union majority usually supported the platform, and carried the day, irrespective of the distribution of opinion in the local parties; and also that the trade union delegations, or most of them, tended to cast block votes which wiped out the influence of their own minorities. As against this, the local delegations, having no block votes or preliminary

* These figures exclude the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society which was affiliated from 1928 through its Political Committee. The members affiliated were 20,000 in 1928 and 37,000, 33,000, and 28,000 in the other years here given.

† These years show the effects of the Trade Unions Act of 1927.

‡ This year shows the effects of the secession of the I.L.P. and of the subsequent dissolution of the Socialist League.

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conferences of their own, voted as each individual delegate had been instructed by his local party or, in the absence of instructions, personally decided to vote.

There were some attempts in the 1930s, in the course of the conflict of views which developed after Hitler's conquest of power, to organize the local parties as a group within the party. But these attempts, in which Sir Stafford Cripps was the central figure, shared the fate of the Socialist League. The defection of Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden on the one side, and the secession of the I.L.P. on the other, had given both the "intellectuals" and the "socialist left" a bad name; and the National Executive, itself dominated by the trade union and parliamentary leaders, received strong trade union support for its assertion of the need for unity—the more so because, in the 1930s, one of the main issues was that of collaboration with the communists in some sort of anti-fascist front. Indeed, then as now, the intense anti-communist feeling among the trade union leaders was a most important factor; for it led many of them, almost as fanatically as the American trade union leaders, to suspect of communist sympathies anyone who questioned the need for a line-up of the world labour movement against "totalitarianism" of the communist equally with the fascist type.

One important factor in moulding trade union attitudes both in the Labour Party and in the Trades Union Congress in recent years has been the increasing centralization of the trade unions themselves. This has been a consequence at one and the same time of their increasing power and of a change in the conditions under which this power has to be used. Centralized collective bargaining is the outcome not only of greater centralization on the capitalist side but also, to an even greater extent, of the growing difficulties of Great Britain in adjusting its economic affairs to its changed position in international trade. The virtual disappearance of large-scale strike action since 1926 is a consequence not only of the defeat of the trade unions in the general strike, but also of a situation in which trade unions have been compelled to keep constantly in mind the probable effects of higher wages on the cost of living and on export trade—and therewith on Great Britain's ability to buy the imports needed to sustain either full employment or a satisfactory standard of life. In the 1930s this pressure was felt in the form of trade union weakness in face of widespread unemployment and declining membership: to-day it is felt no less severely in the form of an inhibition on the

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full use of trade union strength. The trade unions have been compelled, no less when they are strong than when they were weak, to act not as sheer pressure groups determined to exact all they can from capitalism, but as responsible partners in an attempt to make the capitalist system work. This attitude has been forced upon them by their knowledge of the precarious condition of the British economy, despite the high profits which have been made; but it is very difficult to explain the necessity to their members, and this difficulty forces on them the need to establish a strong central discipline and to damp down any militant tendencies among their followers—the more so because they are well aware that all such tendencies will be exploited by the communist minority without any consideration of the effects on the British standard of life.

Thus, there has arisen a situation in which, not indeed all trade union leaders, but the groups which chiefly direct central trade union policy, have come to adopt a largely negative attitude towards what they regard as the irresponsible wishes of local militants, and therewith a marked hostility towards anyone who makes himself the exponent of a left-wing policy in either industrial or political affairs. They can, indeed, hardly suspect Mr. Bevan of being in any sense in league with the communists, to whom he is almost as hostile as they are; but they do suspect him, not only of personal ambition to oust the existing leadership, but also of being an irresponsible stirrer-up of trouble when for reasons both of national and of international policy trouble ought to be avoided at almost any cost. They are afraid of Bevanism, not without reason, as calculated to strengthen opposition to "wage restraint" and to collaboration in measures designed to increase productivity; and they are also afraid of it as calculated to weaken the anti-communist front in which they are partners with the American trade unions. But most of them are at the same time conscious of the need to walk warily lest they be repudiated by their own followers and forced to adopt industrial policies which they believe would be disastrous in the present economic situation.

In this, the group which dominates the General Council and, less directly, the Labour Party Executive, has some reason on its side. Mr. Bevan, in what he has said since his resignation from the labour government, has been either irresponsible or unduly optimistic—to say the least—in speaking as if a reduction in expenditure on armaments would go far towards solving Great

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Britain's economic difficulties and rendering possible a renewed advance of the welfare state. In this, he has not carried all the members of his group with him: Mr. Harold Wilson has presented a much less optimistic diagnosis. But it is beyond question that the effect of Mr. Bevan's own utterances has been to make light of the economic difficulties and to encourage a revolt of the left against the official party and trade union leadership in home as well as in international affairs. That is why the Bevanite challenge has gone so far towards bringing about a trade union line-up against the left comparable with that which led to the temporary expulsion of Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Bevan himself from the party shortly before the war.

This does not mean that Mr. Bevan wants to split the party. Far from it. I think he is as convinced as his opponents that the trade union basis on which it rests is advantageous and indeed indispensable to labour's effective conquest of power. He does not even, as the newspapers continually suggest, want to supersede Mr. Attlee as leader or to thrust Mr. Herbert Morrison off the party Executive. He wants to convert the party, not to split it, and for leadership he is quite content to wait, provided he is allowed to stake out his claim in the way that suits his talents. Hardly anyone in the party thinks it would be a good thing for the final voice in its affairs to pass from the trade unions to the local parties. The most the rebels want is to make their weight more strongly felt both on the Executive in the shaping of party policy and inside the trade unions as a protest against the unduly centralized control. These, however, are from the standpoint of the trade union leadership both very dangerous desires; for the one could easily cause a sharp difference between the party Executive and the T.U.C. General Council, and the other would directly undermine their own influence in the international as well as in the national field.

It may be said that I am speaking as if the trade union leaders were much nearer to having a common attitude than they in fact are; and in a sense this is true. A number of the big unions are dissenters, to a greater or less extent, from the outlook I have described—for example, the railwaymen, the engineers, and the distributive workers, not to mention some smaller unions in which communist influence is of account. But to-day the central core of trade unionism, or at any rate of the Trades Union Congress, is made up of the two great "general" unions—the Transport and General Workers and the General and Municipal

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Workers—*plus* the mineworkers and the cotton operatives; and these together make a block of nearly three out of the eight millions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress and, with their regular supporters, can be always certain of a good majority if they vote on the same side. Indeed, the two “general” unions alone, with upwards of two million votes, constitute by far the most powerful group—and also the most centralized and strictly disciplined from above. This is, of course, an immense change since the days when the “new unions” stood for a socialistic challenge to the dominance of craft unionism and of the old “Lib.-Lab.” attitude; but though the character of the dominant groups has changed, the conflict between the centralizers and the necessarily more irresponsible advocates of greater militancy has not become less acute.

Nevertheless, I repeat, almost no one wants any sort of split either in the Labour Party or in the trade unions—in fact, no one except the communists, if even they. The great mass of active trade unionists and party workers are fully aware that any serious split would both weaken trade unionism disastrously and very likely enable the capitalist leaders to defeat it in a pitched battle, and also destroy labour’s chance of a reconquest of political power. Accordingly, whatever may be the outcome of the struggle between Mr. Bevan and his antagonists, no serious split will occur. None would occur, even if the party were foolish enough to expel Mr. Bevan and Mr. Bevan to allow himself to be expelled; for his followers would not follow him out of the party, nor would he even wish that they should. Were he expelled, he would soon be back again, as he has been before, and as Sir Stafford Cripps came back despite his expulsion during the conflict of the 1930s.

This would happen, because there are not really two clear-cut rival policies, each commanding a massive following. The main body even of active Labour Party workers is not on either Mr. Bevan’s or Mr. Attlee’s side: it is, on the contrary, very uncertain what the right policies are and for what policies the combatants really stand. The struggle is indeed much more a matter of temperaments than of policies—at all events outside the field of international affairs—and international affairs are but seldom, and only at moments of really acute crisis, determining factors among the main following of a mass party, or even among its second-line leaders.

The Labour Party, in order to be a real force in politics, must

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continue to rest mainly on a trade union basis. What is wrong with it to-day is not this basis, but the excessive centralization of some of the trade unions, which makes the relation of the individual trade unionist to his trade union, and through it to the Labour Party, almost infinitely remote. This affects some unions much more than others—most of all the two vast “general” unions with their very miscellaneous membership, their very rapid turnover of members, and their low rates of contribution, which make frequent or really representative conferences difficult. But it is also an outcome of highly centralized bargaining, which deprives the proceedings of the local branches of much of their interest, and of the divorce of the branch from the works or workshop unit, which means that the face-to-face groups in the factories and other workplaces have little organic connection with the activity of the trade unions at higher levels. This factor also weakens the trade union connection with the local labour parties, so that their delegates to these parties act largely as individuals rather than representatives and fail to serve as a real link between local industrial and political activity and sentiment.

The trade unions have, in practice, no effective machinery for political action except at the centre. They had more, in some areas, before the local trade councils were separated from the local labour parties at the end of the first world war. The old Trades and Labour Councils, in the areas where they were active, held the two wings of the labour movement together at the local level. But it is no more possible to go back on the separation than it is to decentralize wage-bargaining. All that can be looked for on the political side is greater trade union participation in the work of the local parties; and it is not too easy to see how to bring that about until trade unionists can be induced to take more interest in the branch life of their own societies. That in turn depends on trade union policy at higher levels. Although wage-bargaining in its broader aspects cannot be decentralized, there is much that could be—including the application of national agreements to the varying conditions of different localities and establishments. But even this meets with a good deal of opposition from the national leadership, which is afraid of losing control. Nor would it achieve much in the political field unless some way were found of creating direct links between the local labour parties and the factory groups and shop stewards’ committees; and to any such link the leaders would strongly object.

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Trade unionism is in fact becoming in a good many industries more and more a business movement and less and less a democratic fellowship of workers who are in close touch one with another through the meetings and discussions of the branch. Politically, the average trade unionist who pays his political levy to his trade union gets out of it no real sense of belonging to a democratic political movement. He pays, and that is all—and of course a great many trade unionists do not even pay, though many more do now than did while the “contracting-in” provisions of the 1927 Trade Unions Act were still in force. Only a small proportion of trade unionists take part in the election of delegates to represent their branches in the local labour parties, and few hear any reports from the delegates when they have been chosen. Few, unless they are active individual members of the local party or branch delegates, attend any meetings called for the discussion of labour policy, or do anything more for the Labour Party than vote for it at election time. The minority that do wish to take part in labour politics mostly join a local party as individual members in addition to paying their political levy to their trade union; but they then act in the party as individuals rather than as trade unionists.

Nevertheless, the trade union basis of the party is indispensable. Without it, the party would probably have split in 1931, might have split in the 1930s during the Spanish civil war, and might even be splitting to-day. Such a split would have been, and would be, disastrous, not only because neither of the resulting parties would stand a chance of winning a majority, but even more because neither would be able to command even a passive mass following. If the party were to split to-day—which is highly unlikely because of its trade union basis—we should get on the one side the great majority of the national trade unions and of the parliamentary leaders, working in close alliance with the national leaders of the Co-operative Union, and on the other a high proportion of the keenest local workers in the local labour and co-operative parties and of the active local trade unionists, without any mass following. Of course I am implying, in asserting this, that the number of individuals, all told, who are active socialists prepared to work for their faith is small, and that the division of these activists between two parties would make it impossible for either of them, even apart from money difficulties, to maintain an effective local organization covering the country.

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This being the position, it is fortunate that there is certainly no such clear-cut division on policy as to require a split. There are two great issues on which the division of opinion is sharp—the whole problem of the Atlantic Alliance with its corollary of subjection to American influence, and the question whether consolidation or a rapid advance towards socialism is the right policy in home affairs. But these two great issues cannot be effectively confronted without confronting a third—that of solving Great Britain's economic problem and adjusting the British economy so as to make payments balance with the outside world; and at present neither faction within the party is showing any readiness to face this difficulty as it will have sooner or later to be faced. One faction insists that we cannot afford to do without American help, and must therefore accept American leadership: the other too often pretends that it could be solved by breaking with the Americans and spending less on arms. In truth, however, it requires far-reaching changes in the structure of the British economy and in British trade relations with other countries; and there is no evidence at all that, when this necessity has to be faced, divisions about the steps to be taken will correspond to the present divisions between Bevanites and their opponents.

What the trade union basis of the Labour Party does make far more likely than it would otherwise be is that this real issue will in due course be fought out inside a single party strong enough to carry out the policies on which it decides. It will not be easy to get this real issue faced at all—for neither faction likes the implications of facing it or sees how to make them acceptable to its supporters. But necessity will drive, probably before long; and only a single, united party will be in a position to rise to the occasion. Therefore, it is important not to push the quarrel between the Bevanites and the Deakinites too far, and indispensable to keep intact a mass party in which the trade unions can, if they will, have the last word. But the alliance will not work properly until the internal machinery of the trade unions is made more effectively democratic and a better link forged between the local labour parties and the local trade union bodies which have at present hardly more than a nominal connection with their day-to-day work.

BRITAIN AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD

By R. H. S. CROSSMAN, M.P.*

I

MOST political controversies—in this country at least—are settled not by the weight of argument but by the march of events. When slogans outlive their relevance, it is the facts which determine policy. Certainly this is largely true of Labour's foreign policy since 1945. Principles and assumptions have been squeezed and reshaped, and the ground of the controversy between Left and Right has been shifting rapidly. This process of adaptation to environment, which is often described as "healthy empiricism", has its dangers. A party which permits its foreign policy to be determined by events has little prospect of ever seizing the initiative. Both its internal controversies and its agreed policies have a tendency to lag behind historical development, instead of anticipating and influencing it. True enough, a sound foreign policy can never be manufactured off a detailed blueprint, or deduced in the Cabinet from abstract principles. But what is possible—and what has been lacking since 1945, despite the title of the Labour Party's most recent policy statement, *Facing the Facts*—is an agreed framework for the study of the world situation. Indeed, the main divisions in the Labour Party about foreign affairs have nearly all arisen not out of disagreement about socialist principles but out of confusion about the nature of the problems with which Britain is faced.

How grave is the threat of Russian military aggression? What is the likelihood of America (a) going isolationist, (b) precipitating a world recession, and (c) assisting us to solve our dollar problem? It is the very different answers given to these and similar *questions of fact* which are the root cause of the divisions in the Labour Party to-day. And the difficulty is that since those answers must very largely be a matter of guesswork, based on insufficient evidence, neither side can prove the other wrong. Yet, unless answers are provisionally agreed, and accepted as a basis of action, Labour's foreign policy is bound to remain a melange of well-intentioned generalizations and particular *ad hoc* solutions. Such a policy provides a future socialist government with no firm directive and so leaves it wide open to unpredicted

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pressures of external circumstance and the gentle assurances of the Foreign Office that nothing is gained by anticipating a crisis. A great imperial power can afford to dispense with a framework of foreign policy and to meet each situation as it comes with an open mind, because, by its sheer bulk, it squeezes circumstances instead of being squeezed by them. Britain—at least since 1945—can no longer do so without losing all freedom of action.

II

But are not American and Russian policy so convulsive and so unpredictable that all intelligent anticipation is useless? It is certainly true that no one can predict in detail the development of Russian and American policy: yet British policy is based on all sorts of implicit assumptions about both countries. Indeed, without such assumptions this country could not have a foreign policy. My aim, therefore, in this article is to dig down below the structure of Labour's policy towards America and Russia, to examine the presuppositions on which it is based, and to see whether it would be possible to work out a set of agreed assumptions which could form a stable framework for socialist thought and socialist action.

Our examination will start with Russia, because here we have a totalitarian state, whose rigidity should make intelligent anticipation relatively easy. Since the 1930's the Labour Party's attitude to Russia has vacillated not because of changes in Russian behaviour but as a result of changes in public feeling about Russia. Each of us has his "Russia complex", his irrational nexus of emotions, which make judgment difficult. Yet for 35 years we have lived in the same world as the Soviet Union, and it should be possible by now to base our policy on something firmer than feelings. It is, for instance, an astonishing phenomenon that responsible socialists, who called Russia a noble ally in 1945 and who presumably have since then studied the mass of evidence collected for the Nuremberg trials, should now talk as though the Soviet menace is analogous to the Nazi menace, and can therefore be met by the same methods. In fact, of course, there is no resemblance between either the theory or the practice of Nazi and Stalinist foreign policy. They present us with dangers, but with quite different dangers, and there is no ground, therefore, for the belief that we shall save peace in the 1950's by doing the opposite of what we did in the 1930's.

Yet Labour's policy towards Russia since the cold war began

has been largely based on "the lesson of the 1930's". We enthusiastically rushed into sanctions against North Korea because we remembered the consequences of appeasing Japan in Manchuria; we are organizing collective security against Russia in Europe with "the lessons of Munich" in mind. I believe it was right to support South Korea (up to the 38th parallel), and to become a member of the Atlantic Pact. But I also believe the assumptions about Russian intentions used to justify both actions do not bear a moment's inspection.

III

Our first task, therefore, is to forget analogies with Hitlerism and to examine Stalin's foreign policy exclusively in terms of Russian history and Stalinite theory. Only if we do so, will it be possible to formulate our attitude to Russia in accordance with the objective facts, so far as we know them. Of course, this involves making a number of assumptions which cannot be verified. But, whatever attitude we adopt to Russia, we must make unverifiable assumptions. In this essay I am trying to make those assumptions *explicit*. Perhaps the best way to do so is to state mine, in the hope of encouraging readers either to accept them or to modify them and, in so doing, to reveal their own.

(1) The development of Russian communism since the failure of the German communist revolution in 1919 has been away from the internationalism of the Old Bolsheviks and towards a self-centred Soviet imperialism. The Kremlin's thinking is still rigidly Marxist, but Marxism, which was the instrument of the oppressed against the oppressor, has become the system of an expanding Stalinite empire.

(2) The danger we confront is not a communist conspiracy for the achievement of world revolution, but the attempt by the Kremlin to organize the revolutionary forces throughout the world, and in particular among the colonial peoples, for its own purposes. Where a communist party in a small state begins a genuine revolution, it soon comes into conflict with the Soviet Union. Then it is either liquidated, as in Czechoslovakia, or breaks away, as in Yugoslavia. Where the country is too large to be disciplined, the Russians will seek a close alliance, for instance with China.

(3) The effect of the Yalta decisions in Europe and of the Chinese revolution in the Far East was to give Russia huge opportunities for expansion. These opportunities were enlarged

by American policy since 1948. As Stalin has recently emphasized, Russia is no longer an isolated communist economy, surrounded by a capitalist world market. There are now two power blocs and two world markets.

(4) As a highly repressive dictatorship, which is engaged on vast plans of economic development inside Russia and in the satellite states, the Soviet Union will for a long time seek to avoid a general war. On the other hand, there is no evidence to suggest that the Kremlin will surrender any peripheral area of importance, rather than stand and fight.

(5) There is no evidence available which suggests either that the Soviet State can be disintegrated by anything short of general war or that the development of the eastern bloc can be more than retarded by economic blockade. Indeed, it seems likely that, under the conditions of a rearmament race, not only can the rate of communist capital investment be maintained, but the miserably low living standards of the communist peoples can be steadily improved. The polarization of the world into two power blocs, therefore, works to the advantage of the Kremlin. The containment of Asian communism, is a policy which has actually assisted Russian expansion by forcing communist revolutionaries to accept military aid from the Russians, to rely on them for the capital equipment they require for industrialization, and so to become satellites within the Soviet empire.

(6) Whatever policy the democracies adopt, the Kremlin will feel justified in employing every means, short of general war, for disrupting the non-communist world. On the other hand, it will also be prepared to enter into trade relations with western states, and even to sign a local peace settlement or accept a general detente, if the balance of advantage points that way.

(7) The kind of relationship which we mean by co-operation is impossible between a western democracy and the Soviet Union. By our standards the Kremlin combines unscrupulousness and legalistic pedantry in a way which makes mutual confidence almost impossible. The only basis for co-existence is that each side should observe the letter of any contract, while assuming that the other will violate the spirit if ever it pays him to do so.

IV

When we turn to the U.S.A., the attempt to build a similar framework of factual analysis is far more difficult. Here we are faced not with a centralized managerial state, but with (i) an

expanding and astonishingly successful capitalism functioning within a weak governmental structure, and (ii) a western democracy where public opinion, organized into pressure groups and operating under the division of powers, is constantly but erratically modifying governmental purpose. Russian foreign policy is rational in the sense that it derives from the continuing purpose of a small group of men acting within a rigid framework of Marxist method. In this sense American foreign policy will always be "irrational"—without continuity of governmental purpose or an agreed framework of procedure.

Does this mean that we cannot discover any coherent pattern here? I don't think so. A partially Keynesian capitalist society, even if it has no settled government policy, develops within a well defined economic framework. There are strict economic limits to the arbitrariness of American political decisions, and these are strengthened by factors of geography and national tradition. Let us take our courage in both hands, therefore, and formulate our picture of the U.S.A. in accordance with the facts, so far as we know them.

(1) Before Pearl Harbour, America was neutral because she did not feel herself threatened. She has discarded neutrality only because she feels herself threatened. Her internationalism since 1947 has been prompted neither by a crusading mission nor by internal economic pressures, but by fear of communist expansion. On the other hand, the containment policy and rearmament themselves engender a crusading spirit and create internal pressures for economic expansion.

(2) The basic characteristic of the non-communist world is the unbalance between the North American dollar economy on the one hand and the sterling area and western Europe on the other. This unbalance is being intensified by American policy. The cold war, when combined with rearmament and the re-emergence of Germany and Japan as competitors for a dwindling world market, produces acute strains between America and her allies. Precisely because the U.S.A. is not ideologically expansionist, as the Soviet Union is, she cannot drag her allies into accepting all the strategic requirements of the containment policy, or suppress the conflicts of interest which it produces.

(3) Internally, America has developed institutions and techniques of fiscal control which will probably prevent a repetition of the 1929 slump. On the other hand, even a minor recession, which America scarcely feels, is sufficient to upset the economies

of her allies. Such recessions, which can hardly be prevented, may within a few weeks destroy the beneficial effects of large-scale aid programmes.

(4) However far-sighted American statesmen may be, the U.S.A. cannot assume Britain's nineteenth-century role. It is a continental and largely self-sufficient economy, ill fitted to become the centre of a multilateral trading system. Though, ideologically, America remains the protagonist of free enterprise, her business men show little confidence in overseas capital investment. Surplus capital is either expended in the arms programme, or exported in the form of aid programmes. The amount which America contributes to the strengthening of her European allies or to the development of backward areas is an annually varying resultant of the conflict between two pressures, the American's fear of communism and his reluctance to foot the tax bill for its containment.

(5) The conflict between the economic interests of the U.S.A., Britain, Germany and Japan is far greater than that between American economic interests and those of the communist bloc. At present this fact is overlaid by the fear of communism. Should this fear be increased and the cold war intensified, then American "internationalism" will be maintained, but the conflicts of economic interest will be further intensified. Should the cold war be relaxed, the main motive for American overseas assistance would be removed and the dangers of a world depression increased. Thus, whichever way the international situation develops, the relations between America and her allies will be subject to acute tensions.

(6) Despite these tensions, co-operation between a British Labour Government and an American Administration is rendered possible by the principles and practices which our two countries share. As Western democracies, Britain and the U.S.A. are ideologically, nearly as closely united as the Russia of Stalin and the China of Mao Tse-tung. We not only speak the same language; much more important, we give nearly the same value to the words we use when we discuss a problem of ethics or politics. So when each side speaks his own mind frankly and the conflicts of interest or policy are openly stated, a genuine partnership can be achieved. In view of the vast discrepancy of power, however, between the two countries, such a partnership is only possible if Britain is scrupulous in maintaining her economic independence at whatever cost to her standard of living and, in

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particular, refuses all aid which carries with it political conditions. Once that independence is forfeited (as Mao Tse-tung probably knows), ideological affinity becomes not a means of communication between equal partners, but an instrument for persuading the weaker power to accept the will of the stronger.

Let me repeat. British foreign policy must be largely based on assumptions about Russian and American behaviour. Usually these assumptions escape criticism because they remain implicit. Only when they are dragged into the light of day do we begin to realise how questionable they are. I have made my own assumptions explicit, not in the hope that they will be accepted without revision, but as agenda for discussion. If, by such a discussion, the Labour Party could be stimulated to reach an agreed framework of factual analysis, the controversy about policy would be shifted on to stabler ground.

V

To-day, for instance, the Right wing of the party takes its stand on the necessity for close Anglo-American co-operation, and envisages the development of an Atlantic Community as the grand aim of British policy. Indeed, the main reason why Mr. Bevin and Mr. Morrison were so strongly opposed to British participation in Western Union and were ready, however reluctantly, to accept the American demand for German rearmament, was the belief they both held that Atlantic Union is the only realistic basis for the organization of the free world. They not only dismissed European Union as dangerously parochial: they held that, if Britain made it a success by participating actively within it, we should thereby be giving the Americans an excuse for withdrawing from Europe. Convinced, in fact, that the two chief dangers to Britain are Russian expansion and a recrudescence of American isolationism, they made it their chief aim to strengthen the ties which bind America to Europe by treating N.A.T.O. not as an *ad hoc* military organization, but as the first step towards a permanent Atlantic Union.

But if our assumptions about America are correct, this policy is based on shaky foundations. It is true enough that the Atlantic Pact, by committing the U.S.A. to an immediate intervention in the event of Russian aggression in Europe, acts as a deterrent against that aggression. But what justification is there for believing that this strictly military alliance either can or should be transformed into an enduring political structure? A sober

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examination of the facts suggests that, in the unlikely event of an "agreement to disagree" between Russia and the U.S.A., the Americans would retreat from most of their present "internationalism". Only so long as they fear Russian aggression, will it be possible to persuade them to participate in the defence of the west and, to a limited extent, to concern themselves with its economic wellbeing. But, in view of the chronic unbalance between the American economy and that of her European allies, it is difficult to see how the dollar problem can be resolved within the limits of a close Atlantic Community, even if the cold war continues. And the re-emergence of Germany and Japan to compete for western markets, ever more closely constricted by the cold war, makes this difficulty even more acute. If it is stupid to refuse collaboration with the U.S.A. for reasons based on emotional prejudices, it is no less stupid to set as the goal of British foreign policy a grandiose plan of Atlantic Union, which demands the impossible of the Americans and neglects the repercussions of German and Japanese revival.

What, then, is the alternative to Atlantic Union? Many left-wing socialists are inclined to talk of regaining our lost independence, while in the same breath they suggest that the answer to the communist challenge is not military containment but the rapid economic development of the backward areas. A moment's thought is sufficient to show the incompatibility of these two aims. If Point Four programmes are to be launched, they must be floated on dollars and justified to the American taxpayer as part of his defence against communism. We cannot set out to cut Britain's dollar imports by increased national self-sufficiency in food production and by finding substitute sources for North American raw materials, and simultaneously rely on Point Four programmes.

The fact is that the room for manoeuvre open to the next Labour Government will be far narrower than most of us care to admit. British foreign policy is constricted to-day by facts which politicians of all parties are unwilling to mention, for fear of being dubbed defeatist. So long as we pretend to ourselves that grandiose goals (including higher living standards) are open to this country, we shall remain impotent to make those small yet critical decisions which are still possible. In a world dominated by Russia and America, British freedom consists in cautiously recognizing the limits which necessity sets on our free will and then acting boldly within those limits.

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If the assumptions we listed above are correct, then most of the ambitious designs for a socialist foreign policy are ruled out. Any close co-operation with Russia is excluded by the facts of Stalinite behaviour. Atlantic Union is excluded by the character of the American economy. A fully independent Third Force (whether conceived in terms of the Commonwealth or of Western Europe) is excluded both by strategic realities and by the national interests of the States concerned. What then remains?

VI

The first part of the answer must surely be that a socialist Britain should, as far as possible, be organized to meet sudden and unpredictable changes, and this demands the greatest practicable degree of economic self-sufficiency. However far we move towards this goal, we shall still remain more dependent on external markets than any other large nation. But a socialist government could, for instance, reduce our dependence on foreign foodstuffs by 20% in its first five-year plan; it could, with the rest of the sterling area, begin systematically to seek non-dollar sources of tobacco, cotton, wheat, aluminium, etc.; it could cut the crushing burden of our overseas military commitments and keep our arms programme within the capacity of our economy. Then, by foregoing military assistance, it could avoid submitting our trade with the eastern bloc to Congressional control under the Battle Act. Such a policy would not, of course, remove Britain either out of the American world market or out of the Atlantic Pact. But it would substantially increase our independence of political action and decrease our vulnerability to the effects of unpredictable changes in American economic policy.

In the second place, we could seek a new relationship with western Europe. The Atlantic Pact, because it commits the U.S.A. to the defence of Europe and the Mediterranean, is a deterrent against Russian expansion, which no socialist government could forego. But we should try to ensure that membership of it does not mean subordination to purely American strategies. At present each European power tends to negotiate bilaterally with the U.S.A. in the hope of achieving special favours. We had excellent short-term arguments of national self-interest for opting out of each specific plan for European Union proposed since 1947. But the net effect of what Europeans must regard as British isolationism has been to weaken ourselves, as well as the nations

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of western Europe, *vis-à-vis* America. It should be frankly recognized, for instance, that it was a failure of Anglo-French co-operation which permitted the Americans to put over their ill-timed and ill-considered plans for West German rearmament.

Nothing we can do will rectify the economic unbalance between the U.S.A. and the other members of N.A.T.O. But we could reduce the ill effects of this unbalance by seeking to create within the Atlantic Pact a European counterbalance to Washington. This would simultaneously provide the counter-balance *within* western Europe, which French fears of German expansion demand.

In the Far East we cannot hope to play any such central role. Here we must recognize that the paramountcy of the U.S.A. as a Pacific power has ended the period of Commonwealth strategy: Australia and New Zealand are now parts of an American defence system. The experience of France in Indo-China has shown us what happens when a European power clings to traditional national interests in a flood of Asian revolution. The national interests were long since lost, and the French are now involved, against their will, in the American containment of Chinese communism. The lesson is clear. American efforts to contain, or even to crush, the Asian revolutions are likely to continue. Since we cannot stop them, our aim should be to avoid commitments which involve us automatically in support for them, and to associate ourselves as closely as possible with the Indian policy of friendly mediation. Whereas in Europe we must be prepared to enter into precise commitments and seek to make America's commitments equally precise, we need in Asia, on the contrary, to retain as free a hand as possible.

In conclusion, I should like to return once more to the assumptions about Russia and the U.S.A. with which we started. If we can avoid general war, the next 25 years will see a slow shift in the world balance of power. The backward communist world will be developed more rapidly if it can rely on capital goods from the west, less rapidly if it is contained by economic blockade. But in either case it *must* grow stronger. Meanwhile the western world will be submitted to grave strains by the repercussions of American war booms or peace slumps and by the re-emergence of Germany and Japan. Nor can we be certain that, when these two unsatisfied powers regain full freedom of action, they will be content to accept American

leadership if the Russians offer them more favourable terms. The brutal fact is that, so long as the world is polarized into two heavily armed blocs, the fifty million inhabitants of these islands have no other prospect than a dwindling standard of living and chronic insecurity. Moreover the policies of military containment adopted by the U.S.A. in Asia are facilitating Russian expansion and sapping the strength of the west. The first requirement for the formulation of Labour's foreign policy is to analyse objectively the decline which confronts us. The west is losing the cold war and is bound to go on losing it as long as these American policies are pursued. And in this process Great Britain is more disastrously affected than any other power. It can only be reversed if the next Labour Government makes the unqualified decision to regain the independence of American aid which we lost during the second world war.

To reach this conclusion is, I know, to lay oneself open to the charge of anti-Americanism. How can we be so suspicious of the policies and ungrateful for the help of a great ally? My answer is, that we must learn from our experience since 1945. Because we sincerely believed that economic assistance would not jeopardize Britain's independence of political action, we voted for the American Loan in 1946. Since then, despite genuine good will on both sides, economic dependence has in fact corroded Anglo-American relations. It has rendered us unable to resist American policies which we knew to be wrong, and tempted the U.S.A. to take British support in the last resort as a matter of course. Hence the Labour Government's failure to nationalize the coal and steel of the Ruhr in 1947, to resist Mr. Acheson's imperious demand for German rearmament in September 1950, and to vote against the resolution branding China an aggressor. Even worse, dollar assistance has enabled us to maintain both a standard of living and a standard of overseas military commitments far beyond our means, and so to postpone the drastic reconstruction of our national life and external relations which would otherwise have been forced upon us. Before we can play the independent role of which we are still capable in world affairs, we must set about earning our own living out of our own resources.

LABOUR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

By WILLIAM A. ROBSON

THE attitude of the Labour Party towards local government since 1945 has been strange and in some ways incomprehensible. The policies of the post-war Labour government were highly injurious to the interests of local government. The rank and file of the parliamentary party appears to have been either ignorant of the trend of events or indifferent to what was happening. At no stage during these vital years of reconstruction has there appeared within the labour movement the slightest sign of any understanding of the problems and dangers which confront local government in Britain, nor any inclination to inquire into the position. Ignorance, indifference, and apathy have been the watchwords in this sphere of politics; and here at least one can observe complete unity within the party.

This attitude is strange because the party was nurtured in the belief that socialism could and should be achieved largely through the activities of local authorities; and leading Fabians had until recently a profound faith in the virtues of local government. Indeed, the Fabian Society's early work consisted chiefly of advocating "gas and water socialism" in terms of municipal ownership, and of urging vigorous action in every possible direction by local authorities. Sidney Webb, Bernard Shaw, Graham Wallas, and other leading Fabians had long practical experience as members of local authorities, and expounded the advantages and opportunities of local government in innumerable lectures, pamphlets and books. Bernard Shaw's book *The Commonsense of Municipal Trading* indicates the importance he attached to the municipal ownership of public utility services.

In *A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain* the Webbs declared that there are "obvious reasons why many industries and services have to be municipalized rather than nationalized".* The case for local administration of industries and services, they explained, rests primarily on the consciousness, among the inhabitants of a given area, of neighbourhood and of common needs differing from those of other localities; and on the opportunities which exist for neighbours to meet and discuss the kind of environment they want, and the best way of obtaining it. The residents in any area must use the same drainage system, the

* P. 213.

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same water supply, the same artificial sources of light and heat, the same educational and medical institutions, the same libraries, the same parks and open spaces, the same local transport administration. This tie of neighbourhood permeates in many different ways the nature of the administration. Hence, they concluded, "in the characteristic municipal industries and services producer and consumer are very near together, and automatically aware of each other".

For these and other reasons municipal industries and services would possess certain advantages over nationalized industries and services, which a socialist community will wish to develop. To the bond of neighbourhood and the stimulus of local pride they added the spur of local emulation in efficiency among local authorities providing similar services. These considerations led the Webbs to remark that there was practically no limit to the number and range of the industries or services that might with advantage be undertaken by local authorities. Only a few of the largest industries or services, such as railways and canals, afforestation, the supply of coal and oil, the generation of electricity, banking and insurance, and the smelting of metals, would require to be nationalized. There was, therefore, an immense field of expansion awaiting local authorities in the socialist commonwealth, and as much as one half of the entire range of services and industries might well fall within their sphere. Apart from the few nationalized industries, the only forms of production or distribution excluded from municipal enterprise would be the provision of commodities for household consumption. These were expressly reserved for the consumer's co-operative movement.

When one compares these confident predictions of the most influential leaders of socialist thought in Britain with the policies pursued by the two Labour governments which were in power from 1945 to 1951, one feels an immense difference of approach. The belief in local democracy and the tie of neighbourhood, which was an essential article of faith in the Webbian creed, has faded completely out of the picture. In its place we find a relentless drive towards centralization and bureaucracy sweeping everything else out of its way.

This is a matter on which the record speaks for itself. The following is a brief summary of the measures affecting local government passed during Mr. Attlee's two administrations. The Trunk Roads Act, 1946, added a further 3,700 miles of main

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highways to the national trunk roads administered by the Minister of Transport. An earlier Act of 1936 had initiated the policy of removing main highways from county council control to the central government. The Act of 1946 not only doubled the mileage of transferred roads but included main highways in the county boroughs and the county of London, which were formerly excluded. Moreover, the minister could henceforth declare by order any road to be a trunk route and thereby bring it under his control. The National Health Service Act, 1946, transferred the entire mass of hospitals owned and operated by local authorities to the Minister of Health. All that remains of local government is the right of local authorities to be consulted in regard to the appointment of a small proportion of members of regional hospital boards and hospital management committees. It was a shattering blow for the local authorities to be deprived of their hospitals, in which they took great pride.

The nationalization of industry took a heavy toll of local government responsibilities and power. The Transport Act, 1947, authorized the British Transport Commission to take away from municipal corporations their passenger road services, such as motorbus, tramway and trolleybus undertakings, and to establish regional schemes embracing both municipal and commercial transport services. The Commission was given similar scheme-making powers regarding harbours owned by local authorities.* The Electricity Act, 1947, deprived local authorities—principally the larger towns—of their municipally owned and operated supply undertakings, which handled about two-thirds of electricity distribution. The Gas Act, 1948, dealt in a similar manner with the 274 municipal gas undertakings, representing about 37 per cent. of the industry. The White Paper on British Air Services issued at the end of 1945 declared that civil airfields needed for the regular air services would be taken over and run by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. In applying this policy nine of the municipally owned aerodromes serving larger towns have been transferred from local authorities to the central government. These include Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds and Bradford, Liverpool, Cardiff, and Southampton.

The National Assistance Act, 1948, transferred to the National Assistance Board the duty of relieving destitution which local authorities had possessed since the days of the Elizabethan poor law. They no longer exercise any powers relating to the payment

* The Transport Bill now before Parliament provides for the repeal of these enactments.

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of money to persons in need and may now provide only services in kind. Another function which they have lost after nearly 350 years is the assessment and valuation of property for rating purposes. This was handed over to the Inland Revenue by the Local Government Act, 1948.

The trend has not been entirely in one direction, and local authorities have gained a few services to offset these staggering losses of power and responsibility. They are authorized by the Civic Restaurants Act, 1947, to provide and administer restaurants and to supply meals to the public, thus continuing the cheap meals service inaugurated by British Restaurants during the second world war. Their activities in this sphere are, however, declining, and there are at present only about 250 civic restaurants compared with nearly 1600 in 1945.

The town and country planning powers of county councils and county borough councils were enlarged by the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947. A further extension of their interests and jurisdiction was brought about by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, in regard to the management of national parks, nature reserves, and the provision of rural amenities generally.

The major local authorities were given much wider powers and duties of looking after children deprived of a normal home life by the Children Act, 1948. A new emphasis was placed on this neglected and badly organized service by the Curtis Report and its legislative sequel.

A beneficent provision of the Local Government Act, 1948, is a section enabling local authorities to provide entertainment and cultural services to help people to make better use of their leisure. The expenditure may not exceed the receipts and the product of a sixpenny rate; but this limitation has not precluded local authorities from undertaking a wide range of recreational services of many different kinds. There are now numerous repertory theatre companies in Britain, aided by grants from the local authorities. Music, ballet, illustrated talks, exhibitions, folk dancing, festivals and amusements of all kinds are now provided or financed by local authorities.

When due allowance has been made for these and other gains, it is scarcely open to doubt that local government has on balance emerged from the post-war phase of economic and social reconstruction greatly weakened and diminished in stature. Local authorities have lost nearly all their trading and utility services,

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and they are scarcely playing even second fiddle in the administration of the national health service. In place of the substance of power and responsibility they are given the right to have their members sitting on consultative councils appointed to look after consumers' interests in the gas and electricity industries. They have been given, in the words of Councillor Stott of Manchester, place without responsibility. It is, he said, "a seductive proposition—a shadow for the substance; an instrument denuded of power; a complete reversal of present practice, in which we receive advice from our technical staff and determine policy under their considerable influence . . . we shall occupy the role of endeavouring to influence the policy of our masters".*

The county district councils have suffered particularly severely, and housing is now the only service of major importance in which they play an independent role. In regard to a whole series of other functions they have either been superseded by the county councils or relegated to a subordinate position. This applies to fire brigades, police forces, town and country planning, local health services, and education.

Local authorities have become far more dependent on the central government than at any previous time in our history. The main cause of this is the increase in grants-in-aid paid by the Exchequer to local authorities, both in absolute amount and as a proportion of their total expenditure. In 1913-14 only 24 per cent. of local authority expenditure was met by grants, which totalled £22.5 millions. In 1947-48 Exchequer grants had risen to £244.5 millions, and accounted for 45 per cent. of local expenditure. In 1950-51 government grants amounted to £304.1 millions, equal to 50 per cent. of the total income of local authorities.

Increased financial assistance has inevitably led to increased central control. Because we have no single relationship between central and local government, such as that connoted by the *tutelle administrative* in France; because each Ministry, and sometimes each service within a Ministry, has its own peculiar pattern of relationships with local authorities; because we have a whole series of separate inspectors, controllers, etc., of central departments in the localities or regions, the assemblage of powers wielded by these outstationed representatives of Whitehall is less clearly visible than it would be if it were concentrated in the

* In a paper on "The Gas Industry in Relation to Local Government" presented to the conference of the Association of Municipal Corporations on September 25th and 26th, 1946, at Eastbourne.

hands of a single official like the prefect.* Nevertheless, when we consider the immense number of statutory powers possessed by ministers relating to the borrowing of money, the audit of accounts, the approval of bye-laws, the approval of local schemes, the appointment and dismissal of officers, the determination of disputes, the prescribing of conditions to be satisfied in order to earn a grant-in-aid, and the many other forms of control which exist, it is clear that the gulf between the British system of local government and that of France has perceptibly narrowed. It is true that a British local authority does not have to submit its budget for approval, that the local council cannot be suspended or dissolved either by the government or its local agent, that the content of education and the police forces are still largely under local authority control. But despite the great differences which still exist, the old contrast no longer holds in the same degree.

The erosion of local independence and freedom is not a new phenomenon. As long ago as 1933 I published an article in *The Political Quarterly*† entitled "The Central Domination of Local Government", drawing attention to the implications of the methods adopted by the so-called National Government to deal with the financial situation, and indicating the general trend of events in the sphere of central-local relations. No one can imagine that local authorities would be allowed to operate in complete isolation or autonomy in 20th-century Britain. But there is a great difference between a partnership on equal terms for a common end and the kind of subordination which has been imposed on local authorities during recent decades.

The grounds on which the Labour Party may fairly be criticized in this respect are, first, that it appears to be totally unaware of the dangerous threat to local independence involved by central domination, second, that central control, in all its forms—legislative, financial and administrative—appears to have increased immensely between 1945-51. Episodes like the unprecedented refusal of Mr. Chuter Ede as Home Secretary in 1947 to approve the appointment of the Chief Constable of Salford stand out in one's memory as symptoms of the general attitude. I am not suggesting that the Labour governments were any worse in this respect than other governments would have

* For a valuable recent survey and discussion see D. N. Chester, *Central and Local Government*, *passim*.

† Vol. IV, No. 1, January-March, 1933.

been. I do assert, however, that there are very strong reasons why the Labour Party should have a very different philosophy on this question from that which it habitually displays.

We have already seen that the ideas underlying the socialist commonwealth, as conceived by the early Fabians, which the labour movement has been endeavouring to express, grew largely out of the collectivist principle applied to local government. Many rank and file members of the Parliamentary Labour Party, no less than leaders like Mr. Attlee, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Chuter Ede and Lord Silkin, served their apprenticeship in local government before they entered the sphere of national politics. They learned, therefore, from their own experience the great value of local government as a nursery for democracy.

The welfare state demands the development and encouragement of local self-government to the greatest possible extent. In the first place, such unavoidable features as central economic planning and control, the nationalization of certain major industries, and the expansion of state functions generally, are bound to place an exceedingly heavy burden of work on the central government, so that on grounds of efficiency it is important to spread the load by devolving as much responsibility as possible away from the central departments. The Labour Party has understood this only to the extent of creating a great number of public corporations to run nationalized industries. It has not perceived the need to make the fullest use of local authorities.

But the case for giving local government a far more important place in the labour programme than it has hitherto occupied rests on a more essential foundation than the need to relieve congestion at the centre. The most widespread grounds of dissatisfaction expressed by members of the Labour Party with the welfare state as it now exists in Britain arise from a feeling that it lacks the genuine spirit of democracy, that there is insufficient popular participation by the citizen in its working processes, that it lacks grass roots. Several of the contributors to *New Fabian Essays* dwell on one or other aspect of this theme. "To-day the enemy of human freedom is the managerial society and the central coercive power which goes with it" writes Mr. Crossman (p. 12); "the test of socialism is the extent to which it shapes a people's institutions to the moral standards of freedom" (p. 15). Later he observes that "though certain basic industries are transformed into public corporations and private industry is

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subject to some control, effective power remains in the hands of a small managerial and civil service elite" (p. 27). He then argues that whether we proceed towards socialism or towards a veiled form of totalitarianism depends largely on whether the state and industry are run by segregated elites with the mass of the people merely carrying out orders (p. 29). Mr. Crosland similarly observes that the power of the state has so greatly increased that it now dominates the economic life of the country (p. 39). Our society has in his view become managerial to the extent that the control of industry has largely passed into the hands of the managerial class which has usurped the position of the old capitalist class (p. 43). Mr. Albu writes in similar vein in diagnosing the absence of any spectacular advances in the efficiency of nationalized industries (pp. 127-8).

These and other contributors to *New Fabian Essays* agree that there is an excessive concentration of power in the central organs of the state; they agree also on its detrimental effects in creating apathy and indifference. They want to destroy the possibility of government by segregated elites and to bring about a fuller sense of responsibility and a wider participation in decision-making by the common man. They seek, in short, to avoid the maladies of bureaucratic domination in public administration and managerial supremacy in industry. Yet strangely enough there is no chapter on local government in *New Fabian Essays* and one does not find the subject even mentioned. The attitude of the New Fabian essayists reflects the contemporary indifference of the labour movement generally towards local government as a method of distributing power, of widening popular participation in the process of making decisions, and of enhancing freedom. On no occasion since 1945 has there been a discussion at the annual conference of the Labour Party on the place which local government should occupy in the welfare state or the socialist commonwealth, or the policy which the party should adopt on this question. There is, therefore, no "advanced" wing of the Labour Party and no "orthodox" view on this matter. The old guard and the Bevanites are equally indifferent, and, in the writer's opinion, equally reactionary in their attitude towards a matter of profound importance to the political life of Britain. Mr. Bevan's own views can best be illustrated by his actions as Minister of Health.

It has long been obvious that the organization of local government in Britain is quite unfitted at the present time to

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carry out effectively the tasks which it should discharge in the modern age. The authorities were created in the nineteenth century before the advent of modern transport and communications and many of the county areas derive from medieval times. Two separate causes have contributed to make the present system obsolete. First, the development of the motor car, motorbus, electric train and trolleybus have rendered the boundaries between town and country, on which the division between county and county borough is based, utterly meaningless. More and more people live outside the large towns and swarm into them to work, thereby throwing a heavy burden on the county borough council. The county boroughs have sought to extend their boundaries in order to embrace the outlying dormitory settlements, suburbs, housing estates, or villages for only by doing so could they obtain the right to tax the armies of workers of all classes who daily invade their territory. The county councils have strenuously resisted these attempts to take away their population, rateable value, and land at a time when they were being pressed to raise the standard of education, housing, public health and other services in country areas nearer to that of the towns. Thus there has arisen a conflict between town and country authorities which has been gnawing at the vitals of local government for more than twenty years.

Secondly, the administrative and technical needs of many modern services do not correspond with the organization of local government. Town and country planning, electricity distribution, technical education, for example, require areas which are both larger than existing ones and which also comprise both urban and rural communities.

For these and other reasons a radical reform of the structure has been desperately needed for many years. Without far-reaching changes in areas and authorities it was inevitable that local government should decline. Other methods had to be found of conducting services if local authorities were unable to do so. Either the local government structure had to be improved so as to enable local authorities to perform the functions adequately, or alternatively, their functions had to be curtailed to correspond with the strength of the structure. No other solution of the problem could prevail. In these circumstances reform has become indispensable for the health and well-being of local government, if not for its very survival.

The wartime Coalition Government burked the issue, partly

from sheer timidity and partly because they were unduly influenced by the inability of the associations of local authorities to agree on a policy. The white paper on *Local Government in England and Wales during the period of Reconstruction** issued a few months before the break-up of the Coalition, was a feeble document which ran away from most of the problems confronting local government or tried to cover them up.† It contained, however, one excellent idea which might have done much to improve the situation. This was the suggestion, derived from proposals put forward by the Labour Party and N.A.L.G.O., that a boundary commission should be set up to enquire into and report on such matters as the creation and extension of county boroughs, the reduction of the smaller county boroughs to the rank of non-county boroughs, the amalgamation of adjoining county boroughs and some of the smaller counties, and the review of country districts. This suggestion was embodied in the Local Government (Boundary Commission) Act, 1945.

When the Labour Government assumed office in 1945 the Minister of Health thus found himself in possession of a new and promising instrument for effective reform. For the first time this century a compact body of able, experienced, disinterested, and independent commissioners was charged with the duty of reviewing the circumstances of the areas into which the county is divided for the purpose of local government and given extensive powers of improving those areas. They could take the initiative instead of merely arbitrating on claims put forward by one authority and opposed by another. They could undertake first-hand investigation in the field, instead of having to be content with highly tendentious evidence presented at a public enquiry by counsel for the contending parties. There were certain quite serious shortcomings in the commission's terms of reference. Their powers did not extend to the administrative county of London, nor could they create a new county borough in Middlesex. They were not authorized to bring into existence new types of authority, such as a two-tier county council for Manchester similar to the London County Council. But these defects could easily have been remedied by further legislation.

Mr. Bevan was in a position to foster, guide, or hinder

* Cmd. 6,579/1945 (H.M.S.O.).

† For a discussion of it see "Local Government in Crisis", the prologue to my *Development* (2nd Edition), 1948, pp. 41 *et seq.*

reform in a quite decisive way, for as Minister of Health he was empowered to make regulations prescribing the general principles by which the Commission were to be guided. As early as 1946 Mr. Bevan showed that he neither understood the opportunities open to him nor was willing to devote time and energy to the matter. His address in that year to the conference of the Association of Municipal Corporations set the keynote for all his subsequent actions. After explaining that some functions have transcended the old organs of local government and that the local government instrument has therefore become inadequate, Mr. Bevan disclaimed any responsibility for the situation thus revealed. "It is not a matter for me", he said. "I throw the charge back." In short, the Government had to assume the obsolete character of local government areas and authorities as something permanent and irremediable, and on that basis merely decide whether or not particular services should be entrusted to them or diverted elsewhere. In adopting this attitude, Mr. Bevan virtually relinquished his constitutional responsibility as Minister of Health for the general well-being of local government.

The extreme lethargy and indifference with which he viewed the problem was revealed by his attitude towards a resolution before the conference asking for an investigation into the structure of local government. He simply dismissed this with the statement that it would have to be preceded by an investigation into the kind of society in which local government must find its place. As the functions were undergoing considerable change and "we do not know what context local government is going to live in, it does not seem to me to be an appropriate time for an enquiry of that sort". Considering that the Labour Government was in process of carrying out a vast programme of economic and social reconstruction, one would have thought the then Minister of Health would have known better than most people the emerging shape of the welfare state. One would also have thought the moment singularly propitious for an enquiry into the role of local government, rather than to wait until local authorities had been deprived of their powers, shorn of their independence, undermined and by-passed in many different ways, before beginning an investigation which would largely be a *post-mortem*.

A notable event in the following year was the Report of the Local Government Boundary Commission for 1947. The Commission pointed out they had reached the conclusion that

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in many areas their powers and instructions did not permit the formation of local government units as effective and convenient as they should be. Faced with a choice between making second-best modifications in the existing system within the limits of their powers or of explaining their proposals for more far-reaching reconstruction, they decided to choose the latter alternative. "If our recommendations commend themselves, some legislative action and some amendment of the general principles (laid down by the minister in his regulations) will be necessary. If they do not, it will be our duty to proceed to carry out our task on the basis of the present instructions, but in that case we should necessarily reconsider many of the regroupings of units recommended in this Report."

This is not the place for describing or discussing in detail the Commission's proposals. My general conclusion, expressed in these columns, was that the report constituted a great advance on any previous official document on the subject but that it did not go far enough to meet the fundamental difficulties of the situation.* The Commissioners devoted much of their report to the functions of local authorities, although they had no jurisdiction to do so. In this they shared the view Mr. Bevan had stated in Parliament that it is nonsensical to attempt to discuss local authority boundaries without also talking about functions and *vice versa*.

The 1947 Report of the Local Government Boundary Commission was virtually their swan song. Shortly afterwards Mr. Bevan announced in Parliament that he intended to abolish the Commission and this was carried out in 1949. In the debate on the Local Government Boundary Commission (Dissolution) Bill, Mr. Bevan explained that he had been driven to take this step by the lack of support among local authorities for the commission's proposals, and by the inadequacy of their powers. Thus ended a promising experiment which might have produced good results if the minister had supported the commission and enlarged their powers to enable them to deal more comprehensively with local government reform. Instead he took the reactionary step of restoring the sterile and obstructive private bill procedure for effecting alteration of areas. This deplorable step was accompanied by the usual expression of faith in the virtues of local government which has become common form with

* W. A. Robson, "The Reform of Local Government", *Political Quarterly*, July-October, 1948, Vol. XIX, No. 3, p. 263.

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ministers who intend to do nothing to help it overcome the deep-seated malaise from which it is suffering. Mr. Bevan also explained that the government was examining the whole question and would some day announce its conclusions. Nothing further was heard of this examination.

The abolition of the Local Government Boundary Commission was not an isolated incident. As we have seen, London was excluded from the commission's jurisdiction for reasons into which we need not inquire. In 1945, however, a committee was set up with Lord Reading as chairman to examine and review the number, size, and boundaries of the metropolitan boroughs and the distribution of functions between the L.C.C., the City Corporation, and the metropolitan boroughs, and to make recommendations. It was clearly wrong to inquire into the organization and functions of the minor authorities in London before settling the much more important question of the constitution, size and character of the major organ in the metropolitan region. The proper course to have adopted in 1946 would have been either to enlarge the terms of reference of the Reading Committee so as to enable it to deal with the regional problem, or to appoint another committee in its place, or to authorize the Boundary Commission to consider both London and Middlesex. Unfortunately, Mr. Bevan adopted none of these alternatives. He merely abolished the Reading Committee on the ground that "the problem which the Committee was asked to undertake cannot satisfactorily be divorced from that of Greater London and any determination of the areas of metropolitan borough councils and of the distribution of functions between them and the L.C.C. must await an investigation into the wider problem". Once again a purely reactionary policy was adopted.*

These ineluctable facts are set out not for the purpose of attacking Mr. Bevan—although the writer is highly critical of his failure to tackle the task of revitalizing local government—but in order to show that his record as Minister of Health reveals no traces of any zeal for radical reform or a genuine belief in local government. It discloses on the contrary an attitude of neglect and indifference towards local government characteristic of the Labour Party as a whole since 1945, at a time when serious amputations were taking place on the body of local government. Nowhere, indeed, within the labour movement can one see

* The problem of London is discussed at length in my book, *The Government and Misgovernment of London* (2nd Edition); see especially the Epilogue.

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any influential sections able or willing to resist the corroding influence of centralization which has infected the whole party. One looks in vain in the Labour Party for political leaders who are ardent guardians of local liberties, eloquent exponents of the need for a great expansion in the scope and functions of local authorities, and ready when in power to take whatever action is necessary to strengthen local democracy in every way.

A sense of the value of local government and the need for its preservation and reform seems to be stirring in the co-operative movement. The Co-operative Party passed a resolution at its annual conference in 1952, calling on the national committee to prepare for their 1953 conference a report dealing with problems of local government and community life. The conference also instructed the committee to look into the question of local government reform, and to report on possible lines of advance. The report of the committee has recently been published, and while its practical proposals are timid and nebulous, it diagnoses the present situation effectively and candidly. This may be the prelude to a change of attitude.*

Just how or why the Labour Party ceased to believe in local government as one of the instruments for realizing the socialist commonwealth, is hard to say. An extreme emphasis on equality can easily militate against the interests of local government, and this has probably been one of the influences at work in recent years within the labour movement. If socialists regard the provision of more or better services in one area than another as indefensible anomalies, if, for example, they become indignant if more grammar school places are provided in Surrey than in Cornwall, or if Labour M.P's. feel they have a genuine grievance if housing is provided on a more lavish scale in Luton than in Glasgow, they have ceased to believe in local government as regards these services.

For nothing is plainer than the fact that local self-government is incompatible with uniformity. It is consistent with the imposition by the central government of a national minimum standard, below which no local authority may fall. It is not consistent with the imposition in addition of a maximum standard above which no local authority may rise. It is, above all, not consistent with equality of performance throughout the country, because local authorities and local communities differ

* *Problems of Local Government*. An Interim Report issued by the national committee of the Co-operative Party.

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largely in their desires, ambitions, energies, inventiveness, public spirit, political outlook, the quality of their councillors and officers, and in their material and financial resources.

The only important measure affecting local government sponsored by the Labour government was the Local Government Act, 1948. This introduced the Exchequer Equalization Grant to supersede the General Exchequer Contribution (known as the block grant) paid under the Local Government Act, 1929. The principle underlying the equalization grant is that the Exchequer becomes, in effect, a ratepayer of a local authority to the extent that the latter has a deficiency in ratable value per head compared with the average for the whole country. The Exchequer pays rates on that amount at the appropriate rate poundage for that area, and each local authority which qualifies for the grant receives a proportion of the expenditure on each of its services which would otherwise fall on the rates.

The new grant has several advantages from the standpoint of the equitable distribution of Exchequer funds among local authorities according to their needs. But the Equalization Grant has two deep rooted defects. One is that by making the grant depend in part on local expenditure, it threatens to subordinate the entire mass of activities of local authorities to the detailed control of the central government.* The other defect is that it does nothing to enlarge the independent sources of revenue available to local authorities. This latter has been for long a crying need.

We have already remarked that the inadequacy of the rates as the only source of taxation available to local authorities has driven them to ask the central government for ever-increasing grants in aid as the one practicable method of solving their financial problems, despite the greatly extended central control which this has involved. Mr. Chester in his recent book puts his finger on the spot when he remarks that many of the present central powers and controls are due to the lack of independent sources of local revenues.† He emphasizes that no matter what changes may be made in areas and authorities or in the distribution of functions, local authorities will still be in a weak position in relation to central departments unless the basis of local taxation can be broadened and made more diverse.

Here, then, is the crux of the problem. The Labour Party needs, far more than it realizes, to throw off the centralizing

* D. N. Chester, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

† *Ib.*, p. 337.

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mania which has seized hold of it since 1945. The full realization of democratic socialism or even the development of the welfare state, demands a reversal of recent trends, a revitalization of local government, an expansion of its functions and responsibilities. This is one practicable method of overcoming the bureaucratic tendency in nationalized industries. The public corporation is inferior, as an organ of democracy, despite its many other advantages to a popularly elected local authority.* Only certain industries or social services are suitable for local authorities to administer, but those that are appropriate should be transferred to the local government sphere.

Nothing, however, can be done until the structure of our local government system has been radically reformed in terms of its areas, authorities, and functions. A salvage operation of great magnitude is required to remedy the shocking neglect of several decades. This calls for courage, resolution, and an understanding of what is wrong. So far no government, no party, no Parliament has shown any readiness to grapple with the problem or to do anything except run away from the fearful wrath which is supposed to await any Ministry which attempts to lay hands on local authorities in their present state of imperfection. The matter could, and should, if possible be dealt with on all-party lines. In addition, the relations between central and local government require consideration and new sources of independent revenue from taxes must be found for local authorities.

The British type of local authority has unique advantages as an instrument of democracy. In no other form of local government do the elected councillors possess such complete control over administrative policy. In many countries the executive work is under the control of a separate organ, such as a mayor or burgomaster, leaving the council with only "deliberative" functions, the power of passing ordinances or bye-laws, and voting the budget. In this country, by contrast, the council possesses executive power, and the committee system offers opportunities for every member of the council to participate in executive decisions on policy. Service on a local authority or even as a co-opted member of a committee, is a civic experience of quite extraordinary value.

It would be a tragedy if we allowed our system of local self-government to perish because we have become blind to its virtues, or too cowardly to embark on the necessary reforms to

* W. A. Robson, *Problems of Nationalized Industry*, p. 350.

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restore it to health. The labour movement, as I have tried to show, has a profound need of a vigorous democratic life at the local level, both as an end in itself, and in order to remedy the twin evils of centralization and bureaucracy. Without a prompt and effective recognition of this truth, the urge towards an enhanced spirit of community, a greater sense of fraternity, freedom, and equality, on which the Labour Party was nourished in its earlier days, will never find expression.

In the past we had a right to feel proud of our achievements in the realm of local government. The present state of local government is one of which it is difficult not to feel ashamed. All parties must share the responsibility for what has happened. But the Labour Party has a special duty to consider how and why it came to embark on the destructive courses of the post-war years, and to retrace its steps to the greater wisdom of its earlier beliefs.

THE LABOUR PARTY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

By BARBARA WOOTTON*

NEARLY all the important social services of this country are younger than the Labour Party. At the turn of the century, fifty-two years ago, we had no national health service, nor even any "panel" doctors; no compulsory sickness or unemployment insurance; no old age or widows' pensions or family allowances; no public system of secondary education, no school meals or school medical service; and no Labour Party. Those who are sensitive to the social and political climate of the century will see something more than coincidence here, even though much of our social service legislation has actually been enacted by Liberal or Conservative Governments. Some will emphasize the direct influence of Labour propaganda in extracting concessions from hostile administrations up to 1945; others will explain the rise of both the Labour Party and the social services as expressions of a more fundamental change in social attitudes. On all sides, it is to be hoped, Lord Beveridge will be honoured

* Nuffield Research Fellow, Bedford College and sometime Professor of Social Studies University of London; Governor of B.B.C.; author of *Freedom under Planning*, 1945; *Testament for Social Science*, 1951.

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for authorship of his big bold plan; but to the Labour Party must go the credit for having put that plan straight away into effect—a feat that must indeed be reckoned far from trivial, in view of the long period of rest that such reports normally enjoy in their pigeonholes before anything is done about them. Anyhow, in whatever terms one may read the intervening history, the fact remains that the century began with no Labour Party and practically no social services—apart from the Poor Law, a few years' elementary schooling, and a restricted scheme of workmen's compensation.

Fifty years later, we talk glibly about the "welfare state", using a label which conceals an important ambiguity. Is the welfare state one which expressly aims at promoting the welfare of its citizens? or does the name derive from the high standard of welfare actually attained? The first is the expression of an admirable purpose; but the second implies an assertion that must, I fear, be written down as both uninformed and complacent.

For in reality, there are large entries to be made on both sides of the account. You do not need to be a trained social scientist to see some of the brightest results of our social services: we all meet them in the course of everyday life. Certainly, no one who has lived through the first half of this century can fail to be struck by many contrasts with the days of his own childhood. Most striking of all perhaps is the change in the appearance of the babies. The decline in the infant mortality rate is written on the face of every working-class residential area. For that we have to thank both the advance of medical science and the maternity and child welfare services which have brought the fruits of that science into the homes of the people. There are educational ladders, too, to be climbed; and many gifted men and women have climbed them to the great enrichment of our community, both materially and in a broader cultural sense. Equally may we congratulate ourselves upon the change in the quality of education provided for those who remain at the bottom of the ladder. And, as everybody knows, we can all hope to live longer, thanks again to the combined activities of the doctors and the social services: the mortality statistics are less and less inflated by the diseases that chiefly attack the young.

We have also contrived—or so we thought—a way of bridging the disagreeable division of the community into two classes that must emerge whenever the right to a social service is made to depend upon a means test. More and more services are now made

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freely available to all. Education, health, national insurance, family allowances rain upon rich and poor alike. Or perhaps it would be nearer the mark to say that we did not so much discover this universalist policy, as stumble into it. Having once tried it out, however, we soon perceived how well it harmonized, or might harmonize, with Labour philosophy. So, incidentally, did the Tories: at least Messrs. Macleod and Powell,* writing for the Conservative Political Centre, are at pains to decry this principle. For them a social service ought as a rule to carry a means test: all the cases when this is omitted must be explained away as due to accident or exceptional circumstances.

On the other hand, none of the five Beveridge giants—want, disease, ignorance, squalor, and idleness is a real stranger yet. Ignorance, disease, and idleness have taken hard knocks, though, with rising unemployment figures, idleness shows a disturbing power of recuperation. Squalor is with us still everywhere, and will be till there is no longer any "housing problem": the best we can say is that aesthetic standards have at last found their rightful place in town and country planning and new building.

And want? The facts on that are not easy to disentangle. I do not think, however, that they justify much of the prevailing complacency. The Rowntree-Lavers York Survey claimed that the percentage in poverty in that city fell from 31.1 per cent. of the working-class population in 1936 to 2.77 per cent. in 1950, but that over 22 per cent. would still have been below the poverty line in 1950, had the social services then still been just what they were in 1936.† Well, it depends what you mean by poverty. As a measure of poverty, these results need to be seriously qualified from two points of view. First, the standard used is, as the authors admit, extremely low: no family would be reckoned as below the poverty line if more than £5 a week was available for man, wife, and three children after the rent was paid; the corresponding figure for, say, a retired couple living together without children being £2. 16s. 2d. Second, the Rowntree method of estimating poverty, which is built up from ideal budgets and "necessary" diets, has been justly criticized on the ground that it takes no account of how people actually do spend their money. If the working-classes were animals or slaves, it would no doubt be possible to keep them in a reasonable state of efficiency on the

* Ian Macleod and J. Enoch Powell, *The Social Services—Needs and Means* (London, The Conservative Political Centre, 1952)

† B. Seebohm Rowntree and G. R. Lavers, *Poverty and the Welfare State* (London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1951), p. 40.

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Rowntree dietary, clothing, and personal allowances. But since working people are citizen members of a community with cultural standards and expectations of its own, these farmyard economics are not quite the whole story. It is not just that people appear to be poor because they spend their money unwisely or even extravagantly: it is rather a question of the amount of weight to be given in deciding where real poverty begins to the cultural forces which determine expenditure wholly irrespective of idealized diets and idealized wardrobes. However prudently a household "ought" to manage a small income, its members cannot be expected to live in a social vacuum.

The truth of the matter is that we have extremely scanty information on which to judge the scale of the distressful poverty, measured by any standard, that still afflicts the welfare state. The current middle-class myth holds that it is all over and done with: the working-classes are supposed to be very well off, in fact, by some curious arithmetic, actually better off than professional people, although the latter enjoy virtually the same rights to social service benefits, and, as a rule, substantially larger incomes. In the introduction to her recent work on *The Social Services of Modern England*, Miss Penelope Hall writes that "the most urgent problems which confront sociologists, social administrators and workers to-day are . . . problems of psychological maladjustment rather than material need".* What is now "most urgent" is, of course, a question of priority which everyone must decide for himself. But many social workers, as well as many old age pensioners, widows, and families whose sickness and other misfortunes eat into small incomes will find it difficult to accept Miss Hall's light-hearted disregard of bread and butter problems.

Certainly, it must be admitted that the national insurance scheme has failed of itself to provide the guaranteed minimum subsistence provision for all people in all circumstances which its sponsors originally envisaged. That is betrayed by the relation between national assistance scales and national insurance rates of benefit. When the National Insurance Act came into force in 1948, the National Assistance Board's scale for man and wife, after the rent had been paid, was only 2s. below the standard national insurance rate, although the latter, of course, makes no separate provision for rent. Any couple whose rent amounted to

* M. P. Hall, *The Social Services of Modern England* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952), p. 8.

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more than 2s. a week would thus have been better off on assistance. With the changes that have been made in both assistance and insurance rates from time to time, the relationship between the two has also varied: but the tendency has been for assistance, exclusive of rent, to catch up on and even to overtake insurance. It is clear that the National Assistance Board does not believe it possible for people to live upon their insurance benefits unless they have other resources.

Similarly, if insurance benefits are compared with prevailing wage rates, we get, at least at some points, a discouraging picture of the former. Professor Titmuss reckons that even in 1911 the amount of weekly sickness benefit for an individual worker represented a "much higher proportion of the average wage" than it did in May, 1951.* It is fair to add, of course, that if the individual worker happens to have a dependent wife and family, he can draw additional benefits to-day which were not available in 1911: but for a man without dependants, the depressing comparison stands.

There are many reasons—or excuses—for the disappointment which these facts involve for those who had high hopes that the 1948 Acts really did mean full social security. Indeed the facts themselves simply reflect the result in one particular sphere of the decline in the value of money. Pensions and other fixed incomes are the habitual victims of inflation. Perhaps the moral is that national insurance benefits ought never to have been rigidly fixed at all. But they were, and the extreme difficulty of devising a satisfactory technique for automatic adjustment is possibly justification enough for that. Once expressed in monetary terms, however, social insurance benefits must inevitably contract with every decline in the value of money. Nor by any stretch of the imagination can it be said that the social services are, in themselves, the cause of the inflation which is their own undoing. Rearmament, uncontrolled wage claims, and general economic policy must take the blame for that.

This inflationary pressure is the more difficult to resist on account of other factors which continually tend to run up the social services bill. Most conspicuous among these is the growth of population at the two expensive ends of life. To-day the number of babies to be provided for is far greater than was ever contemplated when the Labour Government re-organized the

* R. M. Titmuss, "Social Administration in a Changing Society", *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. II, No. 3 (September, 1951), p. 191.

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social services on Beveridge lines; and there are more old people, too, even though in this case a substantial increase was foreseen. Naturally the old and the young make heavy demands both on national insurance and on the health services. Perhaps these demographic changes ought to have been more accurately anticipated: but the fact that they were not is certainly one of the reasons why things have not turned out quite as we hoped.

Also on the debit side must be counted the persistence of a social disease which might be called administrative elephantiasis. The health services are particularly liable to be afflicted by this. In 4½ years the original administrative complexities of the health service have not been fully straightened out. In particular, there are still frictions in the working of the tripartite structure built of Regional Hospital Boards, and Hospital Management Committees; Executive Councils; and Local Authorities. These creaks and groans do not escape the notice of the Central Council for Health Services, which indeed, in 1950, appointed a committee to consider them; and, as a result of this committee's report, has encouraged the establishment of more committees to act as liaison between the committees already in being. In practice this remedy may work out better than anyone who sees it only as a still further complication of the paper appearance of the service might have feared. But no amount of liaison can cover up the fact that the clumsy design of the health service is due at least in part to the antiquated structure of local government on to which it has been grafted.

No Government seems to have the courage to tackle the reorganization of local government: there are too many vested interests. Meanwhile still more vested interests spring up within the new social services, barring the path of necessary change there also. Within these services, professional organizations proliferate generously, at every level from the B.M.A. to the Association of Operating Theatre Technicians. Their merit is that they keep up high professional standards; but against this must be set the dangers that professional prestige gets bound up with a particular way of doing things; and that such organizations sometimes exploit their bargaining strength too successfully. The social services now provide a living for a remarkable army of vocations. Doctors and medical auxiliaries, hospital almoners, health visitors, psychiatric and other social workers, as well as every variety of administrative officer all have their allotted place in the scheme of things, on which proposals for reform

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trespass at their peril. Most of them also expect to stay in their particular callings for all their working life, and to retire on a larger pension (and often at a younger age) than the great bulk of the public whom they serve.

The ordinary citizen pays for the imperfections in the design of the social services in two ways—in money as a taxpayer, or as a consumer where a charge is made; and in personal irritation.

Regulations that look reasonable enough in Whitehall so often turn out to make no sense in the wards. In-patients, for instance, are exempted from liability to contribute to the cost of their surgical instruments, a rule which incidentally obviates the risk of the period in hospital being prolonged while the patient struggles to raise the money to buy what the doctor has ordered. But how is this rule to be interpreted if when the appliance prescribed for you as an out-patient turns up, you have been admitted as an in-patient on account of some quite different complaint? Then there are still delays, wasted journeys and anomalies about fares and payments for convalescence. Bitter complaints are heard, too, about the number of social workers who may descend upon the same family, often in connection with the same business; whilst the social workers themselves, with their intense specialization, doubt the professional competence of any one of this army of visitors to combine his (or more commonly her) own job with that of any of the others. So thorough indeed has been the trend towards specialization that laments have even at times been heard for the disappearance of the old-style relieving officer. At least he could, in the first instance, handle all kinds of distress; one did not in the old days have to chase from one office to another to find the person authorized to deal with a particular problem.

It is only fair to add that, from the highest levels in the Ministry of Health down to the humblest worker in a local office or hospital, efforts are being made all the time to tidy up these tangles. It is fair to say, too, that a great many things are a great deal better than they were, and that the defects get out of perspective just because attention is concentrated on them; and no less because the public already takes for granted the huge blessings of the health and other social services.

Where then do we go from here? The moral is, I think, that the next Labour Government has at least two big jobs to tackle if the term welfare state is to mean more than (as often at present)

a sop to the conscience for things left undone. Other developments which may eventually prove even more important depend on priorities and principles which cannot be decided in the context of the social services alone; but two pieces of work have to be put in hand straight away.

The first job is itself just a multitude of small matters. For that reason (alas!) it is unlikely to be a good selling point on political platforms. The next Labour Government must somehow make the social services as good in practice as they are in theory. When you read the legislation, it all *sounds* so wonderful: when you have to go to hospital, or there is a problem about your child's education, or a sudden economic disaster overtakes the family, things don't always work out quite as you would have expected. As in so many other cases, so it is with the social services: if the whole came up to the standard of the best individual part, we should not have much to worry about. Accepting the lay-out of the general plan, we need now a period of intensive levelling up—levelling the rural standard up to that of the cities, levelling the most backward region up to the standard of the most advanced.

How is that to be done? Partly it will follow naturally from a successful war on administrative elephantiasis. Already the best hospitals, the best offices manage to wriggle out of their bureaucratic swaddling clothes. Others would do as well, if the bonds were relaxed, or even if the quality of their staffs were as high. It is a question of improved recruitment here, administrative simplification there, of more courage in the face of vested interests, and of better morale all round. Such generalizations are all too easy to write, infernally difficult to translate into practice, but often astonishingly effective if this difficulty can be overcome. If there is a single key to the problem it is the Minister himself: he must have fire in his belly. Every department of the social services now awaits the impact of such a Minister.

The second essential task is to overhaul the complicated and inequitable financial structure of the whole social service system. Contributory insurance (which we owe, I suppose, to Bismarck) has become, in the language of the press, one of the sacred cows of our society. In its name we tolerate an extremely regressive system of taxation, whilst thousands of man-hours must be spent every week in the maintenance of a colossal system of records of what in the last analysis amount to actuarial fictions.

The combined worker's and employer's insurance contribution for an adult employed man has now reached 10s. 9d. a week: for a woman 8s. 5d. The standard rate of benefit for a single man or woman is 32s. 6d. According to the latest of the Ministry of Labour's regular enquiries into earnings, the average weekly earnings of adult male workers in all the industries covered in a sample week in April, 1952 was 173s. 7d.: the corresponding figure for women was 92s. 2d. It would be quite impossible from a Labour angle to defend such an extremely heavy poll tax on merits. (Incidentally, it is the heavier because the late Government thought fit to reduce the Exchequer contribution to the National Insurance Fund.) And such a tax is an extraordinarily high price to pay for the theory that the public likes a contributory system because paying a contribution makes the benefit a matter not of charity but of right.

This level of contributions is usually justified in actuarial terms. Since the Exchequer has always contributed to national insurance, actuarial calculations alone have never determined the level of the worker's or employer's contributions. In whatever way the total may be calculated, it is obvious that the less the state pays, the greater the burden on the others. But now that insurance benefits have turned into civic rights to support in such specified circumstances as sickness, old age, or widowhood, the insurance basis of the scheme has become quite fictitious. It no longer makes sense to split up the various benefits and to try to charge particular pieces of benefit to particular pieces of contribution: to attempt to earmark, for instance, part of the man's contribution to cover his wife's maternity benefits or old age pension. Nor is there now any rhyme or reason in requiring the Ministry of National Insurance to continue the practice of keeping millions of individual insurance records. The efficient management of this colossal task is a source of justifiable pride to the Ministry, but it is an unprofitable labour. The whole purpose of the comprehensive social security scheme is to provide protection on a prescribed minimum level against certain contingencies, and to provide this for all and sundry irrespective of the vagaries of individual experience.

At the most, there may be a case for retaining a modest social security tax. But in principle the cost of social security ought to be shared, as much as the cost of any other common needs, in accordance with ability to pay. In theory all political parties have long since accepted the principle of a progressive system of

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taxation, though they differ in their views of how severe the progression ought to be. In practice we have allowed a progressive and a regressive system to develop side by side, thus neutralizing much of the effectiveness of the former.

To work out a plan for escaping from the shackles imposed by exaggerated devotion to the "insurance principle" would involve much detailed work, into which it is not possible to enter here. But more than details are involved. We might also seize the opportunity for bold administrative simplification. In particular, the Labour Party might at least examine a suitably modified version of the scheme devised by Lady Rhys-Williams for eliminating the payments and counter-payments that now pass between the state and its citizens. The cross entries in this book-keeping have certainly reached a fantastic level of complication. For example, we pay income tax, get back family allowances, then pay more income tax on these allowances, then get something off the tax on account of family obligations. Add to that, on the debit side, national insurance contributions, and, on the credit side, food and other subsidies, as well as other non-taxable insurance benefits, and the book-keeping becomes formidable.

Unhappily, there are political complications here because one variety of the Rhys-Williams scheme has already been adopted by the Liberal Party. So it is necessary to emphasize that the political colour of any one of these schemes is a matter of the figures which it contains, not of the essential idea common to all the varieties. The protean idea can equally well be adapted to widely divergent political philosophies.

In her original, and more radical, proposal, Lady Rhys-Williams would have abolished national insurance altogether, substituting allowances payable as of right to all citizens throughout life, in sickness and in health and irrespective of whether the recipients were at work or not. In exchange for these benefits, a straight income tax would have been chargeable upon everybody, or nearly everybody, without personal or similar allowances; and since Lady Rhys-Williams herself* disapproves of steeply progressive taxation, the tax adjustments in this particular project were designed to minimize this. Thus by one stroke of the pen all the national insurance paraphernalia, as well as many income tax complications, were swept away. And, over and above these attractive simplifications, the proposal had the

* I am much indebted to Lady Rhys-Williams for letting me see a number of recent variants of her proposal in advance of publication.

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additional merit of removing the risk that anybody would be better off when unemployed than when at work. If allowances are paid at a fixed rate all the time, earnings, great or small, must be a clear addition to income.

In more recent versions, a modified insurance scheme has crept back into the picture. The beautiful simplicity which was the great virtue of the original plan has thus been lost. But in reviewing the whole financial structure of social security, the Labour Party might at least consider whether this might not be recaptured; for the policy of merging national insurance benefits into standing allowances can be combined with taxation as steeply, or as mildly, progressive as may be preferred. The chief argument that can be used against the proposal is just that it is too attractive. Existing economic and social orthodoxies have learned to tolerate the idea of personal allowances in the form of deduction from income tax; and they have even managed to accept direct payments for children. The further step to direct payments for everybody would be as alarming as it would also be popular. The Labour Party has, however, always thrived on the judicious administration of shocks of this kind. One of the reasons why it is languishing to-day may well be that it has become too timid to continue administering them. In any case a final decision will turn upon a detailed analysis of costs and savings. I would only beg that such an analysis should be undertaken.

The financial overhaul, together with all the bits and pieces that go to make administrative improvement in the social services, can be put in hand without much reference to other chapters in the party programme. But anything beyond these brings us up against the fact that a programme is, or should be, the reflection of a philosophy, and that its parts are interdependent in terms of that philosophy. The social services, being hearty spenders of public money, must take their place in a list of priorities. Till that place is known, no intelligent planning is possible. It hardly needs to be said that everything depends upon the general economic situation, upon the degree of priority assigned to rearmament, and upon the size of the hole which military expenditure continues to make in the budget. The direct impact of these issues upon social service policy appears in terms of money; but the figures of course are merely the outward and visible sign of political and, indeed, moral judgements.

Certainly the future design of the social services waits upon

some clearer decision as to what these services are supposed to be for. In particular, are they intended to contribute to a policy of social equality? Or are they just part of the national minimum programme enunciated in the earlier work of the Webbs—measures to secure that nobody starves, or is too poor to see a doctor, or lacks a rudimentary education? It is the answers to these questions which must govern the whole future of our social services.

That is most clearly brought out by considering our attitude on the question of universality. The Tories, who have no interest in social equality, are logical enough in treating the universal service free of means test as an unnecessary extravagance. The degree of protection against extreme poverty, which is all that the Conservative philosophy requires of the social services, can be provided more economically by confining each service to those who are too poor to buy it for themselves. True, this rule cannot itself now be applied universally because some of the free services already established, notably education and health, are either too popular or too obviously necessary to the whole community to be thus modified except in details. But, by and large, the Tories have no reason to object to means tests: indifference to social equality properly spells corresponding indifference to investigations into means.

The Labour Party has not, till now, shown itself quite so logical—perhaps just because confusion still lingers on the subject of ultimate aims. The strongest argument for showering benefits upon rich and poor alike is that nobody need then know who is poor, and who is not. That, however, is an argument from equalitarian premises; and as such it has an academic ring if the scale of benefits is so low, or their quality is so poor, that the rich prefer to continue to look after themselves, and are also left free to do so. Real equality is only achieved when all classes not only can, but do, use the same services.

In this context, the variations in the attitude of the more prosperous sections of the community to the social services that are now available is instructive. The extent to which family allowances and insurance benefits remain unclaimed by those entitled to them is a matter of guesswork. At high surtax levels, the net sums remaining from taxable benefits may not justify the expenditure on petrol (one assumes a car at these levels) involved in the necessary journey to the post office; and there are certainly some who would rather do without sickness or unemployment

benefit than go to the trouble of claiming it. But presumably these are unimportant minorities. Most people, whatever their income, are well aware that they are helping to pay for these benefits through their taxes and insurance stamps, and have no reason to refrain from drawing a legitimate share of them. Nevertheless, the significance of these benefits is of quite a different order at the two ends of our long drawn out income scale. The current levels of insurance or national assistance payments do not represent the middle-class conception of an adequate subsistence for themselves.

The universal nature of the national insurance scheme does not therefore of itself make for real social equality. But it would do so without any change in the scheme, if the prevailing disparities of wealth and income were drastically reduced. It is in that sense that social service policy cannot be designed except within the known framework of our whole political philosophy.

Similarly, it is instructive to contrast the middle-class attitude to the health and education services respectively. Both these services are freely available: but the former is far more readily used. For this there are no doubt more reasons than one. The comparatively small number of doctors who take no part in the health service provides no alternative "system" comparable to that which, in the field of education, is offered by our public and other independent schools: moreover, nursing homes, though more luxurious, tend to be worse, not better, equipped than hospitals for discharging their ostensible medical and surgical functions. And most important of all it is a man's school, not his doctor, which determines his prospects of superior employment and class privilege.

In the health service, therefore, we can afford to disregard the fringe of legitimate private enterprise. Indeed, the service already owes much to the invasion of middle-class people with middle-class standards, intolerant of inconveniences that were taken for granted as long as they affected only the working-class population: the hard benches and long delays in hospital waiting rooms are visibly yielding to that pressure. But in education things are different. There we have to face the fact that we may never see real equality, until private enterprise schools are virtually prohibited. Not even the broadest education ladder will meet the case, if express lifts are available for a privileged minority.

THE OBJECT OF FURTHER SOCIALIZATION

By JOHN STRACHEY, M.P.*

THE purpose of this article is to restate the object of further socialization. The 1918 constitution of the Labour Party states the objects of the Party with clarity. It reads:

The chief objects of the Labour Party are: To secure for the producers by hand or by brain, the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible on the basis of the common ownership and the means of production. (Section III.)

It will be seen that British Labour is not concerned to socialize further sectors of the economy for the sake of doing so or for any academic or theoretical reasons. On the contrary the object is to secure the product. That is to say, the real purpose of socialization is to secure the proper distribution of the net national product amongst those who create it, "upon the basis"—the indispensable basis—of the common ownership of the country's industries and other means of production.

Once the fact has been grasped that this is the highly practical purpose of the operation, particular measures of socialization, such as measures of nationalization or of alternative forms of common or social ownership, are seen as means to an end. That end is the transfer of property in the means of production, not to the state as such, but to the people, in order that the people should enjoy the product. Various forms of socialization should be judged by whether they in fact accomplish, or at least promote, that object.

The ownership of our industries, and so of their products, by the people is not merely stated as our objective in the 1918 constitution of the Labour Party. It is the basic and traditional concept of British socialism. For example, Keir Hardie, in many respects the true inspirer of the modern British labour movement, put it this way:

The capitalist who has done good service in the past must now give way for a more perfect order of things wherein the labourer shall be rewarded in proportion to his work.

But this basic concept goes back much further than Hardie. Already in the middle of the last century that sturdy old chartist, George Julian Harney, expressed it like this:

* Under-Secretary of State for Air, 1945-6; Minister of Food, 1946-50; Secretary of State for War, 1950-1; author of *The Coming Struggle for Power*, 1933; *A Programme for Progress*, 1940; *The Frontier*, 1952.

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Emancipation of labour is the only worthy object of political warfare . . . that those who till the soil shall be its first masters, that those who raise food shall be its first partakers, that those who build mansions shall live in them.

While Robert Owen, who is usually considered the father of British socialism, spent his whole life in preaching and as he could practising the transfer of the ownership of the means of production to the working people.

Therefore when we press on to socialism let us never become confused as to what is our real objective: it is the vesting of the industries of the nation, or more exactly of "the means of production" as the economists call them—in the hands of the British people. That will involve state ownership and nationalization in many important cases. The British people should own the great basic public services—transport, the mines, electricity, steel, and certainly some others—on a *national* basis—for these are nation-wide services. But the ownership by the state of these great nation-wide industries is merely the appropriate means of achieving the desired end. That end is the *social ownership*, in one form or another, by the British people of the means of production as a whole and their operation for the general good, instead of for the private profit of shareholders. Socialists insist upon this transfer of the means of production to the people in order to effect what Harney called "the emancipation of labour". We do so in order to approach Hardie's "more perfect order of things wherein the labourer shall be rewarded in proportion to his work". Or, to put the thing the other way round, we do so in order to extinguish the great *unearned incomes* which are today derived, not from anything that those who draw them do, but from what they *own*. Socialists are determined to redistribute the national income not only more equally, but above all more justly, so that every man and woman able to work receives what he or she earns and no able-bodied man or woman receives what he or she has not earned. The only final way of doing this is to do it "*at source*": to transfer to the people, that is to say, the ownership of the *source* of the major unearned incomes which at present flow to the shareholding and property holding classes.

But, it may be objected, have we not in fact managed to effect a notable redistribution of the national income, by taxation and other means, even without transferring the ownership of the greater part of the means of production? Yes, we have been remarkably successful in this respect. The better distribution of

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the national income which was effected by the 1945-51 Government was one of its greatest achievements. Unless we had done this we could not possibly have done away with mass unemployment, effected a striking improvement in the level of production or raised the standard of living of the working population in spite of every post-war difficulty. For it is the existence of the great unearned incomes which (if they are left in the hands of the rich) so distorts the economic system as to make it unworkable.

But we must recognize two things about this achievement. First, the amount of the redistribution was quite limited. According to Command Paper 8,203, before the war the share of the national income going to rent, interest and profit, etc., after taxes had been paid, was 37%; by 1950 this share had fallen, after taxes had been paid, to 25%. Similarly the share going to wages was before the war 37%. In 1950, after taxes, it had risen to 47%. The share going to wages was then (at the end of the last Labour Government) some 10% higher, and the share going to property derived and (mostly) unearned income was over 10% lower than it used to be. This is not a particularly massive shift in the distribution of income.

The second thing to observe is that this amount of redistribution is, in the opinion of almost everyone, fairly near the limit of what can be achieved by means of taxation while leaving the source of the great unearned incomes, namely "property in the means of production", in private hands. For a variety of practical reasons it is very difficult to continue to work the private profit-making system if redistributory taxation is pushed very much higher than it is at present. After all, this fact should not cause us any surprise. Must we not admit at once that there is nothing very logical about our present system whereby we leave property in the means of production, which is the source of unearned income, in the hands of the shareholders and other property owners, pay them the greater part of their profits and other incomes, and then take most of those incomes away from them again in taxation? Either it is wrong to pay them their unearned, property-derived incomes in the first place, or it is wrong to take those incomes away from them again in taxation! The present arrangement has surely something unmistakably makeshift about it. One can hardly imagine a permanent social system founded upon it. Such a system of giving and then taking away again on the largest scale puts the observer in mind of the White Knight in *Alice*, who, it will be remembered, had a plan

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To dye one's whiskers green
And always use so large a fan
That they could not be seen.

It cannot really be a good plan to attempt permanently to hide the consequences of leaving the distribution of property undisturbed under so vast a system of taxation that the consequences cannot be seen or felt.

This is why redistributory taxation, for all its practical success, is so eminently uninspiring a political cause. The truth is that such taxation burks the profound social, historical and moral issue of who it is who has a right to the product of modern industry. Indeed, it actually further confounds that issue by first recognizing the historically explicable, but now profoundly outdated, right of the "shareholders", or property owners as a whole, to the net product, and then "robbing" them—as they feel—of most of that product. The social reformer who is not content with patchwork will surely wish to cut deeper than this.

No doubt, if we meant to go no further along the road to socialism in which reward was to become proportionate to what a man *did*, instead of to what he *had*, we might come to the conclusion that, with all its anomalies, redistributory taxation on its present level might permanently serve the national purpose. But who can really doubt that the British people will want to go further along the road to social justice? That they will wish both to eliminate the great unearned incomes and, simultaneously, to make the whole pattern of distribution more equitable? And for this task the tax weapon will hardly do. True, we may be sure that for many a long day we shall need the wonderfully effective system for the redistribution of the national income by means of taxation which we have evolved. The change of our society's basic property relations without break of continuity must be a gradual process. We have begun that process by means of the nationalization of our principal basic industries. Now we must push it further, both by continuing the process of nationalization and by driving forward along other roads to socialism.

Incidentally this is the explanation of why our opponents always show a still stronger opposition to nationalization acts than they do to high taxation of the rich. For this is at first sight surprising. Acts of nationalization such as we have passed and shall pass, with compensation at market value, call for little or no financial sacrifice from the richer classes, while higher rates of

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income tax, sur-tax, profits, tax and death duties impose very substantial sacrifices on them. Nevertheless our opponents show a real understanding of the basis of their position when they reserve their really fierce opposition to acts of nationalization and other such measures, and when Tory governments strive to de-nationalize any industries which they possibly can. For when we bought out the shareholders of, for instance, the coal companies or the electrical companies and gave them fixed interest bearing stock in return, we put an end to the legal right of these shareholders to the net product of their industries. This is, after all, the essential thing: this is why, in spite of full compensation, the shareholders' spokesmen speak of "social burglary".* This is why the shareholders object so much more to nationalization or any other measures which end—wholly or partially—their ownership of the source of unearned income than they do to even the heaviest taxation. After all, tax rates can always be scaled down again: they do not mark a change in basic property relations. But the shareholders' claim to the net product once lost will scarcely be reasserted. Once the claim is lost, the shareholders become merely one item of a long list of people with a claim for certain payments from industry or from the state. And the level of these payments becomes something which can conveniently be determined by the prevailing rate of interest, taxation and economic policy generally.

Therefore nationalization, even with full compensation, does begin the process of transferring basic property rights from the shareholding, property-owning class to the people as a whole. That is the true aim and object of nationalization. It is one essential method of approach to socialism, to the ending, that is to say, of the ownership of property in the means of production, which is the source of the great unearned incomes, by a limited class, and of their vesting in the British people.

It is indispensable to insist upon this character of nationalization as one means of approach to socialism for two reasons: first, in order to answer the false charge of our opponents that socialism is simply nationalization—that "socialists want everything to belong to the state", and, second, because socialists themselves sometimes forget the real purpose of nationalization and speak as if we nationalized industries merely in order to increase their efficiency, and not in order to change the property relations of our community. The efficiency of industry is a very

* See Mr. Parkinson's book, cited below.

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important matter. And no socialist need fear the comparison between the efficiency of the nationalized industries and the general level of privately owned industry. But to narrow the argument to the assertion that nationalization may be expected to increase the efficiency of this or that industry is to overlook the whole indispensable process of social reconstruction which faces us. To argue so would be to degrade the cause of socialism to the calculations of the cost accountant.

The British people must and will assume the ownership of the means of production which they operate. But today that entails the ownership, in one form or another, of vast and complex means of production, from the turbines of Battersea to the furnaces of Margam. Such giants' tools as these can only be owned in some collective way. Even under private ownership they have come to be owned by the semi-collectives of the public joint stock companies with their shifting groups of shareholders superseding the individual capitalist owner. But the joint stock company as it is today has merely superseded the individual capitalist owner by the collective ownership of a small property owning class, comprising less than 10% of the population.

It is necessary to substantiate this statement. For it is often alleged that on the contrary the ownership of property in general, and of property in the means of production in particular (which is the relevant consideration in this case) is today "widely diffused throughout the Community".

It is often said, for example, that the ownership of our capital resources by means of shareholding, far from being confined to a small section, is now "broadly distributed throughout the population". As evidence in favour of this contention the undoubted fact is adduced that the average holding of shares is quite a small one, usually of a few hundred pounds only. (The precise figure is £865 for ordinary shares, according to Hargraves Parkinson, *Ownership of Industry*, p. 19.) The main objection to this otherwise comforting argument is that it does not happen to be true. The *Financial Times* recently got an economist and a statistician to make a careful estimate of the actual number of shareholders. It turns out that in 1949 there were just about 1½ million shareholders in the public companies of the country. The total labour force, i.e. the number of people "gainfully employed", to use the official phrase—is now over 23 millions. Hence it is estimated that about 2½ million people—just half the population—have separate incomes of one kind or another. So

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only some 5% those who have separate incomes have shares in public companies. The explanation why the average holding in any particular company is only a few hundred pounds is simply that well-to-do shareholders nowadays seldom keep all their eggs in one basket. A man with, say, £50,000 is quite likely to have some of his money in 50 different companies: so that his average shareholding is only £1,000 in each of them.

However, shares in public companies are by no means the only form taken by the ownership of the means of production—although it is today much the most important single form. There are ownership of land and houses, ownership of shares in private companies, ownership of government or public stock of all sorts, and ownership in private firms. In practice, of course, well-to-do people usually have some of their money in several of these forms of ownership. So the landlords, the holders of government stock, the shareholders in private companies, etc., are in many cases the same people as the 1¼ million shareholders in public companies. Nevertheless, let us assume that none of the landlords, shareholders in private companies, or holders of government stock, etc., are the same people as the 1¼ million shareholders in public companies. And then in order to be fully on the safe side, let us *double* the number of shareholders in public companies in order to get at the order of magnitude of the essentially property owning section as a whole. That only makes 2½ million “owners of the means of production”—which is, perhaps, their proper name. That is, some 10% of the 25 million separate incomes of the country. And that is, with the dependants of both sections, the same thing as 10% of the whole population. It is easy to see that that 10% (5 million people including their dependants) is a generous estimate of the essentially property-owning section of the population.

What is in question, then, is a transfer of property in the means of production; a transfer from a small section of the community to the remainder; a transfer that has the effect of a dispersal of property throughout the community. Moreover this transfer of property in the means of production must be made, not for its own sake, but because it is the indispensable basis for a just and proper distribution of the “full fruits” of the creative efforts of the working population. For no system of redistributory taxation, be it never so severe, can be more than a stop gap or makeshift device for effecting this purpose, since it leaves the source of the great unearned incomes untouched. Or, to put all

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this in more classically socialist language, no decisive advance to socialism can be made without breaking the class monopoly in the ownership of the means of production by changing society's relations of production.

What has become indispensable is that labour by hand and brain shall, in this way or that, realize its emancipation by resuming its rightful title to the nation's means of production and to their product. Thus only can the vital moral principle that what a man has made should belong to him, to enjoy or to exchange, be reasserted amidst the thunder of the forges, the looms and the conveyor belts of our contemporary world.

The socialist who forgets old Harney's message that this is the only thing really worth striving for in politics will have lost the argument in advance. Both morally and economically this is the one thing indispensable—and therefore the one thing which can continue to inspire us, as it has inspired our forefathers in the British labour movement. If we ever lose sight of our goal of socialism we shall have lost sight of all the glory of our movement. It will decline into a political party like any other. Therefore it is a hundred times right to insist that the next labour government, like the last, should register a definite and appreciable step forward to socialism. Further measures of nationalization of the same sort as the enactments of 1945-50 will undoubtedly be necessary. Indeed if the movement came to the conclusion that this particular method of going forward to socialism was the only one we should have to devote ourselves to it exclusively. But it would be foolish not to use other methods of advance towards socialism, if they exist, in addition to nationalization. We have a long and difficult road to travel. It would be to play into the hands of those formidable forces which are for ever trying to hold us back if we failed to use any means which can hasten our journey. Whatever we do we shall be called “doctrinaires”, “impatient fools”, and accused of being bent on ruining the country because we insist upon pushing on with the basic task of social transition. Let us not neglect any practical methods which may help us.

Men will not everywhere or always use the word socialism to describe the measures by which they progressively rid themselves of the distortions of unearned income, take the distribution of the community's product under their control, and resume possession of the mighty tools of our contemporary trades—which are our lost birthright. In the United States of America

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they may give the process such names as the new deal or the fair deal, for example: they may even conduct the process in the name of "free enterprise"! The name and sign under which these things are done matter very little. But the socialist principle remains the hope of the world. There is no other way forward.

Once we are clear as to our true purpose in demanding further socialization we can go on to consider particular means to that end. This article can do little more than list the various suggestions which are being made at the present time.

There is first of all the highly important question of how far we can push forward along the path to socialism by way of nationalization alone. There is second the question of deciding what industries we should ask the electorate to give us a mandate to nationalize. Besides the obvious and immediate task of restoring to public ownership those parts of the transport and steel industries which the Conservative Government may have sold back to private shareholders, several industries have been discussed as suitable for nationalization. These include, for example, shipbuilding, chemicals, cotton, the joint stock banks, sugar refining, industrial insurance. It is for the national executive of the Labour Party, after the most careful investigation, to select the particular industries which we should ask for a mandate to nationalize.

Alternatively, it has been suggested that it would be preferable to ask the electorate for authority to bring any part of industry into public ownership which the circumstances of the time might indicate as desirable in the public interest. Or, again, it has been suggested that it might be found desirable to nationalize, with compensation at market prices, particular firms rather than whole industries. Again, extensive use will no doubt be made of those intermediate forms by which factories are built and owned by public authorities and then leased to private firms, as on the trading estates. Moreover the movement may well wish to return to the promotion of municipal enterprises of many kinds, which were, perhaps, somewhat neglected in the 1945-51 period. The general council of the Trades Union Congress has been instructed (1952) to look closely into all these possibilities. The Labour Party, for its part, has several sub-committees of the executive at work on the subject. All that need be said in these pages is that major measures of nationalization must form a basic part of the work of the next labour government. There are

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no doubt more industries which will prove upon examination to be suitable for nationalization upon the "industry by industry" lines which were followed in the case of the basic industries in the 1945-50 period. These industries should be nationalized as soon as possible.

The encouragement of the consumers co-operative movement by removing all unfair obstacles from its path is still another field in which the cause of social ownership can be advanced.

But in this case no one has yet been able to suggest how the political movement can do more for consumer co-operation than remove obstacles from its path. May we not have arrived at a point at which, on the contrary, the political side of the movement has much to learn from the tradition of British co-operation? It may be possible to reconnoitre a new way forward to socialism, the spirit of which would have been much more familiar to co-operators of the last century than to many members of the political movement today.

The next labour government must press on along these and other similar paths towards socialism. They have long been familiar to the whole British labour movement. But we shall be deceiving ourselves if we suppose that these traditional methods, even if pursued with maximum practicable speed, will not for many years leave a vast area of the economic system in private hands and operating for profit. The question which faces every thinking socialist today is whether we can leave this inevitably large "private sector" of industry just as it is without any attempt to change its nature. Any refusal to face the problems—and they are undoubtedly both difficult and novel—presented by the private sector of industry, far from being progressive or "left wing" would amount to a capitulation of the movement to the most reactionary section of big business. It is mere escapism to pretend that a large private sector of industry and commerce will not exist for many years in this country. The real question is as to whether the principles of socialism and industrial democracy cannot be progressively applied to that sector. If they can, it may prove possible to open up a whole additional way forward to socialism. For my part, I believe that the suggestions of Mr. Austen Albu, for example, in this field will prove fruitful. For they will be seen to promote the true object of socialization, which is to secure for the working population control over distribution of the net product of their endeavour.

THE IDEOLOGICAL SITUATION IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

By DONALD G. MACRAE*

Man has always been wronged by his fellow-man, and has always been in search of remedies; but no matter where he has lived or what religion he has professed, or what form of Government he has established, the result of his search has always been the same—the means employed have ever failed to accomplish the end desired. All history tells the same funereal knell to human hopes and human happiness.

G. F. BRAY: *Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy*.

IT is possible to argue that Britain in recent years has come closer to being a just society than any other major country in recorded history. Such a claim will hardly command an instant assent, nevertheless I believe it to be not merely defensible, but true. The range of human aspiration can be measured by the extent to which even this society has left us dissatisfied. Of course not all the sickness of our time is to be explained by the gap between our attainment and the huge appetites of the human heart. An important element is the fear of the future which possesses us, and which differs in kind from the fears of the inter-war years. Then men feared Armageddon, but never doubted that the true republic lay beyond, and that evil would be defeated once and for ever. We have survived that war, only to lie under the shadow of a greater battle, certainly more dubious and terrible if it comes, and far less clearly a struggle with simple evil than was the second German war.

This upsets us, but it is not the sufficient cause of the discontent with things achieved, or the uncertainty as to what things require to be done which is general in these islands today, particularly in the Labour Party and among its sympathizers. Despite the shadow of the future and the awareness of the degree to which our destinies in peace as in war are not ours to control, our malaise is founded elsewhere. We have achieved a society in which there is no intolerable want, a society in which social

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mechanisms exist to provide against individual misfortune, whether by hunger, injury, disease, or age, a society in which education has progressed and is, unevenly, progressing. This society is orderly, criminal justice is done, civil justice is more widely and genuinely available than before. There is still inequality, but privilege of birth, wealth, or sex has diminished. In addition it is a free society: certain forms of economic activity have become difficult or impossible, but the freedoms essential to the exercise of those faculties not merely predatory is unimpaired. (Indeed, social services and full employment have done much to relieve individual ability and desire from danger and deprivation, and have thus directly increased freedom.) Freedom of opinion and organization is perhaps no greater in Britain than in France, but these two countries maintain these liberties in a world which is elsewhere darkening to a twilight of free expression or already fallen into night.

This is a community that is not merely just, but good. On the whole there is a gentleness of manners, a consideration in the ordinary affairs of life, a readiness to aid, and a willing honesty in public affairs, which are surely rare. Despite dissatisfactions we have learned to conduct even industrial disputes with considerable smoothness, as the low number of days lost by strike action demonstrates. This is not to claim perfection. What has been done is largely well, but much remains which is far from well. There are still many positive wrongs, and there is still an untouched ocean of private misery and failure, of public neglect and deep inequity. Nevertheless one might expect that, so much having been done, progress would be continued on the lines of the past, and that the labour movement would be training its artillery on new targets in its struggle for liberty, equality, and, shall we say, social responsibility—we seem always to have distrusted fraternity!

Instead we find confusion and uncertainty. Cant phrases are repeated about the search for a new policy, about the need for re-thinking (not, significantly, about the need for thought), about the need for party unity as an end in itself, and so on. Remedies are also sought in various departments of knowledge—in academic economics, for example, and in a fashionable and Americanized sociology. In this world largely created by the direct action or indirect pressure of the Labour Party, the party is anxiously seeking a philosophy, or, if it is not a philosophy that it searches for, it is a new soul.

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The framework of the society in which we live is a direct legacy of the 1939-1945 war. Under a mobilization more far-reaching than any Hitler or Stalin could impose, the British accepted the iron distributive justice of a siege economy. In doing so they gained not merely equality in sacrifice but new rights and claims to decency and equity in treatment. In the war everyone counted and felt they counted. The psychology and some of the institutions of the welfare state were established before victory, and the general election of 1945 was their confirmation. When the Labour Party took power it was in a country whose social structure had been transformed by war, and the party itself was ready with a programme which embodied a logical development of this new structure. Its leaders were accustomed to the complex bureaucracy of war-time England, and when the new world of peace proved more precarious than expected, they met the novel threats by expedients developed in the former administration.

A party in power is always more administratively minded than the same party in opposition. Under the pressures of immediate circumstances—especially when these circumstances are dangers—technical solutions, even if they merely postpone and do not solve difficulties, are welcome. The competent professional politician with some technical knowledge and ability rises in such a time. Issues are not seen primarily as problems of principle, but as matters of skill. Realism reigns—and with genuine realism go certain surrogates. On the one hand there is a false realism which is the excuse for brutal stupidity; on the other there is a fake realism which strives for the appearance of technical power without its substance in order either to maintain or to obtain a personal position. Thus any gain in realism is bought at a cost: the purchase is unavoidable, but the cost can prove ruinous.

Professionalism and bureaucracy grow together and between them emerges a new hierarchy of values and new positions of power. A new psychology appears, and men fit themselves to it almost unawares. Some of the new, unformed men of the Labour Party, in or out of Parliament, who were swept into power in 1945 or who jumped for the labour bandwagon in the succeeding years, succumbed to this new attitude of mind all the more promptly because it was dominant in the structure they entered. The new, slick attitudes were easily learned, especially by young university men who had no family backgrounds of

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working-class loyalty and experience, or who had escaped such backgrounds early and desired now only to conform and be accepted by the mighty.* Political “managerialism” began to fuse with other manifestations of a similar kind elsewhere in the institutional structure.

The continual extension of the division of labour into politics and administration accompanied an extension of politics into more and more areas of civil society. The war had accelerated this not only in such areas as that of the major instruments of communication, above all the B.B.C., and the new world of the P.R.Os., the British Council, the Ministry of Information, and so on, but also into academic life, both by giving academics administrative experience in the higher civil service and also by enlisting their scientific aid and directing their scientific efforts. The psychology of inside knowledge, of backroom information and authority, of technical ingenuity and of awe for the merely instrumental inevitably spread. At the same time, where knowledge and skill were compartmentalized (and believed to be more compartmentalized than they in fact were) the role of personal contacts increased. Individuals came to believe in the significance of their local reputations, and indeed the significance of these reputations rapidly grew.

In political parties, the higher administration, the media of mass communication, certain areas of the world of education, some parts of the industrial executive, and elsewhere, the consideration of fundamental principles was frequently either denigrated as irrelevant to the tasks of the moment and the processes of some specific social mechanism, or it was condemned as breaking some unstated canons of good taste.† Not to know these canons or to doubt these urgencies was to be branded as a boor or a fool, and involved instant condemnation to the outer darkness of those who had no access to power. With this went a growing faith in neat technical solutions within an existing institutional framework, and a rather pathetic faith in quantifiable social data—often genuinely of high value—and in specific “mysteries” (in the medieval sense) of specialized knowledge, in, it might be, psychology, sociology, or economics. Short-cuts

* The inexplicable, but real absence, of a numerous and able “middle-generation” of trade union leaders—there, are of course a few—made this more serious than it might otherwise have been.

† A fair idea of these canons might be derived from content analysis of the B.B.C.’s excellent Third Programme.

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to salvation were believed to exist and to be owned by saviours with arcane skills.

This picture has been over-painted for purposes of compression and clarity, and it is unfair for two reasons. Such attitudes were and are partial except among the silly and innocent, and, secondly, these attitudes frequently have pragmatic justification in success whether for an individual career or for the conduct of policy. Nevertheless the above account gives an aspect of a real and important, if partial truth. This is not to pass negative judgment on the people who have achieved so much of what was achieved in that terrible, heroic, and successful decade of the 1940s. The developments described were unavoidable in kind, if regrettable in degree. The whole development extends far beyond the confines of the labour movement, for the phenomena are of the nation and of the world. Nevertheless the mystique of the thing is not merely unconvincing, but already breaking down on the political left.

Perhaps the ideological apogee of all this in the Labour Party was reached in *New Fabian Essays*. (I suspect that the second series of these essays, which has been announced, will, if only because it is concerned specifically with economic affairs, show a recession of this tide.) The premises of this volume were "managerial" in that broad and easy sense familiarized by Mr. Burnham. The attitudes discussed above animated much of the book, but are most clearly to be seen in the contributions of two men who are often opposed in judgment on matters of daily policy, Mr. Crossman and Mr. Healey. Behind them one can sense another question, and a perfectly legitimate one. Why should the old elements of socialist ideology be maintained except as a myth in Sorel's sense of an animating expression of a will to action? The present is not socialism as it was usually understood, but it is not uncomfortable; it has—as I argued above—achieved a society in which much distributive justice is done. Would our problems not best be solved by the maintenance of an administrative syndicalism, and the gradual extension of its benefits? Such quietism has one obvious disadvantage: it will not win votes, nor even the proselytizing, self-sacrificing action which maintains a political party in being. It neglects much present and continuing social wrong, and it has certain other failings.

One can, as Mr. Truman did, maintain an equilibrium in politics for a long time, constantly adjusting affairs to hold

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conditions fairly constant by reacting, for example, against either rising or falling prices and keeping up a mild and not particularly harmful inflation. Mr. Truman of course did more than this, and desired to do more than he actually achieved. Nevertheless, his administrations represent essentially the stabilization of the society created by Roosevelt. Such equilibria are valuable in politics and economics, but they are insufficient solutions for a world in which events and desires move as strongly as they do in these mid-years of our violent century. The correction of the errors of Mr. Churchill and Mr. Butler does not constitute a policy. Administrative syndicalism is capable of solving problems of means, and of creating minor ends. It does not have such deep roots in our society that it can deal with major decisions of policy in terms of acceptable principle. (I do not know whether this disability is necessarily inherent in "managerialism", but I am sure that it exists today).

Let us then turn to the traditional ends and the older sources of labour thought. These sources are very various, and the currents of some run today both strong and deep, but there is a community of ethical impulse underlying them, and an identity of ultimate aspiration which is particularly in question now.

Marxism, the strongest element in continental and Asiatic socialism, is only one strand in the British tradition. Marx himself was largely anticipated in his economic and political thinking by that Bray who provided this article with its epigraph, and the Marxist doctrine has been both less alien and more important in Britain than most historians have allowed. The influence of the Social Democratic Federation, for example, has been consistently underestimated, but nevertheless, I propose to put the Marxist contribution on one side for the moment—save for one particular. Before men can act they must hope, and one of the forms of hope, a belief in a just future, is powerfully reinforced by an acceptance of even a part of the Marxian analysis of history. "L'avenir est la seule sort de propriété que les maîtres concèdent de bon gré aux esclaves", Camus has recently told us: Marx (and Sorel) have seen how valuable is this concession, and so, to do them justice, have those modern writers who would claim that history has either ended or is meaningless.

But if the future can be used to rouse action in the present, religion can give the present a direct meaning. Mr. Morgan Phillips never tires of the truth that Methodism has contributed

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greatly to the labour movement. Certainly the tradition of radical dissent and of working-class self-help in the field of religion trained men for self-help in the trade unions and the co-operatives. Certainly the language of the Old Testament and some of the texts of the New lay ready to the hand of agitator or orator. All the same I cannot see as deep a significance in the non-conformist contribution—save in so far as it taught responsible administrative habits—as is often claimed. (This failure may result from my Scottish background: in the North the flavour of the dissenting chapel is as strange as the experience of the Mosque or of the Ghats.)

Christianity is rich enough continually to have provided the humble with texts of community, love, and revenge. Inside Anglicanism it could produce that continuing strain which goes beyond the obligations of charity within society as at present constituted, to a demand for a Christian society. Such a society was envisaged as one of common responsibility of each for each, of individuals and institutions as organically dependent on each other. It was therefore a powerful influence in combatting extreme economic and social individualism, and it could offer a divine sanction as against the allegedly scientific teachings of economics. As the same time Christian socialism, in its Anglican form, was, like the church which gave it birth, never merely other worldly, and could concern itself with present issues of charity and reform.

In this reaction to social *laissez faire*, in this recognition of the relations of the interdependence subsisting between men and between institutions, and in this willingness that the state should intervene in the economic order while at the same time charity and reform were pushed ahead, Anglican Christian socialism had much in common with Hegelianism. Hobhouse has taught us to suspect Hegel, but there is a distinct Hegelian influence on British social thought which has no Marxist affiliation and which is of importance throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Hegel who adored the Prussian state is not the corrector of *laissez faire* and utilitarianism who appears in the Cairds, in Green and Bosanquet. The social work inspired in Glasgow, Oxford, and London by these writers is unimportant today—save in so far as it helped to produce the handmaid of the welfare state in the modern social worker—but the idea that it was not only legitimate but necessary and just that the state should intervene to mould institutions to better things and to curb

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predatory action was learned not merely by young men in the universities, often destined to administrative work, but also through the new extension lectures of the same universities, and later, through the Workers' Educational Association. Very largely it was the Hegelians who prepared the mind of England—even part of upper-class England—for the welfare state and socialism. The importance of this factor in the ideology of labour has been neglected, but it is great, and it illustrates that evolving power of liberalism to which I now turn.

I suppose the late A. D. Lindsay would illustrate the theme here better than anyone. He belonged to the Hegelian tradition, he was a devout Christian, and he stood for the political liberties advocated and defended by J. S. Mill. The practice of English politics, the transformation of liberalism in a developing industrial society, had brought Mill near to socialism, and L. T. Hobhouse his greatest follower, who was also a follower of Green, came closer still. For Hobhouse society existed for the individual, and liberty is a social consequence less of right than of the duty to respect the personality of others. In consequence liberalism requires not merely equality before the law, but equality of opportunity so that each individual can find and make himself. The state exists to make this self-discovery and self-development possible in the full context of society. A just economic order is a duty of the state's, and even the most extensive charity is no substitute. Interpreted in terms of an industrial society this means at the least a form of socialism. The enmity of philosophical idealism and philosophic radicalism was resolved in the rejection by men like Hobhouse of the state-worship of Hegel and in their acceptance of social responsibility and liberty as social goals, an acceptance which results in the liberal socialism of a Lindsay and of many of our contemporaries.

Such ideologies, based on academic philosophies, rapidly penetrate society and politics, and reach to men wholly ignorant of the first authors of the ideas they defend and put into practice. The history of socialist thought is largely the history of the spread of ideas and of their criticism, acceptance or rejection, from people peripheral to the labour movement into that movement. Today academic philosophy, whatever its intrinsic merits, can fill from its technical content no such inspiring and guiding role. On the contrary, it is more likely to encourage the backroom psychology and the technocratic ideology discussed earlier.

If utilitarian liberalism and British Hegelianism could both

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lead in the same direction, both influenced the utilitarian criteria and the idealist readiness for state intervention which characterized Fabianism. In some ways the Fabians also anticipated the ideological and administrative revolution of the previous decade, and, though the importance of the Fabian Society has been overestimated by European and American observers, the Fabians have been both a cause and an index of social change. Concerned with those measures of social provision and reform which have now been largely implemented Fabianism went further; "As regards the great combinations of capital, State action may take one of three courses. It may prohibit and dissolve them; it may tax and control them; or it may absorb and administer them. In either case the Socialist theory is *ipso facto* admitted, for each is a confession that it is well to exercise a collective control over industrial capital."* In that sense socialism has largely been achieved by the authors of the *Tenant's Sanitary Catechism* and their successors who produced *The Distribution of Fish*.

Unlike the liberals who moved to socialism and were guaranteed its coming by theories of progress based ultimately on Darwinian evolution, and unlike the Hegelians who saw history as the progressive revelation of the absolute, the Fabians had a lesser assurance about the future. Shaw was an exception to this, and there were others, but the passionate belief in progress almost universal among other socialists was markedly absent from Fabian thought. They set themselves—and helped to solve—technical problems of the day and we now stand, their heirs, in a period when their limited vision of the future has largely been attained in our internal affairs. Technical problems, of course, remain, and great external difficulties to which socialism seems largely irrelevant. But, except in one area to which I now turn the Fabian solution has proved adequate in domestic affairs.

The faults of the administrator and the expert are that their skill does not provide from itself the ends for which it should be exercised, and that they treat men, often for their genuine advantage, as means, not ends. The lessons of Mill, Green, and Hobhouse about the individual as end are neglected, and the spontaneity of unruly life and of those stubborn associations which Laski defended is an inconvenience. This is to make a serious error about values. In a period of war this mistake did not matter: the end of victory was so commonly and deeply accepted that individuals and organizations gladly accepted such

* William Clarke in *Fabian Essays in Socialism* (1908 reprint, p. 99).

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treatment. In the post-war world they more and more receive it with discontent, or, worse, respond to it by the denial of personal or collective responsibility.

The history of syndicalism, of guild socialism, and of the constant grumble among workers in and out of nationalized industry about workers' control, is in part a reaction to this, and provides a protest against the new attitudes of recent years and the growth of these attitudes in an earlier period. The failure hitherto of all such demands is one of the primary factors in that dissatisfaction with the consideration of which this article began. It is not enough, to paraphrase a famous dictum, that justice be done in society, it must be seen and be felt to be done, otherwise there will be a failure not only of satisfaction but of that animation of will on which all communities and especially a collectivist community depend. The syndicalists, however muddle-headed, have seen this and the subterranean continuity of their thought proves the vitality of the insight. It is claimed today that the workers are too often irresponsible. The answer is not to provide the responsibility of unemployment, misery, and disease, but that, even at the cost of error they must have access not only to political power but also to social and economic responsibility throughout the hierarchy and the regional dispersion of productive and administrative life. This is not to argue for guild socialism or syndicalism: the claim is for a share in control and it is fully realized that only the few will want to participate in such responsibilities. The knowledge that such possibilities do in fact exist and that one can participate if one wants—and can persuade ones fellows that one is a suitable person—should be at least as real in economic as in political affairs.

In all these varied sources of labour thought—and in many other and sometimes older ones which I have not mentioned here—there are certain common impulses and aspirations. Progress, the brotherhood of man, the value of shared endeavour for social purposes—these are all in unfashionable concepts and their very mention can embarrass more than an obscenity. They are however all defensible, and all who have contributed to the British socialist tradition have accepted them. Today they are out of tune with a technical, professional or managerial attitude, and hope so long deferred—especially in the international sphere which does not concern us here—has also resulted in their denial.

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Progress is the favoured target of abuse for romantic realists, in love with the idea of being tough-minded. Whether it is an objective fact of human history or not it is certainly an objective possibility, for progress is attainable by the will, thought and action of individuals working together—and has been so attained in the past. Optimism is more dangerous than pessimism to the tough-minded professional, for, while nobody minds or notices a prophet of woe falling into error, distrust and even the ascription of personal responsibility attach to the man whose anticipation of good has been delayed or falsified. Yet the belief in progress is one of the things which makes progress possible, and the refutations of “automatic progress” attack only a view which no one has ever seriously defended.

To dismiss such concepts as sentimental is to succumb to that ignoble sentimentality which finds in power without judgment the one object of value in society. These ideas may be unfashionable in our divided and violent world, but they are part of the common hope of humanity for they are corollaries of man's continuing passion for justice and liberty. It is unfortunate that the very successes with the consideration of which this article began have proved a little disappointing, but this disappointment is largely the artificial creation of a continued and stupid propaganda of the mass press on the one side and the sinister denigration of a few Communists on the other.

Partly, too, it results from the feeling that nothing fundamental has been done, that the old barriers of class remain, and that the institutionalized contempt of English social structure also largely remain. So long as the inequitable jungle of English education and educational opportunity persists and as the level of personal responsibility remains low, so long will this feeling continue and have much justification. The unwillingness to deal with these central issues is, alas, reinforced by those vested interests which the professional politician, administrator and technician have already learned to enjoy and not unnaturally hope to preserve for their children.

All this does not mean that the animating hopes and beliefs are dead. The forces that gave them embodiment are still with us, and though the incentive of need is less urgent in our society it is still great. The failure of nerve in this odd period of relaxed political and economic attention which has followed the strenuous forties is mainly one of intellectuals and publicists. It can therefore be remedied by deliberate taking of thought and letting

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the movement sift out and select from that thought those elements which best meet its requirements.

Such thought might be aided by the opening of new fields of research into our economic institutions and their social influence, into the creation of legally defined statutes which are the inevitable accompaniment of expanding social provision, into the successes and failures of the intellectual Cinderella of socialism, the co-operatives, into the problems of communication, in both directions, within the trade unions and especially in nationalized industry, and so on. None of this will solve the problem of re-kindling the energies of political action, but it could contribute to that self-knowledge of the movement and of society without which action is unprofitable and energy blind. It would also remind us and force us to the significance of the fact that we already live in a new world to which even the maps of the 1940's are an inadequate guide.

Bray saw how unobtainable the ends of justice and liberty had always been, and that ultimately the good society must always remain beyond our reach. Yet we have seen it brought closer in our own time by means which Bray would have approved and in part which he suggested. It is to be merely silly and blind to all past experience to believe that the doldrums in which professionalized politics and the inevitable disillusionments of accomplished hope have becalmed us are permanent features of our climate. It is also silly to believe that the gale of liberty and equality which has continued since 1789 is exhausted because it is briefly abated. The world beyond our frontiers is the disproof of such an opinion, and men still desire justice, liberty and fellowship.

THE LABOUR PARTY IN ITS SOCIAL CONTEXT

By H. L. BEALES*

WHERE does one find a workable definition of the term "social class"? Sociologists write endlessly about it but their ingenuities seem to bring the light of understanding to few eyes but their own. Latterly they have been making, or taking, subjective tests of social classdom. Perhaps they will get final, or at least illuminating, results from them, though the voice of the sceptic is not silent. . . . But the political observer need not be greatly worried by the rarefied atmosphere of sociologists' disputations, or by the useful if limited range of their discussions of actual election processes and results as recorded in recent issues of, say, the *British Journal of Sociology*. Nor need the working politician to whose nostrils the dusty strife of elections is the breath of life. They know social classes do still exist even if their exact delimitations escape the techniques of scientific measurement. No one who has ever taken part in a political canvass can have any doubt of it. He has to change his vocabulary and the content of his appeal as he goes from area to area, from occupational stratum to occupational stratum, from building-society suburb to council housing estate, from West End opulence to suburban thrift. The mechanics and ethics of press advertising reinforce common observation. The bowler-hatted figure who strides confidently into your concerns with the *gravitas* of many corporate millions behind him does not approach you to urge your support for a comprehensive scheme for a national investment board or an extension of the planning powers of the state. Nor did his political predecessor, who won your disgust and your opposition a generation ago, with his slogan, "It's your money they want!" It is not unknown to the organizers of the appeals of business or politics to strike the class attitude, and use the class weapon of fear of change, in a class struggle for the maintenance of class power. So, even if we don't quite know exactly what social class designates, we can remember the pretty clear meanings of, say, the May Report of 1931, or of certain provisions in the 1944 Education Act, or of certain blind-spots

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in the projected legislation of the present government, or of the tone and content of much of the discussion in this country and elsewhere of the problems of Africa, or of the all-too-common blather about social policy at the present time. And even those who, whether intellectually or politically, are most embarrassed by talk of class factors in the life of the day, have no doubt that social hierarchies do exist. That plutocratic values are prevalent, that we English are not "wops" or "dagoes", that men are more fitted for responsibility or leadership or the House of Lords if they derive from Winchester than from the County School . . . *et hoc genus omne* . . . is surely visible enough.

But the survival of class attitudes, it may be said, is no proof of the continuing existence of the class structure and the class *mores* of the past. It is necessary to try to think in this subject in as up-to-date a way as possible, and it may be that the present tensions in the Labour Party arise not merely from its constitution—the trade union-constituency party relationship—but from the lack of such thought in adequate clarity. If a politician of the left is apt to think of his supporters in class terms, he risks being guilty of what the logicians would call political historicism. Because the Labour Party rose to independence, and ultimately to power or office, on the tide of working-class "emancipation", it does not therefore follow that "the working class" will continue to occupy the key tactical position in politics that it has done in the first half of the twentieth century. It may itself have changed. Labour politicians tend to take their inherited attitudes too much for granted. To the late Mr. Bevin, political classes were four in number, upper, middle, working and intellectuals. Mr. Bevin was not alone in this attitude.

A returning Englishman who had spent a dozen years in Canada was asked how England struck him after so long an absence. His reply was that it was so crowded that he suffered from agoraphobia. "Even in the country?" he was asked; to which he replied, "There is no *country* south of the Highlands." Such impressions of the urbanization and suburbanization of Great Britain have some substance, but they are exaggerated. In rural areas the changes have been sweeping and are still in full development. There are feudal areas still, and in them Labour candidates still have difficulty in persuading villagers that the ballot is secret, and that they can vote Labour without endangering their employment or their cottages. How far these feudal or feudally-minded villagers are mere anachronisms, as, say, in the

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West country, it is difficult to say. But their record of wage advances, up to the present national minimum (£5 13s. 0d.), is striking and is a clear demonstration of the power of good trade unionism. It is hard to believe that many members of the Agricultural Workers' Union are in the habit of voting Tory, or are likely, even temporarily, to be seduced from their present loyalties. But they are a small element in the countryside, however upgraded they are. It is necessary for them to be reminded of salient facts in their history—that if the Liberals helped them in Joseph Arch's day in the seventies, it was they also who turned down the Labour proposal in 1913 of a wages board for agriculture, and they who abolished the wages board and wages committee of the war period in 1921; it was a Liberal-Tory combination that emasculated the minority Labour government's measure of 1924, and the great gains of agricultural labour were the fruit of Mr. Attlee's first government, not of the war-time coalition. Even so, it is the new importance of agriculture in the country's economy which makes the going good for this formerly "beaten and crouching" class in the countryside. There are still territorial and clerical tyrannies in our villages; there is still more class consciousness there than in the towns. It is at the top now rather than at the bottom, but the benevolent developments that sweeten the ancient atmospheres of exclusiveness and serfdom, of philanthropy and snobbishness and patronage, are gathering pace. The task of the Labour Party in rural Britain is to strengthen them—to make health services really effective; to enlarge the range and quality of education while eliminating extraneous influences, whether clerical or other; to stimulate cultural enjoyments so that people can stand up to the big-wigs and take over their jobs, or share them, in every sort of democratic body from councils to hospital boards, from women's institutes to rural community councils. And the key to that is as much the women as the men. The effective agency is as likely to be educational as political—if only because its work can be continuous and neutral, the W.E.A. may better pave the way to effective village citizenship than the Primrose League or the local Labour Party, while much can issue from the educational activities of the National Union of Agricultural Workers and the Co-op (if not a sleeping partner).

This example serves to illustrate the character of the Labour Party's current problem. It has always been the politician's habit, since the Ballot Act of 1872, to underestimate the intelligence of

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the working classes. Low intelligence and imperfect education have been associated too easily as effect and cause. But things are changing so rapidly that the habit of talking claptrap no longer (if it ever did) yields dividends. School, cinema, radio, travel, leisure, improved living standards, the camaraderie as well as the risks of war all work together with successful trade unionist pressures to "modernize" the village. The mechanization of agricultural processes and the improved status of agriculture as an industry of paramount importance in the national economy provide the context in which the social changes now operate. But the countryside is increasingly suburbanized—unless the high costs of motoring retard that development—and in consequence the Labour Party has political problems to face that are more complex than those of yesterday.

To turn from the village to the town is to find the same complications writ large. The class structure of yesterday seems to be fading into something both less determinate and more difficult to assess politically. This is due to the combination of many factors, among which the most deeply influential, and the most elusive, is the passing of the large Victorian family. The upper crust of English society has never, in the last two hundred years at least, lived the Malthusian life. It has always been less prolific or philo-progenitive than the strata below. Whether its entailed estates and its habits of "high" living and conspicuous consumption are responsible for this, or whether it is just "inferior" in the capacity to wax fruitful and multiply because it is (as one theory has it) too well-fed or not, who knows? The expanding complexities of our civilization, the demands of Empire for administrators and pro-consuls and all the rest of the imperial governing personnel, at home as well as abroad, have made it necessary to pump up ability from the lower strata. The resulting social mobility has been on the big scale. It is not merely that the beerage (as some wag put it) has got into the peerage, or that financiers (some from abroad, but with an impeccable Anglo-Saxon pedigree) got there earlier, and newspaper proprietors, lawyers, trade union officials . . . since. There has been in nearly all grades of society a "levelling up"—it is useful to employ the political jargon of the Victorian age for these Victorian and pre-Victorian processes—which amounts to something like social assimilation at the top levels of society and the establishment of middle-class and working-class similarity and even identity lower down.

These silent developments come to the surface every now and then. In one context they appear as "the twilight of the middle classes"; in another as the demand for the differentiation by state policy of a new governmental elite; in a third as mere nostalgia for days gone by, expressed in a revival of "Victorianism" which can go even to the lengths of praising Victorian architecture: at the other end it can be the special policies of the University Grants Committee, or the exaggerations of high ceremonial, or the failure to trample on the values of plutocracy. . . . Whatever the manifestations, the broad characteristics and some of the early results of this turn to classlessness (if that is an appropriate term) are discernible, and to all appearance permanent. It is easy to exaggerate them, and it is as well to remember that there are black spots in our social system which call for sharp surgical treatment, as well as the slow developments of ameliorative policy. There are bad patches of "underpaid" labour, for example, in such employments as cutlery, food, drapery, furnishing, and many other branches of retail distribution, and equal pay for equal work remains an elusive target in civil administration, some branches of teaching, and elsewhere. It is difficult to interpret the census data just made available, but hard not to believe that social factors are not at least in part responsible for the fact that nearly three out of five households in Britain contain no children under sixteen, and, an opposite kind of fact in nearly half the households, there is only one member going out to work. The pressure of poverty nowadays equates, broadly, with the number of dependants, whether old people or children below working age, and in the social class analysis, attempted in the preliminary data drawn from the Census, it is shown that the unskilled worker's family, unlike the professional man's, has the highest proportion of other workers. It would seem that the method used by the Census officials for establishing social class stratification, by the occupation of the heads of the family, is the most useful to the politician because it is in the occupational sphere that his contrivings can be most fruitful. But it remains largely true, as Beatrice Webb found it when she began her work as a social investigator, that the most obvious form of power is that derived from wealth, only nowadays that power is usually corporate, less vulnerable, despite high taxation, rather than more as time goes on, and entrenched behind the skill of "management" which knows how to shift its burdens, humour the public, and appear (even when not, as the

Monopolies Commission slowly, very slowly demonstrates) benevolent. In some, the older propaganda cuts little ice nowadays. *Merry England* and *Britain for the British* have had their day. The pragmatic improvement and extension of the social services must be, clearly enough, a constant concern of the Labour Party, but the major attack by Labour policy in the general field of democratic equalization must move beyond, while not letting down, the achievements of the pioneer age of the labour movement. Labour has, in fact, won the early campaign for social betterment, and now its policies are everybody's policies. No doubt the dog's tail will wag the mid-twentieth century Tory dog from time to time, but by and large the Tories have adopted Labour's policies.

In the present phase of our social evolution there seems to be a general willingness to accept the term, "the welfare state", as an adequate description of the chief feature of our social system. That willingness may not be surprising in so politically minded a people as the British, but it conceals at least as much as it reveals. The forces which have determined our social policy are inherent in "industrialism" itself. Industrialism rests on the twin foundations of technical innovation and expanding capital equipment. There have never been any industrial revolutions in any sense which can command "scientific" definition, but there has been material progress, the increasing use of power-driven machinery being its main instrument and the satisfaction of inexhaustible wants its main driving force. The new technical innovations have proved to be cumulative and irreversible, and the social reconstruction that has accompanied their widening adoption has also proved to be continuous and inescapable. That reconstruction (sketched so convincingly in the best study yet made of its earlier phase, Saunders's *Scottish Democracy*, 1951) has rendered obsolete the old land system, the old landed aristocracy, the old quasi-serfdom of the landed workers, the old forms of tenure and land management, the old annual contract for labour. . . . It has substituted corporate for individual businesses and small partnerships. It has necessitated the specialization, by increasing division of labour, of every kind of business and technical function. It has called for a great extension of professional organizations and professional standards. It has brought into being new universities, with new capacities in research, new subjects of research, new sources of research expenditure. The new technologies have to be built; they don't

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just grow, like Topsy. The new productive organizations, in which their results are applied and developed, are in the main big, or tending that way, and sometimes they are monopolies in greater or less degree. The labour, which is accessory to the capital equipment, is often still skilled but less and less so, and in any case specialized machine techniques can be quickly learned by women as well as men. The character of labour, that is, has changed and while dock labourers and builders and others may successfully resist the erosion of technical change for a time, in the long run it will get them, and render their present attitudes as obsolete as most apprenticeship, if the truth is told, is already. . . . The story widens out into a managerial "revolution" (it's only the name which is recent) and a labour revolution (time and motion study are now nearly three-quarters of a century old) and a financial revolution.

Against this background of sweeping and irresistible change, the social structure, like the social policies, of contemporary industrialism must be set. The Victorian simplicities have gone. It was easy in mid-Victorian England to see the middle class as the executive of the new industrialism. They were in the bank parlour, the counting house, the manager's office: they still are. But they come now from the public schools that are not private as well as those that are; from the new universities as well as the former strongholds of clerical monopoly; from the cream of the primary schools skimmed off by the scholarship system; from the other half of the human race who as mere women were sub-human as well as redundant a century and less ago. They are the new governing elite, but they often languish in the middle-class twilight of the present era.

In a short article no more can be done than spotlight one or two outstanding features of the present order as it issues from the second world war. First, industrialization was bound to bring educational advance—it could not be carried forward without. The old aristocracy, now visibly in dissolution (despite the pathetic and heroic efforts of the owners of majestic "seats"), was able to cash in on some of its processes, like railways, or to occupy honorific positions, as on the directorates of big companies and in parliament. But the new did not come from them or derive much from them, and in any case they could not stand up to the seductions of plutocracy, whether royally led or just vulgar. The House of Lords in its present form is hardly graced even by their occasional attendance. Owing nothing much

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to aristocracy, industrialism simply passes them by, and as the days of proconsulardom are numbered, the revival of aristocracy in its older forms is inconceivable. The new leadership must come from elsewhere and the extension of education shows from where.

The executive middle class still runs the show, but it is socially and politically less unitary and homogeneous than it used to be. The passing of liberalism is not due to some political absent-mindedness or aberration: it is due to the speed of social change, and the success of the challenge of labour to the middle-class leadership. The Victorian House of Commons was a house of interests, of the economic interests of land, finance, communications, commerce, manufacture. It still is, of course, and will remain so, but the presence of solid phalanxes of mining and other labour representatives of "safe seats" makes for some differences. It is doubtful if they are simply what they are usually supposed to be. Is it better not to regard them as further "interests"? It has been remarked that the Labour Party is sometimes frightened of its own followers—as no doubt, the Tories are, though they are not the same followers. But Labour has pinned its faith to Socialism (whatever that may mean) or socialism, though it is not quite clear to which. The former, the crew, would lead to the doctrinaire reconstruction of our economic system by the substitution of national or public ownership of the means of production, not of distribution (because the co-ops. would not like it) or insurance and banking. The latter, socialism with a small "s", would mean the moving at quiet intervals along the ordained line of slow transformation of our productive institutions, as between 1945 and 1950. It is difficult to say whether this is a real dilemma or not. Who knows what the Bevanites really stand for? And in any case, would not a considerable extension of the pleasant equipments of welfare capitalism satisfy most working-people and their middle-class assimilates?

It is to that sort of problem of policy-making that any consideration of the social trends of industrialism leads. A new definition of the limits and aims of what used to be called state interference is called for. Social equalization having gone so far that illiteracy has been liquidated, poverty substantially reduced, insecurity considerably abridged and general state competence greatly extended, where do we in general, and the Labour Party in particular, go next? Harold Laski used to

warn us that no governing class, especially one with the prestige and aristocratic appurtenances, including the power to penetrate every social circle, of the English would voluntarily consent to share their powers with the forces from below. But it seems to have happened, and to have happened so successfully—despite the more than vestigial traces of the bad old habits of predatory oligarchy—that party programmes are very difficult to distinguish one from the other nowadays. What then do we do?

In part, though in very general terms, the answer has been suggested—push on with cultural equalization, with the extension of social amenities, with the instruments of civilized enjoyment as far and as fast as may be possible. But beside that there are other things which urgently call for treatment. Some are in the realm of taxation—cannot the expenses racket be wound up, or regularized, for example by taxation of expenditures directly and not merely indirectly? Cannot the relative fields of central and local government be re-allocated so that our suburbans are not politically functionless or parasitic? Is it impossible to devise some system of desirable bonuses for good local development? Cannot much more adventurous policies of research encouragement be adopted, more adventurous developments of technical education, more substantial recognition of successful advances in the fields of applied science? And so the search for up-to-date expedients, developmental expedients, could get momentum. Societies can be choked by vested interests, property rights, social privilege as much as by ignorance, obscurantism especially of the religious kind, and too great a predilection for territorial expansion and military ambition. Our society, it seems to me, is now coming out of its “individualist” phase but it is handicapped by the survivals of social caste and privilege, in their various forms. Economic change has loosened up the social stratification. But there are still heavy burdens, inherited and difficult to shift. Social service developments, important as they are, are not enough of themselves to enable us to establish our civilization at new high levels of diffused culture, material advancement and rational living. We have to win through to these by further equalization, imperial and domestic, further opportunities of technical innovation, further development of public enterprise, closer control of bureaucratic and other administrative functions. We have in fact to do what the Tories won’t do—to advance as well as to conserve.

THE LEADERSHIP, THE RANK AND FILE, AND MR. BEVAN

By MICHAEL YOUNG*

IT is always a poor prospect for the patient when the doctors cannot agree what is wrong with him and one of the most disturbing things about the present dispute within the Labour Party is that there is not even agreement about its causes. As long as the contestants continue to behave like a husband and wife who snipe at each other without understanding why, bitterness will thrive on its own memory. If they would only agree on what they disagree about, the quarrel would be half-mended and the many adherents of left, right, and centre who deplore the present dissensions could begin to heal them. The dispute is not about policy, or at least it’s not only about policy—that’s certain. The Bevanites have not committed themselves to any detailed declaration in conflict with the National Executive Committee. On the contrary, all groups supported the statements presented to the Morecambe Conference, and although it may be objected that these were cast in such infuriatingly general terms that Guelfs and Ghibbelines could have signed them, no one is able to define with any clarity the differences of view which these statements are supposed to have obscured. When Bevin attacked Lansbury in the thirties, everyone knew it was about pacifism. When Morrison attacked Cripps, everyone knew it was about the Popular Front. When the Bevanites attack or are attacked, few can be quite sure what it’s about. On the face of it, there is only a small difference of degree over rearmament, over the American alliance, over nationalization, and surely so much heat cannot be generated over a little more or a little less. If the struggle is not about policy, what then is it about?

The complexity of the Labour Movement is responsible for some of the fog. All can claim the support of the movement because one man thinks of it as the annual conference and the trade unions, another thinks of it as the constituency parties, one thinks of the National Executive Committee or the Parliamentary Party, another of the active rank and file. A full account would have to deal with each of these in turn. To explain why the trade unions are on the whole opposed to Bevanism would entail an exhausting debate with Mr. Goldstein on the nature of “the trade unions”. To account for the attachment of certain M.Ps.

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to Mr. Bevan's cause would need the kind of evaluation which would call for another Ostrogorski. To throw some light on the divisions within the constituency parties is the sole, immodest aim of this article.

The commonest explanation of the whole business is that it's "purely a clash of personalities". Visualizing politics as a battle between individual champions is habitual amongst journalists, who themselves see the leaders and follow their manoeuvres from the ring-side at Westminster. Whatever the reason, many others besides journalists perceive things in the same way. No doubt many of his supporters follow Mr. Bevan because he is saluted as the soul of righteousness in the papers they trust; and, what is far more telling, because he is denounced as the soul of evil by the papers they distrust. The Bevanites have the whole press on their side—from the *New Statesman* to the *Sunday Express*.

But to imply that the clash is merely one between gladiators is to forget the armies ready to fling themselves into the fight. Mr. Bevan is a colourful personality because he is a great orator, and when he speaks he expresses the emotions of his supporters better than they can themselves. Expressing what they would liked to have said, had they been able, he becomes the symbol of what they themselves stand for. The column has not been enlisted, though it may have been augmented, by his skill as a recruiting-sergeant. The column was on the march anyway, and Mr. Bevan has merely put himself at its head. If he had not carried the flag, another would.

Another, rather less usual explanation is that Bevanism is a result of the managerial revolution. Instead of regarding the play as the product of the performers, we may regard the performers as the product of the play, and in that case, if Marx is our guide, we shall seek for the causes of political change in the metabolism of class relationships. By the turn of the century, as Maurice Dobb has pointed out, the industrious classes, having lost the mentality of small masters, had been formed into one working class, and on this foundation the Labour Party was built. But while the working classes were becoming singular, the middle class was becoming plural: the old middle class of proprietors was being eaten into by the new middle classes of salaried employees. "A new middle class is thus forming", said Charles Booth in 1902, "which will, perhaps, hold the future in its grasp. Its advent seems to me the great social fact of today." The salariat of clerks and administrators, teachers and tech-

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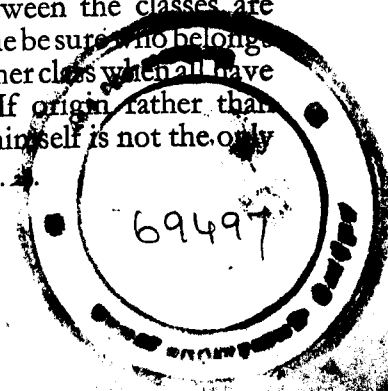
nicians, has been growing apace ever since, as the 1951 Census so strikingly demonstrates once again. This great social fact must have had some effect on the Labour Party.

One hypothesis is that the politically active people, as distinguished from mere voters, in the middle of the class hierarchy do not take up their position in the middle of the political spectrum, but instead move to the extreme. They are not only Morris and Shaw, the Webbs and the Coles, Crossman and Foot, the articulate idealists, the formulators of the ideology of socialism. They are also the rootless who need to depend on strong leaders and strong dogmas. They are the extremists who crusade for the socialist creed. When they predominate in local parties, as in places like Hampstead, Holborn, and Tunbridge Wells, they pass the hundreds of extreme resolutions which descend in a steady stream upon Transport House. Where they are in a minority, they constantly campaign for socialism against their less revolutionary working-class colleagues. The Manchester Fabian Society, reporting the results of a detailed investigation in nine local wards, found* that "Opposition to re-armament was strongest among the middle-class members and weakest among the working class. . . . Sweeping nationalization of all major industries found most support from the middle class, and a good deal less from the lower middle class and the industrial workers. . . . The working class, particularly non-industrial working-class members, were more willing to ban the Communist Party than those in other classes." The middle classes were the backbone of the Socialist League, and in the House of Commons of today they are the core of the Bevan group, which hardly contains any well-known trade union M.Ps.

On this hypothesis, Bevanism can be interpreted as a movement of the middle classes, whose growing importance in the constituency parties reflects their expansion in the population at large, in opposition to the more moderate working class who constitute the bulk of the trade unions and who read the *Daily Herald* far more for its racing tips than for its editorials. But, though it has some truth in it, can such a view really be so sharply maintained? When the dividing lines between the classes are becoming more and more blurred, can anyone be sure who belongs to which? Can M.P.s be allocated to one or other class when all have an odd kind of middle-class occupation? If origin rather than present occupation is the test, Mr. Bevan himself is not the only

* *Fabian Journal*, February, 1952, p. 2.

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person of working-class origin in his group; in the country, there are very many such others who support him, including many trade unionists. Nor is Mr. Attlee the only middle-class person in the official camp; there are many others, both amongst M.Ps. and in the constituency parties, who oppose Bevanism root and branch.

A third explanation is that Bevanism is the contemporary manifestation of the old conflict between leadership and militant rank and file. Whatever the social class of the active members, they tend to be at loggerheads with the leadership in every large organization, from the trade unions to the British Legion, from the N.C.B. to the P.B.I. In political parties, the conflict commonly conforms to a special pattern of its own. When the party is in power, its leaders have a double role: they are leaders of the nation as well as the party. In their performance of the first role, wherein they are powerfully supported by the civil service, they have to edge towards the centre in order to maintain national unity. The better their performance in that role, the worse it may be in the other. They can depend to some extent on the sense of loyalty, which is strongly sustained, as in any fighting organization, by the attacks of the opposition, but they cannot hope to persuade their own members that, in order to govern at all, almost continual compromise is necessary. So disunity within the party becomes the price of unity within the party. Eventually, the pendulum swings back, not only because the leaders have lost the support of the electorate but because they have forfeited the enthusiasm of their membership. The leaders, reverting to a single role, can then set about restoring unity within the party, and this they do by reversing their direction and moving back towards the wings, where their active members have all along been anxiously waiting for them to reappear. The problem in the Labour Party is that one leader made a dash for the wing well before the performance was over, and the other leaders have not, since the curtain was run down, moved more than a few steps away from the centre of the stage.

This process can be seen at work even in the Conservative Party. In the Labour Party, bridging the gap between leaders and members is even more difficult, despite the loyalty which is so marked a feature of its working-class tradition. The militant rank-and-filers believe in social change. They are inspired by the philosophy of socialism. They hope to create a new social order free from the injustice, inequity, and insecurity of capitalism. When imagination sees the whole new golden building, how

disappointing the patient work of adding brick to brick! How saddening the trials of legislation! How dreary the plodding administration needed to breathe life into the statutes! How easy, when the intricacies of the architecture are so baffling, to blame the builders for their lack of spirit! The experience of power, without the alibi of 1924 and 1929, was bound to be a great test for a party so nurtured.

That the government did so well, and retained the support of the rank and file for as long as it did, is certainly tribute to the calibre of the leaders. But we must admit they were in some ways very much helped by achieving power at the end of the war. The nation was ready for bold reconstruction and the government could, in the mood of the times, implement the party programme without alienating other sections of the population. A planned economy, complete with fair shares and controls, had been created during the war, and it was less a question of establishing new administration than of making use of what already existed. The ground plans had been made by Beveridge and others for a Health Service, for social security, for urban replanning, and, after the Reid report, even the public ownership of coal was no longer purely a party matter. We speak about *Let Us Face the Future* as though it was the product of a long period of party preparation; if we are honest with ourselves, we have to recognize that many of the most solid proposals in it had been given body by the painstaking work of civil servants, when they were allowed, and encouraged, to plan for the work of the next administration that was to come after the war and the election.

Even so, after the first glorious spate of legislation, and after the fuel crisis, a greater strain was placed on the loyalty of the membership. They became steadily more puzzled and concerned that the advance towards socialism seemed to have lost its momentum. After difficult years, in which the gap widened, came the Pyrrhic victory of 1950, which condemned the government to passivity. It was obviously impossible to carry through the major proposals in the watered-down but still substantial version of *Let Us Face the Future* contained in *Labour Believes in Britain*, but why nothing was done on such matters as insurance, public buying and consumers advice, not even committees of enquiry set up, is still a mystery. One blow fell upon another. The long-standing grievance of the rank and file that the government was subservient to the United States, and unnecessarily hostile to the U.S.S.R., was accentuated by the decision to

step up re-armament after the beginning of the Korean war. The departure of Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Bevin weakened the official leadership at a crucial time, and the gap became a gulf. When Mr. Bevan and his associates resigned, they became the leaders of a rank and file already drawn up in battle order.

As already suggested, a party defeated at the polls can expect to compensate for losing the support of the electorate by recovering the support of its membership. By vigorously adhering to the rule that it is the duty of the Opposition to oppose, and by falling back on a more extreme programme for the future, the leaders can, if they will, rally their supporters round the party banner. Why has this not happened after the electoral reverse of 1951? Why have the Bevanites been allowed to hold the field? One reason is the extraordinary freak of yet another hair's-breadth election. It can be argued that a government which came so near to winning a third term cannot have been so far wrong. The middle-of-the-road voters apparently approved of the moderate (practically non-existent) programme of 1951, without any specific proposals for further nationalization. Why then adopt more radical policies? All the more reason for avoiding extremism when its chief advocate is Mr. Bevan, who is thought of as being as violently disliked by the body of voters as he is violently admired by his followers.

Another reason is that ex-ministers always take time before they discard the cloak of office, and when some of them have been in power for eleven years running it is not easy to throw off the ministerial habit of mind. For a few months they knew a great deal more about their departmental policies than the upstarts standing at the Box, and could tell them where they were misinterpreting their civil service briefs. On this occasion, it is more than ever difficult for responsible people to take up a new stance, except on those questions, like steel and transport denationalization, where the incoming government has dared to undo what the previous administration had done. The experience of six years has convinced the leaders not only of the terrifying complexity of modern government, but has shown time and time again how narrow are the margins, for a country which long since ceased to be mistress of the world, within which any Cabinet has room for manoeuvre. Once it is agreed that the American alliance must be upheld and stout resistance offered to communism, there is not much left in foreign policy to disagree with the government about. There have been shifts, for instance,

over Germany, but on most issues the leaders are still in concert. Once it is agreed that in the economic sphere the first task is to establish equilibrium in the balance of payments, there is apparently not very much left to argue about there either. Awareness of the delicate position of Britain in world economy also makes for unwillingness to enter into any commitments for the future, since at any time a sudden crisis abroad may vitiate any gains we are able to make at home. In these circumstances, one does not need to be a Solomon to understand why the official leadership has not moved to the left nor, understanding that, why the gap between the leaders and the active members, championed by the Bevanites, yawns so wide.

If the official leaders moved leftwards, the conflict would be at an end. If Mr. Attlee, if Mr. Morrison, if Mr. Griffiths would make a series of left-wing speeches, party unity would be restored, and Mr. Bevan would be just one leader among many. One can appreciate why they cannot do it. But is there any good reason why, within the limitations of the situation, they cannot talk more about policy? Every time anyone prominent in the party attacks another member, overtly or covertly, for his behaviour, personal antagonisms are sharpened. Every time anyone, whether Bevanite or non-Bevanite, pronounces on policy, provided he does not just issue forth a pint of platitudes or a gallon of generalities, there is something tangible to debate, and, although there may be differences of view, when people state what they believe in, there is always a chance, once discussion is joined, of reaching eventual agreement. The most depressing feature of the past year is that non-Bevanites have said virtually nothing, and Bevanites, except for Harold Wilson, little more that is concrete, about the future policy.

It is not as if there were a dearth of questions to discuss. To prove the point, it is unnecessary to do more than list just nine out of many.

(1) *A less vulnerable economy.* We can now see more clearly that the job is not only to increase production, but to produce more of the things that will either find assured export markets or relieve our dependence on imports. We can never be secure while our economy is shaken to its foundations by the slightest tremor in American industry. The crucial problems are to decide which export industries, and even firms, are to be backed for full-out expansion, how British farmers are to be prevailed upon to produce more food, and how other industries producing raw

materials at home can be promoted. We also have to consider whether we need a state trading organization for purchasing goods for re-selling to countries which themselves engage in state trading.

(2) *Nationalization*. It is no longer any use discussing in principle whether public ownership would be desirable. We have to get down to cases, and relate specific proposals to the goal of making the economy less vulnerable. Would nationalization of ship-building be worthwhile against the day when the backlog of orders has been satisfied? Let the party discuss it and let the unions concerned be drawn in. Would nationalization of the chemical industry enable more capital to be found for new developments, incorporating more brains and less labour, in the production of synthetic materials? And are the arguments for mutualization of industrial assurance any less strong than they were two years ago?

(3) *Economic equality*. Is it not time to contemplate the overhaul of the entire structure of taxation and, in particular, to decide how to tax unearned income at substantially higher rates than earned? Which specific income inequalities should be further abated? And what in detail is it proposed to do about the remaining inequalities in the distribution of property?

(4) *Industrial democracy*. Here again, pious generalizations are no use. Everyone can say it would be nice if there were some sort of workers' participation in management. What can be done to get it? Why not give each nationalized industry two years to make one of their pits, stations and depots, generating plants, or gas-works in every district a model of joint consultation at every level? They would have to draw on social research, potentially as important as technical research, which was beginning to make a small start under a Labour Government but which is now, inside and outside the Universities, being starved to death. Why not establish residential colleges in every town and city where hundreds of shop stewards, foremen and charge-hands would go for short courses?

(5) *A new welfare state*. The welfare state is rapidly becoming a myth. If you compare the proportion of the national income at present being spent on social services with the proportion spent before the war, or with the proportion spent in America, you find we have very little to be proud of, and with continued inflation and the curtailment of food subsidies, provision is becoming sparser every day. The party has the chance to work

out a programme, embracing the whole field from family allowances to housing, for giving solid support to the family.

(6) *Old people*. To maintain fixed ages for retirement, and then to compel people to live in penury, is becoming more and more absurd, as people live longer and more healthily. It is high time to tackle this problem, and to work out ways of extending the working life without blocking promotion.

(7) *Socialization of housing*. The case for the gradual acquisition of rent-controlled property by local authorities, on the lines pioneered in Birmingham, is becoming stronger every day. Will anything less than socialization of controlled houses meet the requirements of the situation? Would anything less enable the central areas of our cities to be rebuilt? Rebuilding the cities could be the most inspiring venture of our generation, and, given the will, it could be done with no greater expenditure of labour and materials than is at present going into the erection of houses in the remaining green fields left to agriculture.

(8) *Education*. We have never thought out what we mean by equality of opportunity. Not only do we need to consider more carefully how to implement the Party's stated policy to make comprehensive schools universal, but also what the content of education should be. Marvels have been done in some primary schools which have made the arts the core of their curricula. Is this new life to be excluded from the secondary schools?

(9) *Reform of local government*. We believe in democracy, we deplore the growth of the giant state, and yet we transfer powers from local authorities to all kinds of new bureaucratic institutions. We cannot indefinitely excuse ourselves by saying that the structure of local government is archaic, because we have neither done anything, nor planned anything, to reform the structure. The Local Government Boundary Commission was allowed to fizzle out, and since then no leader of the party has made even one major proposal for putting the system to rights. Why not?

When our society bristles with such problems, and this is only a tiny selection, how can anyone say that there is nothing to discuss? The National Executive Committee has appealed to all members to discuss policy and to submit their opinions. Is not this an appeal to the leaders to do the same? If they do not respond, what other means do they propose for reaching agreement? Only by reaching agreement can the strength of the movement be maintained, and the present conflicts become just another episode in the history of the British Labour Party.

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THE CONTROL OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE. By BASIL CHUBB. (Oxford University Press. 25s.)

It is commonplace that the functions of parliament change from generation to generation, and this interesting and admirable book is much more than a study of contemporary financial practice; it is an illustration of the flexibility of the constitution and of the changes that the relationship between parliament and the Executive has undergone in the last hundred and fifty years. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, public expenditure was low in relation to the national wealth, there was a comfortable if pessimistic assumption that it was in the nature of administration to be extravagant, and a sentiment that, whereas the voting of money—that is, the approval of the ends of public policy—was parliament's business, its expenditure when voted—that is, administration—was in a sense the king's affair, and was not a proper subject for parliamentary enquiry except in the very general form involved in the debates on the state of the nation unless there was some exceptional public scandal. To-day, when taxation absorbs about a third of the national income, it is an essential part of the task of the people's representatives to seek to ensure that the people get value for their money.

The study of this transition and of the problems it has raised is the essential purpose of this book. Parliamentary control over government expenditure falls into two main categories: the task of ensuring that sums already voted have been applied for the purposes for which they were voted—essentially, that there has been regularity of accounting; and the task of ensuring that the estimates in process of presentation provide that the policies for which parliamentary approval is sought will be attained with all reasonable economy.

There are certain difficulties that are inherent in the execution of both of these tasks. There is the problem of reconciling any effectual form of control with the maintenance of full ministerial responsibility; there is the problem, essential both to the maintenance of ministerial responsibility and to the proper operation of parliament itself, of distinguishing between policy and administration; for while ministerial policy is obviously a matter for parliamentary debate, experience has shown the limitations on the control that the House of Commons, as such, can exercise over the day-to-day conduct of administration in that, while it can deal with irregularities after they have been exposed, it can neither, as a rule, bring them to light, nor positively promote efficiency; special organs have had to be created to exercise control but these must not be allowed to interfere with the formulation of policy in Cabinet and its determination by vote of the House.

In the main, however, the separate tasks have been clearly defined, and have presented different problems that have been solved with somewhat sharply differing measures of success. Regularity in the appropriation of public money and in the presentation of public accounts has to a large extent been secured by the audit conducted under the Auditor and Comptroller-General, an officer of the House of Commons reporting to the Public Accounts Committee, a Select Committee of that House. This Committee, its powers

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and its duties, are well understood and respected by the civil service; the Committee and the Treasury have been firm and faithful allies for nearly a century and, though there is need for constant vigilance, in the main this form of control is as effective as it would be reasonable to expect. But there are limitations inherent in its nature, which are ably expounded by Mr. Chubb.

The Public Accounts Committee deals with the past. The task of controlling contemporary expenditure has never been solved with comparable success. It has devolved upon the Estimates Committee, in peace, and upon the National Expenditure Committee, in the two world wars—both committees being Select Committees of the House of Commons. No Estimates Committee was appointed until 1912, nearly fifty years after the Public Accounts Committee had become a power in the land; and by 1914 it was recognized as an unqualified failure. The National Expenditure Committee when working under the leadership of Lord Samuel (as he now is) in the later years of the 1914-1918 war achieved considerable success but it failed after the war when the late Lord Banbury was in the chair. The Estimates Committee of the inter-war years at first repeated its earlier failures, but later succeeded in producing one or two valuable reports; it was left to the National Expenditure Committee of the last war to achieve first-class political importance, and, amidst a good deal of controversy as to its methods, to do some work of unquestionable value. The post-war Estimates Committee, largely through following the National Expenditure Committee's techniques, especially in the matter of working in sub-committees that report to the main committee, has established itself as an important committee of the House; but even so the reviewer has had the experience of hearing one of the highest officials of the Treasury give evidence before a sub-committee without, clearly, having even a rudimentary idea of what are the Committee's responsibilities and powers. Certainly the technique of controlling contemporary expenditure is still not completely elaborated whilst the technique of controlling the nationalized industries is barely embryonic.

Mr. Chubb has shown both great care and imaginative insight in collecting his material and great powers of discrimination in handling it. Inevitably there are some mistakes in the description of the practical working of the financial committees of the House: for instance, the author seriously underestimates the influence of the main Estimates Committee in editing and even substantially altering reports presented by sub-committees. But he has grasped the essential fact, which a purely academic observer would not have noticed, that work in committees of this kind is only part of an M.P.'s public duties and that many members have also to do private work which they cannot neglect; that members are representatives of the public and not technicians; and therefore that it is useless to expect too much of Select Committees or their members. This is an important study of one aspect of our political institutions and it is a pleasure to be able to recommend it.

W. T. WELLS.

THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY

PEASANT RENAISSANCE IN YUGOSLAVIA, 1900-1950; A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF YUGOSLAV PEASANT SOCIETY AS AFFECTED BY EDUCATION. By RUTH TROUTON. (Routledge. 344 pp. 28s.)

THERE are many types of peasant society, and many types of peasant. Almost all, from the feudal serf to the *kulak*, from the semi-nomad mountain herdsman to the peasant-merchant of the market town economy, exist or have recently existed in the South Slav lands which comprise the modern Yugoslavia. Over most of the country, peasant poverty and foreign domination used to be identified, as they still are in much of Asia and Africa, and the movement of liberation from the Turks, the Austrians, or the Hungarians was also a movement towards economic improvement. Yet when liberation came, it created equally serious new difficulties. Like other Balkan countries, Yugoslavia between the wars suffered from exaggerated nationalism and internal feuds which hampered development, from official corruption and the excessive wealth of a small minority which for most of the population simply replaced foreign oppression by a native one, and from chronic agricultural over-population and under-capitalization. The new liberation movement of 1941-44 was thus something more than the older movements had been. Its inspiration and its backbone were peasant, even though its forms of expression were often those of urban communism; its purpose was to combine the expulsion of the Germans and the Italians with an internal revolution. The first liberation had gone wrong; the second provided a glorious new opportunity for real liberty and real economic advance.

Both because of this pre-history and because of the speed with which things have been changed since 1944, Yugoslavia is a first-class case study in the modification and modernization of a peasant society. Miss Trouton has done a very thorough job in compressing the social history of a complex period in a complex country into 350 pages, and in keeping the book readable without being as superficial as many earlier books on Yugoslavia are. She also supplies a full and useful documentation. The sub-title of her book indicates that she is chiefly concerned with the conscious efforts of governments and others to modify peasant ideas by education, and she clearly believes that this is the means by which peasant society can best be adapted to take its place in a wider industrial economy without losing all its distinctive characteristics. The one serious criticism that can be made of her approach is that she overestimates the significance of formal education. She does not by any means ignore the other influences—improved economic status, greater security, the closer contact with the towns and the outside world made possible by better communications and transport—but she tends to put these in the second place because their influence is less tangible. A second, though lesser, criticism might be that she is herself too uncritical of some of her sources; her sympathy with the great experiment now in progress leads her to undervalue some of the strains it has set up, and one also gains the impression (possibly wrongly) that she has spent more time in the Serb lands than in Croatia, Slovenia, or the old Hungarian territories. She is probably wise not to attempt too many comparisons with other countries where similarly rapid advance of peasant societies is under way. Yet it is precisely the comparisons which her book invites which give it its greatest value.

When people talk and write about the development of backward areas

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they frequently confuse two quite separate things. A peasant country relying on subsistence farming (which is what most so-called "backward areas" are) may be reorganized in order to raise the level of its agricultural production and the standard of living of the peasants while still remaining essentially agrarian; or it may be partly industrialised, with all the consequences which follow for those parts of it which continue to depend on agriculture. Yugoslavia is an example of the second. Over-population in the countryside can no longer be relieved by the traditional means of emigration, and agriculture cannot be revolutionized fast enough to provide a better living for the present population, let alone for a larger one. Consequently, surplus labour must be removed from the land into the towns to work in new industries. Capital must be found for these industries, for the improvement of the land and of farming methods, and for a great extension of transport so that the produce of the land can be brought to the towns at less than prohibitive cost. The changes involved are both bigger than and different in nature from those required where the main task is agricultural improvement without reducing the agrarian labour force.

As a case study, Yugoslavia experience is thus of limited applicability. Rather late in the day, more people are now beginning to appreciate that industrialization is not the key to the problems of all under-developed territories in a world tending to suffer from a glut of manufactured goods and a shortage of certain foods and materials. It is very doubtful whether the vast changes brought about in Yugoslavia since 1944 would have been possible except as part of a revolution which united the towns and the countryside in a common purpose, nor could the agrarian changes have happened unless accompanied by increased industrial development. A further case study is needed, by Miss Trouton herself or by someone else, which will survey in similar fashion the experience of a territory where industrialisation has played a smaller part. Making allowance for the very different basic conditions, the Gezira area of the Sudan, or even the much-criticised British colony of Cyprus, could supply material for another study on similar lines.

Most people agree that a great deal of money and energy must be expended in the next several decades on developing the poorer agrarian communities, yet few are prepared to give full consideration to the risks involved. Do we yet know, for instance, how far a peasantry can advance economically without ceasing to be a peasantry? We need an answer to that question, because the last thing we want is to create vast agrarian proletariats in Asia. Where industrialisation is part of the process, how do we avoid setting up new Calcuttas, Cairos, or Johannesburgs? How do we prevent our revolutions from getting out of hand? How should we link economic change with political change? What really is the part that education can play? The answers to all these questions, and many more, can only be learned by experience. Miss Trouton's book is of great value because it records a part of the experience of one country; if its circumstances are special, so they are in every country. Unfortunately, not every country that needs development will throw up a Tito to lead it at the critical moment.

T. E. M. MCKITTERICK.

THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY

DEMOCRACY AND FOREIGN POLICY. By R. BASSETT. (Longmans. 654 pp. 42s.)

MR. BASSETT, who is Lecturer in Political Science at the London School of Economics, has written this book as a case-history of the Sino-Japanese dispute, 1931-33, about Manchukuo. It is a study of the state and movements of public opinion in England about foreign policy between the first and second world wars, in relation to one important incident of that policy. And it is carried through in great detail by long extracts from parliamentary debates, speeches of leading persons, press reports, and editorial articles. They are set out chronologically, but the book deals not only with opinion at the time, but with subsequent developments in public opinion. It takes account therefore of important commentaries on the Manchurian crisis, such as Lord Cecil's *The Great Experiment*, and Mr. Stimson's *Far Eastern Crisis*, and *On Active Service in Peace and War*. The three main purposes are, (1) to present as accurately as possible the opinions expressed at each successive stage of the crisis; (2) to examine subsequent versions of what was done and said during the crisis; and (3) to consider the charges made against British foreign policy in the light of what was known at the times when the charges were made.

It has been said that it is easy to be wise after the event, but it is also wise. Mr. Bassett does not seem to agree with that maxim; or rather, he suggests that it is often not honest to be wise after the event. The actors forget what they said and did at the time, and later give a picture distorted by unreliable memory. Mr. Bassett's own wisdom after the event justifies the British policy, though he is careful to point out that his book was not written with that purpose. His conclusion may be summed up in the following remark on Sir John Simon's conduct of the Manchurian crisis at the League of Nations; "It is difficult to dissent from the view that, in the dilemma confronting this country, no greater measure of success could have been achieved, and that seldom or never has so difficult a problem been handled with greater coolness, clear-sightedness, resolution and indifference to considerations of personal popularity." That is indeed a handsome tribute to the then Foreign Secretary; and it was written before the publication of Lord Simon's memoirs, of which Mr. Bassett had no knowledge.

History, however complete the apparatus of the historian, must be subjective. The author does not disguise his views or his sympathies. He is severe on all the critics of the British policy from the Left; and he is fond of mounting the *Manchester Guardian*—which he regards as a newspaper of the Left, not recognising any middle road—and the *New Statesman* for not pointing out at each stage what exactly should be done. He is severe, too, on the protagonists, in and out of Parliament, of firm resistance to Japanese aggression, like Geoffrey Mander and Zilliacus, and he does not spare even Lord Cecil from occasional taunts.

However skilful his special pleading that England did not default on her obligations to the League of Nations, the impression that is left by his exact analysis is that, whereas England was expected to give a lead for resistance against aggression, she did in fact pursue no consistent line, and Sir John Simon, as he then was, countenanced Japan's action. And, as Disraeli said on a famous occasion, 'it is the general impression which counts'. Mr. Bassett argues that the American Secretary of State, Mr. Stimson, never

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supported a policy of economic or more drastic sanctions. But who shall say that, if England had taken the stronger line, which the *Manchester Guardian* and the *New Statesman* and the *News Chronicle* asked for, and if Japan had refused to go back and challenged the League to apply sanctions, the United States would not have joined with the League to defend China and her own interests in the Far East. After all, the United States and we were compelled some years later to take up arms against Japan, and in much less favourable circumstances than in 1931 or in 1933. Mr. Bassett makes much of the very guarded and limited terms of the démarche made by Mr. Stimson in January 1932 for not recognising the puppet-state of Manchukuo. He says truly that there was no threat of applying economic pressure, much less military action, against the aggressor. On the other hand, it is clear that British action at the time offended American public opinion.

Mr. Bassett does not draw for the student lessons about the relation of democracy to foreign policy, which is his particular field. He lets his analysis of parliamentary debate, speeches, and press speak for itself. It is not an encouraging story. The press was divided on party lines, and with the exception of *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*, did little to give regular and reliable information of what was happening in China and in Geneva. Two organs of the cheap press were violently hostile to the League; one of them was unqualifiedly a supporter of Japan. The bulk of the English people were not interested in the grave issues which were hard to understand; and it is to be remembered that the crisis was coincident with the rise of Hitler in Germany, the American Presidential election, and the unparalleled economic depression in the world. Perhaps the stoppage of war in the Far East was too severe a test of loyalty to the League of Nations. It was remote from the life of the great bulk of the citizens, and in 1931 the lesson had not sunk in, as it has since, that peace is indivisible and war is indivisible. In the lack of continuous public interest it was easier to create myths about the events and about the relation of the United States to our policy. One general conclusion the author does formulate.

'Criticism became more widespread and more extreme the farther critics were removed in point of time from the action or inaction complained of. . . . One might almost speak of a law of increasing virulence in propaganda, although the later attacks are invariably foreshadowed in earlier stages.'

What is to be regretted in a case-history of this kind, is that the author should indulge in sneers against those with whom he does not agree, as where he speaks of 'the characteristic negativism of the *New Statesman*'.

NORMAN BENTWICK

CEYLON. By SYDNEY D. BAILEY. (Hutchinson's. 168 pp. 8s. 6d.)

THE GAMBIA. By LADY SOUTHOORN. (Allen and Unwin. 273 pp. 21s.)

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. By HEWAN GRANT. (Faber. 195 pp. 25s.)

THIS is a review of three books, each of which deals with a British country far distant from the others. Two of them are still British colonies, and the third, Ceylon, has not long emerged from that status and become a fully self-governing member of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

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Ceylon by Sydney D. Bailey, the Assistant Director of the Hansard Society, is a history of Ceylon in one volume of 158 pages. The author says that "Ceylon's history is indeed a long record of foreign invasion". Up to the end of the first millenium of the Christian era the invasions were mainly Aryans from the Hindu civilisation of North India. Then for five centuries the attacks came from the Tamil-speaking Indians of South India. From the beginning of the 16th century to the middle of the 20th century Ceylon was a colony of a European power, first of Portugal, then of Holland, finally of Britain. Today it is independent, freely associated with other nations of the British Commonwealth. The population is now over seven million, of which 69 per cent are Sinhalese, 23 per cent are Tamils, 6 per cent are Moors (Arabs) and 2 per cent Europeans.

Half of the book is devoted to the battles for mastery by the various invaders, until the last of them, the British, conquered it in 1795. For a generation British rule was purely autocratic, but in 1829 a Royal Commission known as the Colebrooke Commission was sent to Ceylon, which resulted in an Executive Council of officials being established and a nominated Legislative Council consisting of a number of senior officials and members of the inhabitants, European or native, with an official majority. The public service was also opened to all persons irrespective of race, and education was provided to enable the inhabitants to qualify for some of the higher posts. The Commission recommended the complete abolition of forced labour, which had been irregularly maintained. With slight modifications in favour of increased representation of the people that constitution continued for a century.

In 1928 the Donoughmore Commission was sent out, which recommended creating a novel colonial constitution. Communal representation was to be abolished and a State Council was to be set up of which all but three of the members were to be elected by adult suffrage. The three non-elected members were to be senior officials who would sit *ex officio* but would not vote. Control of administration was also given to the legislature, by appointing seven committees of the legislature which would be responsible for specified departments and the chairman of each committee was to be described as a minister. The seven ministers with the three *ex officio* members formed a Cabinet of which the Chief Secretary was the chairman. The Governor was given reserved powers by which he could overrule the decision of the legislature. This constitution continued until Ceylon was given full responsible government in 1948. In 1945 Mr. Nehru suggested that Ceylon should form part of an Indian federation but in 1949 revised this opinion and said: "There is not a possibility of our trying to make Ceylon a part of India."

The Gambia by Lady Southorn is a history of Britain's oldest West African colony, written by the wife of a former Governor of the Gambia, Sir Thomas Southorn (1936-42). The Colony is the last 300 miles of the River Gambia with a strip of land on each side varying from 7 to 15 miles. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to stake out a claim in the Gambia about 1460 which they held until it was seized by Philip II of Spain in 1580. British ships began to sail up the Gambia and trade in 1588 and various companies established settlements there but it was not until 1765 that it became a British possession. Since then it has been administered as a crown colony. The chief

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product of the Gambia is groundnuts, which represent 98 per cent of the total exports. Lady Southorn spent five and a half years in the Gambia and left it obviously with many happy memories of its people, whose history, customs, and problems she describes with great insight and charm. It is a valuable contribution to colonial history.

The Legislative Council of Trinidad and Tobago by Hewan Craig is written by a citizen of Trinidad and is one of the studies on colonial subjects published under the auspices of Nuffield College, Oxford. Trinidad is a plural society in which four races are represented, African, Chinese, European, and Indian. Of these, people of pure or mixed African blood formed in 1946 (the last census) 60 per cent of the population, of Indian descent 35 per cent, and the others together 5 per cent. The author says that "although Trinidad's diverse races live together in fair harmony, the heterogenous nature of the population has hampered the colony's political and social development".

Trinidad was discovered by Columbus in 1498 and remained a Spanish colony until its capture by Britain in 1797. Tobago was discovered by Columbus in the same year and was at various times a French, Dutch, or British colony until it was finally ceded by France to Britain in 1814. It retained the old representative form of colonial government until 1875. It was then a crown colony for 14 years and became united with Trinidad in 1889 to form a single colony. Although Trinidad became a British possession in 1797 it was not until 1831 that a legislative council was first established consisting of the Governor (as President), six official members, and six unofficial members, nominated from among the principal landowners in the colony. At the same time an Executive Council was established consisting of officials only. By 1898 membership of the Legislative Council had grown to twenty-one, but it was still wholly nominated. In 1921 Mr. E. F. L. Wood (later Lord Halifax) then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, visited the West Indies to investigate constitutional and other problems. He recommended that the unofficial side of the Council should be increased to thirteen, of whom seven should be elected and six nominated, but that the official majority should continue. This was done in 1924. At the same time a minority of unofficial members was appointed to the Executive Council. The colony was divided into constituencies and the vote was given to every male over twenty-one and to every female over thirty who had an income not less than £62. 10s. a year, or who paid a specified minimum of taxes.

Between 1934 and 1939 labour disturbances occurred in all the larger West Indian colonies and in some of the smaller islands. The constitutional changes which have since taken place in the West Indies and the substantial efforts which have been made to procure social and economic reform had their origin in these disturbances. Although the disturbances were an expression of economic rather than political discontent, they effectively demonstrated the need for political reform. A Royal Commission was sent out to the West Indies in 1938 which recommended that the only official members in the Legislative Councils should be the three *ex officio* ones and that early consideration should be given to reduction of the qualification for the franchise and that West Indian Governors should give representation to all important sections of the community on their Executive Councils.

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In Trinidad a Constitutional Reform Committee was set up which reported in 1948. The main recommendations of this Committee were that (a) the Legislative Council should consist of 3 ex officio official members, six nominated and sixteen elected unofficial members, elected by adult suffrage and that a Speaker having a casting vote only should be appointed by the Governor from outside the Council to preside over the Council; (b) the Executive Council, the chief instrument of policy, should be responsible to the legislature and should consist of three ex officio members and nine unofficial members, 3 nominated and 6 elected by the legislature. These reforms were effected in 1950, subject to the modification that the nominated unofficial members of the legislature are five, not six, and the unofficial members of the Executive Council are 6 not 9, that is, one nominated and five elected, who have full ministerial responsibility. In Trinidad crown colony government has now almost run its course. The present constitution gives the people of Trinidad and Tobago "a dominant voice in the control of their affairs".

C. W. W. GREENIDGE.

HITLER: A STUDY IN TYRANNY. By ALAN BULLOCK. (Odhams. 776 pp. 25s.)

ERNEST BEVIN: PORTRAIT OF A GREAT ENGLISHMAN. By FRANCIS WILLIAMS. With a Foreword by the Rt. Hon. Clement Attlee. (Hutchinson. 288 pp. 21s.)

THE FORSAKEN IDEA: A STUDY OF VISCOUNT MILNER. By EDWARD CRANKSHAW. (Longmans. 178 pp. 15s.)

THESE three political biographies, all in their different ways excellent, yet vulnerable to criticism, repay collective study, for the more one meditates upon them, the more they illuminate one another. The illumination is partly by likeness and partly by contrast, or should one say both by light and by shadow? It would, of course, be impossible to say that Bevin was like Hitler, but certain facts are interesting. Both came from the "lower" classes, the manual workers. Up to the age of 30 Hitler lived the life of a casual labourer, if not that of a down-and-out, and of a private soldier in the German army. Four years later he was in prison. Ten years later he was German Chancellor and the absolute ruler of Germany. Bevin was born eight years before Hitler, the son of a farm labourer. At the age of 29 he was a drayman driving a two-horse van in Bristol on a weekly wage of about £2 for a mineral water firm. Ten years later he was one of the most powerful labour leaders in Britain and in another 25 years Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Every one now knows what Hitler was like. There was in Bevin ruthlessness and brutality, and a touch of egomania. Bevin died full of honours and respectability as "a great Englishman" in Mr. Williams's sub-title. Hitler, a world conqueror, a world destroyer, and a world murderer, died in an underground cellar in Berlin like vermin in a trap. Read these two books and it is difficult not to suspect that the difference in the sequel was due partly to the impact of two different national environments and traditions. Mr. Crankshaw's book is not a full-length biography, but it is a biographical study, and shows

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again how environment acting upon character produces a politician or statesman, the political "idea" being only a part of the statesman and his statesmanship. Milner had something of the fanaticism and ruthlessness of Bevin. His environment was that of Oxford and the governing classes, the muted middle-class civilization of Victorian England. It produced from a man of great tenacity and mental ability a first-class administrator and a considerable statesman who, unlike the other two, lacked the force or violence or brutality necessary to impose one's policy upon the contemporary world.

As regards the three books, Mr. Bullock's is much the most important. It is eminently factual, giving a balanced chronological account of Hitler's life. Mr. Bullock aims at impartiality and to a great extent succeeds. It is improbable that posterity will find much of importance to add to the facts so ably presented here. The interpretation, the vision and estimate of Hitler's character and "greatness" are another matter. We and Mr. Bullock are, it is said, too near the horror to be able to judge soundly—but may not posterity be too far from it? To some Mr. Bullock will seem to overestimate, to others to underrate Hitler's "greatness". There is no doubt that he had great qualities, but they were mostly colossally vulgar or colossally evil. Is the moral that to be a great man in the modern world means that you must be a man of colossal egotism, ruthlessness, violence, and vulgarity?

Mr. Williams gives a good half-length portrait of Ernie Bevin. So far as it goes it is very well done. But it is not a complete portrait. One does not feel, when one has finished it, that one understands Bevin completely or why what he did followed from what he was. And the query about greatness raised above applies to the adjective in Mr. Williams's sub-title.

And so we come to Mr. Crankshaw and Milner. This is a wrongheaded, but none the less an interesting book. Mr. Crankshaw's thesis is that Milner's "forsaken" idea, of British imperialism, if it had not been abandoned for the illusions of democracy and internationalism, would have saved the British and the rest of the world. What is valuable in the book is the account of Milner's political philosophy, character, and career. The thesis is naively absurd: it is sustained by misinterpreting the principles and policy of all those with whom Mr. Crankshaw or Milner disagree and by making the extraordinary assumption that if only the British had been imperialist enough all the rest of the world would have gratefully acquiesced.

LEONARD WOOLF.

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PIONEERS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION. Edited by A. V. JUDGES. Lectures delivered at King's College, London, during 1951; with Introduction by the Editor. (Faber. 251 pp. 25s.)

IN order to make a satisfactory selection of "pioneers" of education in any particular country one must, obviously, have an idea of what are the most important aspects of the educational history of that country. In the case of England, with an educational set-up all its own and so unsymmetrical that few foreigners can grasp it, this would seem peculiarly difficult. One has to note, first, that as England, unlike France, Scotland, and many other countries, has undergone no political or religious revolution (since the brief experiment of the Commonwealth was so rapidly undone) there has never been any political compulsion to teach positive "truths" to all the children of the nation; furthermore, that state intervention in education was actually feared and opposed for many generations, that the provision of education for the poor was eventually taken in hand partly as a matter of philanthropy, but far more as a prevention of public nuisance—and even so was slowed down, for generations by the battle of the sects. From this there follows the extraordinary—however well-known—class-system of education for the better-off, and Public Instruction, as the Newcastle Commission called it, for the poor, which successive Acts of Parliament have only succeeded in modifying, and the tradition of parsimony and under-payment of teachers (as compared, for example, with inspectors and administrators).

These characteristics are those which are generally recognized; there are others, however, of hardly less influence and importance. There is, for example, the remarkable amount of freedom, in both method and curriculum, enjoyed by the state schools at primary and in many cases at secondary level. Since the crude financial strait-jacket of Robert Lowe's Revised Code was finally removed, English teachers have been the freest in Europe and in fifty years have changed the state schools and the education given therein out of all recognition; alongside this, however, must be set the fact that the English contribution to educational theory during the last two hundred years has been negligible, and that the bulk of the English people do not care two hoots what is taught in school. They accepted for years that it did not matter what a boy was taught so long as he disliked it, and now equally accept the converse, only demanding that *their* child shall be able to have whatever form of education currently seems to be the way to social advancement; whilst in technical education, the historic accident that the great advances in British industry were made by a nation of apprentices and brilliant amateur scientists very nearly resulted in our having no technical education at all. Finally, the English system makes a phenomenal use of volunteers, by which I do not mean only the enthusiasts who start model schools and swarm at conferences, nor the "voluntary" schools themselves, but also the hundreds of thousands of councillors, committee-members, governors, managers, after-care visitors, and the like, who all have their parts, their voices, and their prejudices, and impede the official or keep him up to the mark, according to how you look at it. It is a confusing picture, even if the end-product—the citizen-voter—turns out not so bad after all.

Where then should we look for pioneers? Among the theorists, we shall find little help after Milton and Locke, who lived too early for Professor

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Judges, for though there was a good deal of educational speculation most of it was derivatory, and the ideas of both Owen and Spencer were very half-baked in comparison with their predecessors. Among the effective practitioners? There is a wider choice: Owen, Thomas Arnold, Hannah More, Joseph Lancaster, Rowland Hill, Hodgskin and Birkbeck, A. S. Neill, Frances Mary Buss, Margaret McMillan, Albert Mansbridge—to take the names which first occur. Among the administrators? Kay-Shuttleworth, Brougham, Matthew Arnold, Morant, possibly Mundella, Michael Sadler? Even the reports of the big Commissions—Newcastle, Taunton, Bryce, Hadow—have considerable claims to be regarded as pioneering influences.

Faced with such an array of possibilities, it is certainly, as Professor Judges' uneasy and over-long introduction suggests, a difficult problem to select eight or nine persons whose life and works might give the student an idea of the growth of English education. But it cannot be said that the selection in this book is the best that could be achieved. Of the names listed above only Owen, Matthew Arnold, and Kay-Shuttleworth get chapters to themselves—both the first very slight—and Mundella a piece of one headed by the name of Forster, who was hardly a pioneer of importance. The best of these is the editor's own study of Kay-Shuttleworth. Space is wasted on Bentham, whose *Chrestomathia* was ridiculous, and whose ideas on education are on four separate pages of his chapter pronounced to be without originality, and on Newman, who, whatever he was, was certainly not a pioneer of English education. The "marginal value" of Herbert Spencer would hardly seem to rate thirty-four pages in a book of only 250. The historical lecture by Sir Philip Morris and Sir John Maud's contribution on administration in the twentieth century are unexceptionable in themselves, but have not much to do with pioneering.

Part of the reason for this unsatisfactory result is probably that the book is a collection of lectures and not a book. The technique of the public lecture is to produce the finished phrase, the stimulating remark that may arouse the attention of members of the audience, not to produce historical material for study. I have no doubt that the lectures, when delivered, were good lectures, interested the students, and may have encouraged some to read, for example, Frank Smith's excellent life of Kay-Shuttleworth. (It is a pity that the editor did not add something of a bibliography.) But that does not mean that they were worth reprinting between covers at 25s.; and it is, to my mind, regrettable that when good studies in the history of our educational system are so much needed, labour and paper should be expended on the production of something which is not.

MARGARET COLE.

EDWIN CHADWICK AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH MOVEMENT, 1832-1854. By R. A. LEWIS. (Longmans. 24s.)

THE British may be good biographers but they are very neglectful of some of their greatest figures. There are still no lives of any substance, outside the D.N.B., of such figures as Samuel Whitbread, Joseph Hume, Henry Hetherington, Sir John Simon, to name only a few of the more obvious figures in the context of whose lives the great civil servants, like Chadwick, of the age of early industrialist reconstruction did their invaluable work. It is

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true that Chadwick has just attained the distinction of a two-guinea biography, but Chadwick's life was so long and its public service phase so soon over that Professor Finer found almost insuperable the architectural problems thus presented. Dr. Lewis has a big enough subject in the study of these two decades of his busy public-spirited benevolence, and he has done his job quite admirably. At last we can see Chadwick's work at the Poor Law and the Public Health Board in full and in true proportions. The forerunner of this book was his illuminating study of *Edwin Chadwick and the Railway Labourers* (Economic History Review, 1950), which showed not only Chadwick's power of disciplined analysis of a problem of labour exploitation but his capacity to see straight to the heart of its treatment—in this case a system of workmen's compensation, which came in the fullness of a very long time. Here we have the full story of Chadwick's constructive energies in the great work of his life. His guiding hand, with Senior's greater urbanity and remarkable adaptability, gave shape to the fact-finding enquiry and subsequent Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, and then, in the teeth of the crass obscurantism of the Poor Law Commissioners, he set to work on the prevention of the all too abundant squalor and poverty which his new centralized machinery uncovered. It was thus that he tackled the hydra-headed monsters that hastened on the miseries of the people. He stirred up every kind of opposition that could be stirred up . . . but it is not only the familiar parts of the story which Dr. Lewis narrates. He gives us the whole of Edwin Chadwick's outlook, his conception of public duty in operation, his methods of administration and investigation and controversy. He gives us, so to speak, a working picture of Bentham's *Constitutional Code* in action. It must be concealed from the lawyers. Professor Keeton must not be allowed to read it, and it is lucky that it was not available when Lord Hewart was writing the *New Despotism*. For the whole of Chadwick was more than the sum of the parts, and he knew no areas of life to which the eye of government should be a stranger. There was room for inquiry and measurement everywhere, and prescription would follow. Chadwick was a necessary but uncomfortable tornado, and Dr. Lewis does well indeed to show him to us so effectively and understandingly.

H. L. BEALE.

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CODE, 1951. (*International Labour Office, Geneva*. 1952. 2 vols. clv + 1,220 pp. £3.)

THE I.L.O. was the most successful of the organs of the League of Nations. It remains to-day one of the most successful and effective of the U.N. agencies. The secret of this success has undoubtedly lain partly in a Webbian respect for exhaustive research and honest, brute fact, and partly too in an exceedingly intelligent and tactful response to three of the principal material forces that shape the modern world: the desire of international labour for improved conditions of life and work, the desire of the more advanced trading countries to mitigate the strain of international competition by obtaining, so far as possible, a parity in national labour costs, and finally, the desire of governments to ease internal stresses by the peaceful adjustment of changing industrial relations and the attainment of equilibrium in trade terms. From 1919 to 1939, the conventions and recommendations of the

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Office were largely fashioned by these needs of labour, trade and internal government; and they formed the bulk of the first, 1939 edition of the I.L.O.'s International Labour Code.

This, the principal work of the office, has continued. The statistical section of the splendid new code shows, for example, that, by 1952, 73 conventions were in force compared with 46 in 1939, and 1,244 ratifications had been registered against 863. But the 1951 code contains, also, important new developments of both substance and method.

One of the major problems of adaptation facing the highly industrialized nations to-day is the political, social and economic fostering of under-developed lands on a basis of co-partnership. This is a policy involving to an extreme degree the mobility of industrial, technical and social experience within the limiting frame of local conditions. Book X on social policy in non-metropolitan territories and the regional supplements for the American continent, Asia and the Near and Middle East in appendices IV, V and VII, go to meet these requirements. A striking illustration of the benefit of the I.L.O.'s work in this respect in India was recently provided by P. P. Pillai (*Indian Labour Problems* (1947) Chap. VII). Unlike the 1939 code, again, that of 1951 contains the elements of a comprehensive code of industrial relations, including chapters on freedom of association, the right to organize and to bargain collectively, collective agreements and voluntary conciliation and arbitration (Book VII).

The volumes under review display, further, new departures in method. Since 1946, member states have been obliged to report periodically to the director-general of the I.L.O. the position of their law and practice in regard to matters dealt with in unratified conventions and recommendations. Again, the conventions and recommendations have been made far more flexible in their application in a number of ways; thus, recent maritime conventions have provided that effect may be given to them not only by laws and regulations but also by collective agreements; members have been permitted to adapt a convention to local needs by, e.g., substituting a prescribed standard lower than that of the convention; a formula has been devised to meet the obstacle presented by federal member states, namely, by treating their constituent provinces, cantons or states as independent fields of operation for a convention; and a formula is now envisaged whereby certain conventions might be drawn up as statements of general principles specifying that detailed rules for their application would be worked out on a regional basis in regional conferences. Two other procedural developments deserve mention. First, members now undertake, in accordance with the I.L.O.'s revised constitution, to apply conventions they have ratified to the non-metropolitan territories for whose international relations they are responsible, subject to appropriate exceptions. And, second, the standard-defining function of the office is now rapidly assuming proportions comparable to the drafting of conventions and recommendations. The standards of policy evolved in a large variety of ways make up the bulk of the appendices Vol. II of the present work.

Before leaving the procedural aspects of the code, it may be added that it would be a helpful refinement on the statistical side if there was shown not merely how many conventions each member had ratified, but precisely which and how far member states had respectively implemented them through legislation, regulations and agreements.

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In this country, the effect of I.L.O. work on industrial, trade union and social insurance law and practice has been only fragmentary and interstitial, though, as in the case of the "fossy-jaw" convention of Berne, 1906 (passed by I.L.O.'s predecessor), undoubtedly important. But, the practical utility of the code here to-day lies primarily in the field of colonial administration. Nevertheless, for every serious student of labour and occupational problems generally these two volumes comprise a tremendous reservoir of information, experience and suggestion. The notes and bibliographies alone are worth a research project subsidy. No social sciences library should be without this work.

C. GRUNFELD.

SHORTER NOTICES

HISTORY OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR. WORKS AND BUILDINGS. By C. M. KOHAN.

HISTORY OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR. CIVIL INDUSTRY AND TRADE. By E. L. HARGREAVES and M. M. GOWING. (*Stationery Office and Longmans.* 540 pp. and 678 pp. 32s. 6d. and 37s. 6d.)

THESE two further volumes in the Civil History of the second great war will, of course, be invaluable to the 30th century historian of the 20th century but our accumulation of historical facts is somewhat terrifying. For instance, the volume on civil industry and trade deals with that province of government control which was exercised during the war by the Board of Trade. It is based upon the Department's documents and Mr. Hancock in an introduction tells us that the war-time records of the Board of Trade are contained in 12 million files, occupying 16 miles of shelf space. The book, which deals with the Board's control of the production and distribution of consumer goods—other than food and certain consumer services—is divided into two parts. Part I covers the introduction of import, export, and price control, Part II the operation of full control from 1941 to the end of the war. The other volume tells the intricate story of the government's building programme, first in the period of rearmament, and then during the war. It deals with the methods of control and with the building programmes of the various government departments. The authors of both volumes are to be congratulated on their skill in extracting what is important out of so many miles of shelf space and in producing out of it two important and interesting books.

WORKS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF DAVID RICARDO. Edited by PIERO SRAFFA, with the collaboration of M. H. DOBB. Vols. VI-IX. LETTERS 1810-1823. (*Cambridge University Press.* 24s. each volume.)

THE first four volumes of this remarkable edition were noticed in our issue of January, 1952. They complete the nine volumes originally promised for early publication, and apparently there is now only one volume to come, consisting of biographical miscellany and the general index. The four volumes of letters are of great interest to the economist and the historian. They contain 555 letters of which 317 have not been published before. The correspondence with Mill, which is entirely new, is of outstanding interest. The editing is admirable.

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THE SHORTER CAMBRIDGE MEDIEVAL HISTORY. By C. W. PREVITÉ-ORTON. Two Vols. (*Cambridge University Press.* 1202 pp. 55s. the set.)

PROFESSOR Previté-Orton was one of the editors of the *Cambridge Medieval History*, published in eight volumes, and he was invited in 1939 to write an abridged version. The idea was to produce a shorter version which could be read as a continuous history and which would at the same time retain the character of the larger work as a book of reference. The object has to a considerable extent been fulfilled, though it is not a very easy book to read, the compression being naturally intense. Professor Previté-Orton died before the book could be published, but he had completed the manuscript. It has been revised for the printer by Mr. Philip Grierson. It can be recommended to the serious student of the Middle Ages. The book is admirably produced, and the 300 illustrations, selected by Dr. S. H. Steinberg are of great interest and often of great beauty.

THE CAMBRIDGE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF EUROPE. Volume II: TRADE AND INDUSTRY IN THE MIDDLE AGES. Edited by M. POSTAN and E. E. RICH. (*Cambridge University Press.* 604 pp. 45s.)

THE Cambridge Economic History was originally planned by Sir John Clapham and Miss Eileen Power, both of whom had died before this second volume could be put definitely in hand. The book was planned before the war, but its plan has necessarily had to be modified if only because the war depleted the ranks of the contributors. It is a work of great value and can be recommended to the reader of the Shorter History, noticed above, who wishes to carry his study of the Middle Ages still further. It is divided into eight chapters each by a separate author. Professor Gordon Childe deals with trade in barbarian Europe before the Romans, Professor Walbank with the Roman Empire in the West, and Mr. Steven Runciman with Byzantine industry and trade. Professor Postan and the American Professor Lopez cover medieval trade in the north and south respectively. The last three chapters deal with specific industries: Miss Carus-Wilson the woollen industry, Professor Nef of Chicago mining and metallurgy, and Professor Peredur Jones building in stone.

THE BRITISH CABINET SYSTEM. By A. BERRIEDALE KEITH. Second Edition by N. H. GIBBS. (*Stevens.* 466 pp. 37s. 6d.)

THIS work by the late Professor Berrisdale Keith was first published in 1938. So much has happened in the last fourteen years in the sphere of Cabinet government that it was necessary for the book to be brought up to date if it was to retain its undoubted usefulness. This has been done by Mr. Gibbs, lecturer in modern history at Oxford, with commendable thoroughness. He has extended and amended the text so as to take account of recent developments and also fresh knowledge which has come to light since Keith wrote. He has even had the courage to omit a chapter dealing with the Privy Council and the departments of state.

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REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, 1950-51. Part II. ON THE STATE OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH. (H.M. Stationery Office. Cmd. 8,580. 1952. 192 pp. 6s.)

THIS part of the Ministry of Health's annual report is concerned with the medical aspects of the department's work. It contains a highly interesting account of a multitude of different factors which play greater or lesser parts in the nation's health. There are chapters on vital statistics, general epidemiology, the laboratory services, tuberculosis, the rheumatic diseases, maternal and child care, nutrition, dental services, mental health, morbidity statistics, the work of the World Health Organization, etc.

In an introduction to his report, Sir John Charles summarizes the progress which has occurred in the nation's health since the beginning of the present century. There have been massive advances in infant and maternal mortality, typhoid fever has almost been eliminated, tuberculosis has been greatly reduced, nutrition has improved, vast improvements have been made in treating venereal disease, mental disorders, and other maladies. Unfortunately, other evils have arisen to take the place of those which have yielded to greater medical knowledge or improved public health organization. Among them are the increased incidence of cancer, poliomyelitis and coronary thrombosis. The report is a fascinating story of our fight for life and health against the known and unknown dangers that beset mankind in modern civilization.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE USE OF FUEL AND POWER RESOURCES. (H.M. Stationery Office. Cmd. 8,647/1952. 242 pp. 6s. 6d.)

THIS is the report of the Ridley Committee appointed to consider what steps should be taken to promote the best use of our fuel and power resources. The subject is a highly important one which has never before been inquired into in Britain. The committee deals in its report with the demand for fuel and the supply prospects, the price of coal, the domestic and other uses of fuel and power, and the co-ordination of fuel and power. There are forty recommendations covering a wide field. They include proposals that the Minister of Fuel and Power should be assisted by a Tariffs Advisory Committee in exercising general control of price policy in the nationalized fuel and power industries; that he should set up a Joint Fuel and Power Planning Board; that he should invite industry to establish a greatly increased fuel efficiency advisory service for industry; that Government departments and other public authorities should lead the way in promoting fuel efficiency; that financial inducements should be provided for the installation of heating appliances of high efficiency in dwellings and for improved insulation of houses; that the Railways Executive should hasten on with the trials of more economical forms of traction to replace the coal-burning locomotive; that electricity tariffs should differentiate between the charges for peak and off-peak hours; and that coal-burning grates and stoves should reach a standard of room efficiency of 40 per cent. The report is of absorbing interest.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE last issue of THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY was devoted to a detailed survey of the Labour Party, its structure, principles, and policies. In this Issue we deal in a similar way with the Conservative Party. For that purpose we present a series of articles by prominent conservative writers and politicians expounding, interpreting, and discussing various aspects of the Conservative Party.

Conservatism faces unprecedented difficulties at the present time. Some of these arise from the economic plight of Britain and the international situation. The balance of trade problem imposes as severe restrictions on conservative policy as it does on labour, whatever may be said by those who claim to be able to solve or evade it. The cost of rearmament and the wars in Malaya and Korea bears as heavily on the Conservative Party as on their opponents, for it makes any substantial lightening of the heavy burden of taxation almost impossible. This is a more important fact than the differences between the Conservative and Labour Governments about fiscal policy.

There are other difficulties of a domestic character which confront conservatism in the mid-20th century, and these are in a sense more serious because they are likely to be more permanent. In the past, its chief sources of support have been business men and industrialists, landowners and shopkeepers, clergymen and lawyers, bankers and financiers, together with large numbers of voters who could be swayed by emotional appeals to the empire or stampeded into voting conservative by an election stunt such as the Zinoviev letter or the threat to confiscate post office savings accounts. The improved education and greater political maturity of the mass of the people have made it much harder for the Conservative Party to obtain power by these means, as the failure of the Gestapo bogey and the Laski affair showed in 1945. While it is incorrect to describe the conservatives as a class party—for no party in Britain can attain or maintain a position of national importance merely as the spokesman of one class—it is nevertheless true to regard the Conservative Party as predominantly concerned with the interests of those who own and manage property, whether it be factories or insurance companies, shops or overseas trading concerns, newspapers or agricultural land. The difficulty is that there are not nearly enough of these people

Some of the elements from which a programme could be constructed are apparent, but they have not had any hard thought applied to them. Is this because of that "disbelief in any purely intellectual process" of which the party's philosopher and historian writes, their desire to escape from "the despotism of reason"?

Every nation which enjoys a healthy political life must undergo periods of change followed by periods of relative quiescence, for the strain of continual progress in large doses is more than any community can bear indefinitely. This was at least one important factor in the conservative victory in the general election of 1951. In a country so strongly attached to tradition as Britain, conservatism, as the party of tradition, will always have a strong appeal. The more dynamic the policy of a Labour government the greater will be the need for alternating periods of calm, though not of reaction. On these psychological and sociological forces the Conservative Party can at least rely. Looked at from a more positive point of view, neither its policy nor its programme are impressive. It would appear, however, that the party is united at the present time. This is a comparatively rare event during the present century. For conservatives were disrupted not once but many times over such issues as home rule for Ireland, tariff reform, the continued support of the Coalition government in 1922, India, Spain, Munich, sanctions against Italy, appeasement and defence. In this respect, then, they are in a stronger position today than the Labour Party, where the deep rift shows no sign yet of being healed.

PRINCIPLES OF CONSERVATISM

By KEITH FEILING*

THE stately epitaph which Burke composed for the Prime Minister of his making declares, that it was Rockingham's purpose to make party 'a living depositary of principle'. And it ends 'remember, resemble, persevere'. It is a good deal easier said than done. Members of a party do not differ, or they at least agree to disagree, on the items of a platform, but when it comes to the principles on which all platforms ultimately rest, there is plentiful room for doubt and dissent. All that an individual student of politics can do is to ascertain, to the best of his powers, the principles which the most illustrious minds of his party have taught, and from which its most positive leaders have advanced.

In two senses at least all parties are historic. Their existing character is unintelligible if considered apart from their particular history; again, in a people which have long enjoyed responsible government and freedom of expressing opinion, conditions with which alone we are here concerned, a party's development is part and parcel of the national history, responding to or reacting from every change of current, and each new wind of thought. But a Conservative party must, *ex hypothesi*, be historic in a third sense; that its very *raison d'être* is to preserve an inheritance.

Party names, which are terms of convenience, or even historical misnomers, have little or no bearing on their principles. Most human beings, trade union officials included, grow more conservative as they pass middle age. Palmerston was transparently more conservative than the Conservative Peel, nor have many political clans existed more conservative than the peers of Gladstone's creation. Nor, once more, have we any right to expect an undeviating consistency of principle in a long-lived party. Just as the attitude of the Labour movement radically changed in regard to state 'interference' during the half century that ended in 1906, so on equally weighty questions the Tory and Conservative parties veered to and fro over the revolutions of two centuries. Beginning as monarchists who preached passive obedience, in the revolutionary era they dedicated themselves to the defence of individual liberties against 'the general will'. They

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were low-tariff men under Bolingbroke and the younger Pitt, but high-tariff men when Peel dragged them into a new world. They were isolationists, or little Englanders, as against the Whig junto and Walpole, but imperialists under the inspiration of Disraeli, Chamberlain, and Rhodes. It can, then, hardly be in the continuity of principles like these that their identity must consist.

Indeed, if we called them the most unprincipled of all parties, in the sense that rigidity or exclusive principle has been alien to their manner of thinking, there would be a measure of truth in it. It has sometimes been, unkindly, noted that they have often borrowed their leaders, or absorbed them; the puritanic Harley, the Whig Pitts, the radicals Disraeli and Chamberlain. The reason for this, surely, goes deeper than biography. Within a free society, the new urges of party begin on the left and, as they develop, impel elements of the left centre towards the right. By such constant accretions the Conservative party has been perpetually transformed from within. It has taken in the Burke and Portland Whigs, Irish Whig landowners and Liberal peers, the radicalism of Birmingham, and a considerable influence of thought returned from dominions overseas. Any such amalgamation, however indigestible at first, ends in some reshaping of ideas, and affects the balance of interests. More presumably than other parties, the Conservative cause represents many coalitions, by the very law of its growth.

More, then, consequently in all probability than others, the Conservatives should be a comprehensive cause. Even if we ignore its very wide territorial variations of type, and pass over likewise its first unorganized century of life, the elements that have gone to compose it in modern times are mixed, contrasted, even mutually hostile. Pitt and Canning, as against Castlereagh and Wellington; Wordsworth and Coleridge, as against Burke; Shaftesbury, the evangelical philanthropist or Michael Sadler, as against Newman; Peel and Disraeli; the Brontës and the Froudes; Salisbury and Chamberlain; Balfour and Randolph Churchill; Goschen, Hicks Beach, Birkenhead, and Bonar Law. In the case of any single individual, some stress of ambition, some original quality, or secondary disillusionment, may be taken into account. Even so, when we sum up the multitudinous feeling behind them, our problem remains. It is to isolate the 'principles', in agreement with which, or accepting which, they were all substantially willing to serve.

If the first may be thought rather a method or a temperament than a principle, for all that it seems a fundamental. It is a scepticism, amounting to disbelief, in any purely intellectual process as the means to explain rights and duties, or to justify political obligation. They distrust general notions such as 'the community', and would argue that the despotism of reason may cloak as much sinister interest and self-deception as any other tyranny. Burke made eloquent how he hated 'the very sound' of abstract rights, insisting that men do not act on metaphysical speculations. And even more. His teaching was that the rules of politics are but morality enlarged, and that all moral questions are mixed questions; not to be resolved by pushing some one abstract principle to its extremity which must end in force, open or concealed, but always by reference to relation and circumstance and moral effect.

And even if the prerogative of intellect were stretched to take in all our sense experience, it could not satisfy the Conservative instinct, unless it were so rarified as to become self-contradictory. Utilitarianism, Newman said, 'aimed low, but it has fulfilled its aim'. The evidence of the senses of one or two generations does not afford a criterion of right.

Political ideas do not perish, for each in turn is a facet of the truth, nor are they unlimited in number. So that even for our restricted purpose we must look to the ideological background. The two broadly contrasted notions of the state's origin, between some divine or natural order, and some system set up by man's deliberate will, both persisted in many varied forms, over the two thousand years that divide Aristotle from John Locke. The scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, and the historical revolution of the eighteenth, combined to disintegrate and transform these ancient formulas. But the Catholic order, the classic Renaissance state, new or revived concepts of law, and the reformed churches, which had made so many and such profound contributions to conservative thinking, between them bequeathed the frame within which the thought of Hooker, of the divine right school, and ultimately of Burke, were set. In turn primarily a philosophical, a legal, a Christian, and historic concept, each new orientation overlaid, without destroying, its predecessor, and after passing through the rebel sieves of Hobbes and Hume emerged as a body of thought, which claimed the warranty of history and congruity with science.

That lasting frame or, to reach a better metaphor, that solid

sediment, made its first appeal to time. The 'feathered thing', the 'winged chariot', the old man with his scythe—Time, figured under countless images by poets, is for conservatives a justifying force, an armoury, a restorer. Enough perhaps here to remember the maxim of the Oxford movement, '*Securus judicat orbis terrarum*', or Burke's claim that, 'when time is given to it, mankind as a species almost always acts right'. They deduce that in all violently destructive action there is moral evil; loss of values, extinction of the vitality of loyalties, and all 'the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes'. As John Mill said, purest of liberal thinkers; 'no one can calculate what struggles, which the cause of improvement has yet to undergo, might have been spared, if the philosophers of the eighteenth century had done anything like justice to the past'.

Political man, then, does not act in a vacuum; we are born, as they would have said in their theological phase, 'under a yoke'. Their moralists, with an ultimate reference to conscience, have depicted the collective and instinctive traditions of the race as constructing a moral province, which underpins the state, and by reference to which all state action must be judged. Hume and Bagehot, and generations of men of science demonstrated the assumptions, the hinterland as it were, which precede our civic obedience and really govern all our mechanism. The mighty laws of evolution and natural selection, of heredity and variation, which challenge the most costly improvements and ridicule human dogmas. The psychologies with which legislation cannot deal. The atavistic and subconscious powers, the enormous preponderance of custom, the animal that glares from the civilized cage. Their historical school simultaneously reached much the same conclusions; that the present fact must be explained by its becoming; that power is, to a degree on which they differ, justified by its very existence; or that 'the general stream of tendency is towards good'. They would hold that principles must be put in relation to time and circumstance. That the constitution, for example, is much more than Acts of Parliament or common law; that it embodies racial character and inherited ideals, making that restraining discipline, that element of endurance, in default of which a people are 'little better than the flies of a summer'.

Thus life, as interpreted by all these converging schools alike, is process, and ideally they would adopt the defence given by Coleridge, 'accustomed to regard all the affairs of man as a process, they never hurry and they never pause'. And if process,

then an organic growth, in which both whole and parts have their living values, and no part of which can be destroyed, or allowed to deteriorate, without affecting all its related members. It is the people in all their sub-divisions and neighbourhoods and corporate interests which constitute the community, and not *vice versa*. It is individual personality which creates the wealth of governments, and brings sap to the connected growths of interests, neighbourhoods, and voluntary groupings. As opposed, therefore, to the traditional liberal, the conservative is not by native instinct an individualist. Individual will cannot determine political obligation. We are born into a community, or rather an interlocking circle of communities; the most profound of our relationships, of husband to wife, of parent to child, of neighbourhood, are by no means wholly voluntary. While, as opposed to the socialist, the conservative would claim that the state is secondary and derived, not original or an all-embracing Leviathan. Natural, or divine, if you prefer it, as flowing direct from human needs and diversities, but to be tested and verified, not by a single intellectual principle, but through the whole content of man and his history.

And if organic, then also subject to law. If all history is not just an old almanack; unless all our garnered science is arbitrary dogma; if all our moral experience is allowed to have a meaning; then life must have its laws. 'The laws', Burke said, 'go but a little way', but he was speaking of the state's laws, whereas those now in question are of a higher order, the code of a developing society. Whether we may appeal to religion or no, and to a design of which we form a part, whether we look to Burke's 'master workman of the world', or Hooker's majestic theme of God as 'an intellectual worker', we are left always with the conception of law. Of function as the dynamic of existence; laws of political growth and disease and variation, of the fit and the unfit, of those rising in the scale of creation and those sinking. The dreams of a golden age have vanished, but not the validity of nature's great scheme, never catastrophic but yet unrelenting, transmitting to the generations yet unborn the hardwon triumphs of many ages, together with a code of penalty and reward which men disregard at their peril. Natural also in the sense that it may be instantly apprehended, and as affording a universal value. Strange, thought Wordsworth, if the scheme of things should conceal 'the excellence of moral qualities':

'Believe it not;
The primal duties shine aloft, like stars;
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
Are scattered at the feet of Man, like flowers'.

Walter Bagehot's prescription for the Macaulay type of mind, which seemed entirely incapable of sympathizing with the Cavaliers, was very short—'try a little pleasure'. And 'the happy-starred, full-blooded creature' of R. L. Stevenson, who 'shoots towards the spiritual land', has this bearing for our subject; that if a conservative philosophy has values that are worthy to survive, it can only be in so far as it can be vindicated as a philosophy of the whole. From the small cells of individual being, it would build upwards to the corporate life of mankind in masses. It would defy the compartments by which, for convenience's sake or at our whim, we tend to divide human personality, of spirit and matter, reason and will and understanding. It would make as large a place for intuition and instinct as for rationalism, for sentiment and loyalties as for appetite and abstraction. The being who is reckoned as little lower than the angels is also found to be an animal of primitive needs and lusts. His role is not solely directed by his present position in time; the state, which is to be 'a partnership in all perfection', is so just because it is a partnership between past, present, and future.

If any of this be so, a fundamental concept of conservatism would seem to follow, that its first thought is for more than a single generation. Without a doctrine of inheritance, it is meaningless. In a scheme that is all process, nothing is indefeasible, but all things are inherited; all hopes, all passions, all delights, all morals and all powers. Whatever strengthens inheritance must receive welcome in a conservative mind. It is therefore not surprising to find the emphasis which it lays on the plain channels through which inheritance must flow. It sees in property no ignoble greed but a legitimate, and indeed inevitable, sphere surrounding the moral unit of individual personality; one of 'the energies of nature' as Burke put it, and a natural piety whereby a potentially vicious appetite becomes the virtue of affection for others. It would agree broadly with Bagehot that, on all experience, property provides something like a prudential test: 'if it has been inherited, it guarantees education; if acquired, it guarantees ability'. It is as well aware as Cromwell was that liberty and property are 'both noble things, abused for the

patronizing of villainies', yet would not destroy an essential potency because it is abused.

And since it takes inheritance as the sole means of duration, and variable function as the demonstrable law of existence, conservatism would presumably set some bounds to a doctrine of equality. It would argue that an educated is of higher value to society than an uneducated opinion; that mind and character and the moral will are not brought to their highest, nor entirely lowered, within a single generation; that to stipulate a rigid equality of inheritance, or a rigid equality of reward for labour, is to sterilize the very energy by which humanity has escaped from its grosser elements. For such a word as equality it would substitute justice, which must reckon with the spiritual and potential equality of all beings, and equalize opportunity so far as positive law can do it, without levelling down the quality by which societies are raised and preserved.

Historically, as the detail of political and Cabinet components would amply prove, British conservatism had no intrinsic connection with aristocracy. Considerably less at any rate than the Whigs, and no more than logically resulted from the social outlook of every generation from Shakespeare to Wordsworth. Yet in principle, if the conclusions reached above are found valid, aristocracy in its primary sense must make part of any conservative creed, even in a world that has rejected aristocracy by birth. The rule of the best, its Hellenic and original meaning, must be the ideal of any government fitted for civilized man, and in that light the notion of a classless society is a contradiction in terms. How the best are best discoverable, here indeed is the eternal crux. All that conservative thinking would seem to claim is that some indispensable criteria—character, ability, moral standard—are inheritable, and that a lasting society will not so define its freedoms or frame its economic governance as to extinguish that tested chain of essential aristocracy.

If modern conservatism has come to democracy, it is therefore with a difference. Wholly recognizing, as its lineal Christian forbears ever did, the moral equality of every personality, it has hesitated to take that ethical right as equivalent to a political—economic claim. If it has been compelled to agree that no one social class can be trusted to protect the moral interests of all, that agreement is rather historical and utilitarian than acceptance of a principle. Bound up from its Christian origins with the conception of some 'fall', it has retained a reserve, a certain

pessimism, as to man's unaided efforts, or ideas abstracted from the diurnal course of stresses and desires. It has found not only that the high road has to be kept in constant repair, but that it leads uphill; yes, to the very end. It would probably argue that, mixed and defective creatures that we are, we can employ no other general criterion than moral result, moral in the fullest sense of the consensus reached by an unbroken development. In these it would look for the rules of happiness, and not in any 'spectacle of uniformity to gratify the schemes of visionary politicians'.

It is plain enough, as Burke's own history too much reminds us, how easily and how grossly such a body of teaching can be, and has been, misused. The appeal to time was distorted into 'the wisdom of our ancestors', which in practice became the private opinions of any village Eldon, blinded and closed by age or prejudice. Property was made to cover the unforeseen effects of some haphazard grants from an Angevin or Tudor king. The inequality of function was degraded to justify the holding, or the sale, of slaves. The freedom of moral participation was denied at its highest level, in the freedom of worship. Subordinate or conquered peoples were sacrificed to British economic interests, or refused the very canons of freedom that we professed to bring them. All these were illustrations of the phenomenon that darkens the history of all sects, all parties, and all governments; of some alleged principle driven to its extreme, without reference to justice, balance, and circumstance. All alike were a repudiation of the philosophy of the whole.

There was a fundamental of the golden age of Anglicanism, in which British conservatism was first rooted, the neglect of which may part-explain such obsession and refusals. It was the teaching of its masters, from Parker and Hooker to Sanderson or Chillingworth, that outside the minimum extent of dogma, revealed in scripture, lay the much broader field of what was 'indifferent'. If that analogy may be used, then beyond the very few broad conclusions which the moral sense, history, and science alike seem to endorse, political action remains free for the operation of prudence, of the reason that accompanies, creates, and follows a developing society. This would seem to dispose of a mass of questions which, at various times, have been exalted into conservative principles. There was a special association with the land and landed interests; a dedication to the unity of church and state; a bias in favour of protection, as the economic shield of society;

a special assertion of the causes of empire. But where to-day are the Irish union, protection, and Anglican legal supremacy? Sometimes legitimate extensions from principle, sometimes tactical positions of defence, such causes seem to fall into the category of symptoms, bias, or interests, rather than of the principles which build and endure.

There is, of course, a further point that illumines, and partly justifies, this clutching at lines of defence, or at deduction, which may be diversion, from principle. The most conservative countries in the world, the United States of America, France, or Switzerland, have established sundry checks and balances, to offset or correct the extremism of democracy; in supreme courts, fortified second chambers, referendum, and all the varia of proportional representation. In Great Britain such checks as ever existed—plural voting, a restricted suffrage, a positive veto—have one by one been removed. For good government we thus depend, far more than any other people, on constitutional convention, public opinion, and national character. That being so, it is the more natural for conservatives to lean heavily on tradition, to draw political lessons from past ages in which this country matured its genius, and made its greatness as a commonwealth.

And tradition is principle in action. It is no answer to say that the resistant force in tradition has so often proved grievously mistaken, blind to the heavy shiftings of time. There is no principle on earth which, taken in isolation, has not done enormous damage, nor any principle without two sides to its shield. Traditionalists have often enough predicted the final outcome of hostile principle. 'Church or property or colonies, or union with Ireland, or eventually monarchy,' said Wellington, 'we shall all be destroyed one after the other, by due course of law.' But the owl of this wisdom too often flies only after sunset.

Being thus traditionalists, and of a sort that cherish what is venerable, tangible, and nearest home, conservatives have been influenced less than other parties by cosmopolitan ideas. If this is reckoned insularity, their retort would make it a morality also. That it is moral to stand fast by a system of law which has given 'our ancient, sober, vital liberties', as Strafford called them, to unnumbered millions. Moral to repent our shortcomings, but moral also to count our blessings, and to make our claim for good accomplished, for slavery and famine obliterated; for continents, once soaked in war, by us redeemed for peace.

THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY

Moral to be thankful for our benefactors, for all who have led and fought and reconciled.

If it were possible to represent conservatism as having a last unrealized ideal, unity could seem to be its core; the ideal professed by all the parties of civilized men, and so often mistaken or betrayed. Such unity could not proceed from a forced similarity untrue to nature, still less from a concentrated centralism that extinguishes spontaneous growth. It is, rather, a harmony of variations and opposites, held in equilibrium by relation to one end. Such unity, presupposing an immanent impulse to freedom, suffers no distinction between the morals of the hearth and the morals of the state. What is butchery, or confiscation, in the one does not change its character by changing the venue. The manifestations of such unity, from whatever spiritual sources ultimately derived, are recognizable by all men: imprinted by intuition or conscience, ratified by experience, yet perishing if not transmitted by inheritance. Given the difference of idiom and their immediate purpose, there is still substance in words that Clarendon's sons wrote in their foreword to his 'History'; 'the true interest of the Kingdom is the plainest thing in the world; it is what everybody in England finds and feels, and knows to be right, and they are not long a finding it neither'.

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY AND THE CHANGING CLASS STRUCTURE

By ANGUS MAUDE, M.P.*

IT is perhaps easier for a Tory than for a socialist to study analytically the class structure of Britain and to perceive what is happening to it. The socialist is so convinced that the class structure is "wrong", and is so anxious to alter it, that he is apt to adduce the abuses of yesterday to justify the reforms of tomorrow.

No doubt there are plenty of members of the Conservative Party who believe that any system so violently attacked by socialists must be good and ought to be preserved unchanged; but for the most part conservatives are concerned neither to alter nor to preserve the existing class structure. To them it is neither "right" nor "wrong", but simply the reflection of a variety of social and economic factors. It is changing all the time, reflecting changes in social and economic policy. To seek directly to alter the class structure is like setting out to cure a symptom rather than the disease. To take an obvious example, no conservative would ever frame a policy for education with a view to deliberately changing the class structure, although changes in educational policy clearly bring social changes in their wake.

There are plenty of definitions of social class. Here is the most satisfactory that I have found: "A social class is a group of persons conscious of certain common traits and of certain common ways of behaviour which distinguish them from members of other social classes with other traits and other ways of behaviour." The writer adds that "to be a full member of a social class, an individual must both feel himself to be so and must be felt by others to be so". Of course this definition pictures the situation at a given moment of time, whereas there is in fact a continuous movement into and out of each class; there will always be individuals and families who are in process of establishing themselves at a new level. It also follows from this definition that a particular social class is a fairly narrow division of the

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population. To divide society into an upper, middle, and working class would be to make nonsense of the idea of community of traits and ways of behaviour. The Harley-street surgeon, the yeoman farmer and the small shopkeeper may all be middle class, but their ways of behaviour differ very widely—and the difference is greater than can be accounted for simply by the differences in their incomes.

The variation is less wide among manual workers, although there are certainly marked differences between what American sociologists call the "folk ways" of coal-miners, farm labourers and fishermen. Nevertheless, it is possible to speak of a "working class", whereas Cobbett was already referring to the "middle classes" in 1822. For all practical purposes, we can distinguish an "upper middle" and a "lower middle" class, with a substantial body of people in between who are not easy to fit neatly into either. The so-called "upper class" has almost disappeared; there are still the vestiges of an old landed aristocracy, but most of those who are popularly regarded as "upper class" (for no better reason than that they tend to spend money conspicuously on inessentials) belong in truth to the middle classes.

Indeed, the emergence of a section of the middle classes into "Society", enjoying the pleasures of the old upper class without—in many cases—undertaking any of their more serious responsibilities, is one of the most notable features of the last sixty years. It is the result of the growth of joint stock capitalism, combined with a number of other factors such as the modern public school system and the development of cheap and rapid transport.

By 1939 the social structure had already changed perceptibly during the twentieth century. Except in those industries and areas in which mass unemployment had taken its toll, the living standards of manual workers had steadily risen. Improved social services and redistributive taxation were having their effect. The lower middle class had been substantially swollen by the increasing number of small shopkeepers and the great expansion in the numbers of clerical and semi-professional workers. In particular, large numbers of young women from the working class were acquiring lower middle class characteristics as they passed from the new secondary schools, which developed after the Education Act of 1902, into nursing, school-teaching and secretarial or clerical jobs. The cheap semi-detached house and the bungalow were the new monuments to lower middle class aspirations.

The war continued the process. The real incomes of civilian

manual workers rose sharply, although of course shortages of consumer goods produced a highly artificial pattern of spending. At the same time the growth of the bureaucracy further increased the number of middle-class jobs. Finally, the great expansion of the social services between 1944 and 1948 created a steadily widening field of professional employment under the auspices of public authorities, many of the recruits to which came from working-class homes. At the same time, the standards of local authority housing became more and more nearly equivalent to pre-war middle-class standards. In the last seventy years advertising and display techniques, mass production, large shops, and finally the cinema have made an increasingly wide range of luxuries and semi-luxuries first visible, then available, to more and more people. This has of course increased the pressure for a more equal distribution of incomes.

The total effect of all these things has been not only to expand the size of the middle classes, but to instil what might be called middle-class aspirations into an increasing number of artisans and their families. It is not therefore surprising that many more people are now beginning to *feel* middle class than would be regarded as such by most people applying all the conventional tests. In *The English Middle Classes*, which was published in 1949, Mr. Roy Lewis and I estimated that the middle classes included between one-third and three-eighths of the population of Great Britain; the sample tables from the 1951 Census suggest that we may have over-estimated the proportion. Yet when the Gallup Poll asked in 1952, "If you had to say what social class you belong to, which would it be?", no less than 49 per cent. of the sample claimed to be middle class, compared with only 46 per cent. who thought they belonged to the "working class".

This is obviously an important trend. If people *want* to be middle class, and begin to *feel* middle class, they or their families are likely to *become* middle class if they stick at it. If the pattern of income distribution remains roughly as it is at present, the trend will continue. Present policies for housing and education may well intensify it. We must not, of course, imagine that the trend is the same in all parts of Great Britain; in fact, there are very wide differences, in different parts of the country, not only between social patterns but between the ways in which the social structure is changing. But, while these things are more obvious in the suburbs and new housing estates round the great cities, something of the sort is happening everywhere—even in the

deep countryside. It may in time seriously weaken that working-class solidarity which has for long been so great an electoral asset to the Labour Party.

Some of the many economic and social changes which have produced this remodelling of the class structure have brought benefits too obvious to need repetition. Others, to the Tory, appear more dangerous in their implications. There is, for example, the effect on the birth-rate. It is of the utmost importance that a population which is ageing so rapidly should be rejuvenated, yet the behaviour of the middle classes between 1870 and 1939 should have made it clear that a preoccupation with material standards of living and a competitive social atmosphere do not make for large families. There is no doubt that familiarity with contraceptive techniques is spreading in the working class, and the greater the approximation to the lower middle class mean the larger will be the proportion of families with no more than two children.

There is also the effect of the redistribution of incomes upon personal saving. High taxation has greatly reduced the savings of individuals at a time when they are sorely needed, while those who have had their real incomes most increased are not given to saving. Despite the undoubtedly large volume of working-class saving before the war, the saving habit has always been more pronounced in the middle classes. I do not think too tragic a view should be taken of the present situation. It may well be that for a time company savings must be stimulated to bear the main burden of investment, but I am convinced that the last eight years have been no true guide to the probable saving habits of the better paid artisans during a prolonged period of high wages and full employment. As houses, motor cars, and other possessions worth saving for become increasingly available, and as the novelty of being able to afford consumer luxuries begins to wear off, it seems probable that lower middle-class habits of thrift will become more widespread.

The effects of recent developments on the professions have also caused some disquiet. The creation of the welfare state and the complication of administration in the last ten years have greatly increased the amount of work to be done by professional people. As a result, not only are the best practitioners in all professions overworked, but the demand for numbers is showing signs of diluting quality. This could have unfortunate effects in the future, and meanwhile the professional upper middle classes are finding

it increasingly difficult to sustain their role as the cultural inheritors of the old upper class.

Now what has all this meant in political terms? Obviously this century has seen a profound change. Before the 1914 war, there were in Britain an upper class which was almost entirely conservative; the middle classes no longer overwhelmingly liberal, since the increasing radicalism of the Liberal Party had driven large numbers over to the Tories; and a working class predominantly left-wing, but still divided politically between three parties. At the end of the second world war in 1945, the working class was perhaps little more left-wing than before; the election results show clearly that a great many working class people must have voted conservative. But those working-class people who were left-wing in their views had clearly decided (except on the Celtic fringes) that their interests would be better served by labour than by the liberals. The remnants of the upper class remained loyal to conservatism, but the middle classes were divided. Much of the surviving support for liberalism came from elderly middle-class people, and the majority of the middle classes continued, with varying degrees of conviction, to support the Conservative Party. But for the first time, in 1945, we saw the spectacle of a substantial minority of the middle classes voting socialist. There were almost as many reasons for this as there were different types of converts. There was the feeling that it was "time for a change"; a certain uneasiness among the lower middle classes at leaving so formidable a personality as Churchill in charge in peace-time, when there was someone so quiet and reassuring as Attlee to take over (after all, had he not had five years as Churchill's deputy in which to learn the ropes?); a strong—and traditionally middle-class—desire for an accelerated programme of social reform; and, finally, a pronounced swing towards Fabian socialism among the intellectuals, who had discovered the magic potentialities of planning and believed that the retention of the controls and bureaucratic machinery of wartime would enable them to organize the welfare of the masses.

The result of the 1945 election was as precarious and unnatural as those of 1900, 1906, and 1931. The elections of 1950 and 1951 established something like a new norm. The middle classes swung back to conservatism, but it remained obvious that there was with us—perhaps for ever—a substantial "floating vote" on which the results of all elections would now depend. The

intellectuals had tired of planning, and became progressively more evasive when asked about their politics; many of them were heard to say vaguely, "Well, I suppose I'm a liberal, really"—but most of them voted Tory in 1951. The lower middle classes had begun to think more kindly of Mr. Churchill.

What has been the effect of all this on the Conservative Party itself? In many ways it underwent a silent revolution between 1945 and 1950, and it emerged with an immensely improved organization and a rejuvenated body of Members in the House of Commons. The day of the rich man who could persuade the selection committee of a constituency Conservative Association that the length of his purse would amply compensate them for any shortcomings in his intelligence or industry was over. At the 1950 election there were returned about 100 conservative M.P.s who had never before been in Parliament; their average age was remarkably low, and their average ability high enough to astonish and depress the Labour Party. Most of them came from the professions or from business, some of them being former elementary schoolboys who had built up businesses of their own; a considerable number had been trained in local government, so that for the first time conservative back-benchers were able to debate local government questions on equal terms with the socialists. None of these recruits to the Tories had paid a penny of their election expenses, nor were they allowed to contribute more than a small sum to their constituency associations. The 1951 vintage is similar.

This has not produced, on the conservative benches in the House of Commons, anything like a complete cross-section of British society, although it has certainly ended the period during which the party was largely the mouthpiece of the interests of big business. Although many conservative back-benchers are of working-class origin, these men could not now be described as anything but middle class. It is common form at every party conference for someone to move a resolution calling on constituency Conservative Associations to adopt working-class trade union candidates in areas where they may hope to win seats. There is nothing whatever to stop the local committees doing it, for there are no longer any financial disadvantages involved. Nevertheless, they do not in fact do it, even in constituencies where there is a majority of working-class people on the committees. The reasons are deep and somewhat mysterious. The selection committees do not appear to be imbued with a "ruling-

class" *mystique*; more probably they are afraid that a working-class M.P., lacking the Labour-T.U.C. ticket, will be an object of resentment among his fellows. It is, I think, also felt that entry into Parliament very soon makes a working-class man middle class, so that the benefits of such a choice do not long endure: the Labour Party has shown that there is something in this view, especially as the sons of trade union M.P.s are now entering the House as university-trained intellectuals. In any case, it is a matter in which the constituency associations have complete freedom of choice; if they like things the way they are, that is the end of it.

Still less, of course, is the present government representative of the Conservative Party as a whole. The aristocratic upper class represents less than 1 per cent. of the nation, yet very nearly half of all ministers of Cabinet rank are drawn from this class. This was not, I think, the case in the governments of Baldwin and Chamberlain, nor is it likely to be so in the future. The Conservative Party in the Commons is, of course, overwhelmingly middle class.

For the last twenty years the Conservative Party has always proclaimed that it seeks to govern the country in the interests of the whole nation, and it is probably nearer to doing it now than ever before. Clearly it cannot escape the responsibility of looking after such interests of its middle-class supporters as it believes to be vital to the nation. This is not, of course, the same thing as yielding to the demands of its supporters however unreasonable they may be. There are, for example, limits to the degree of protection which ought to be extended to the small shopkeeper, where the competition which he has to meet is fair and efficient. Similarly, many Tories might feel inclined to wonder whether the best interests of the farming community are necessarily served by yielding so frequently to the views of the National Farmers' Union—although the present government certainly goes no further in this respect than did its predecessor.

It is more often asked, however, whether the present government is being as helpful as it might to small industrial businesses. In *The Right Road for Britain*, the party leaders said, "In industry and agriculture we shall encourage the small enterprise which depends directly on individual character and skill." This is indeed a policy to which conservatives are deeply committed, not only for philosophical reasons but because they believe it to be essential to Britain's industrial survival in present conditions. But

the new credit policy is pressing hardest on just these businesses. The established firm and the large enterprises have enough resources to survive the squeeze; many men who set up small manufacturing businesses after the war on overdrafts are now being pressed very hard by the banks—just at the time when more plentiful raw materials offer them the chance to expand their share of the market. No Tory doubts that the tighter control of credit was necessary, but some of the government's supporters are getting a little restive at what seems to them a deliberate favouring of big business at the expense of the small man. Similarly the government is being pressed to do something which will mitigate the effect of high taxation and death duties on professional partnerships, for Tories cannot happily watch the resulting trend towards salaried and public employment in the free professions.

Class conflicts arise more obviously in the field of educational policy than anywhere else. It is almost an article of faith with socialists that the Public Schools should be either abolished or incorporated in the publicly provided system of education in such a way as to ensure entry to them by "merit" or competitive examination rather than that they should be virtually restricted to pupils whose parents can afford to pay high fees. There is also increasing pressure in the Labour Party to secure "parity of esteem" in publicly provided secondary education by merging grammar, technical and secondary modern schools into "comprehensive" schools. Both these propositions are firmly opposed by conservatives.

I do not propose to enter here into the whole conflict over the so-called "privileged" systems of education, although I believe that the commonly advanced socialist arguments against the Public Schools are based on two mutually exclusive arguments. I readily admit, however, that each argument by itself needs answering. Broadly, the Tory view is based on the proposition that, so long as the clever child of poor parents is given a free place in a school which will develop his aptitudes to the full, the parent who is prepared to make sacrifices to provide his child with better-than-average schooling has as much right to spend his money on that as on a better television set. However, something more than a philosophical defence of the Public Schools may well be demanded of conservative governments as fees get progressively higher and the ability of parents to meet them from capital diminishes. It is already being suggested that parents who

pay school fees should be given special income-tax rebates, and that there should be a higher proportion of fee-paying places in direct-grant grammar schools. These questions are highly controversial.

What will be the long-term effect of twentieth-century changes in the class structure on conservative electoral prospects? Superficially, it might seem that an expanding lower middle class, with the growth of lower middle-class ways of life among the working class, would be likely to produce a more widespread predisposition towards conservatism. This hope may be falsified, but it is too early to be sure. For some years a change has been coming over a number of electoral constituencies. The well-known electoral bias against the Labour Party, which makes it possible for the conservatives to win a substantial majority of seats in the Commons without a majority of votes over the Labour Party in the country as a whole, seems to be in process of disappearing. It arises, of course, from the fact that the Labour Party piles up at each election a large number of "wasted" votes in huge majorities in over-populated industrial areas. But every new town and every large housing estate which is built draws off some of those votes into a new area; and, since the only sites available are in open country, the new area is nearly always in a conservative-held constituency. On the face of it, this should result in socialist gains at future elections, but so far it has not done so. Labour agents report that the emigrés are more difficult to get to the polls from their new homes, and there is no doubt that the new estates do not foster that intense Labour Party loyalty which flourishes in the industrial slum. We shall have to wait some time, and suffer many changes at the hands of the Boundary Commission, before we know for certain how it is all working out.

Meanwhile, it is clear that the floating vote is now the target for both sides in every election. If the Labour Party goes markedly to the left in opposition, the defences of the enlarged lower middle class will go up against it. These electors are likely to take an increasingly empirical view of politics in the future: and that will suit the Tories at least as well as their opponents.

THE ECONOMIC POLICY OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

By ROBERT BOOTHBY, M.P.*

THERE is a revealing sentence at the beginning of Mr. Hugh Gaitskell's article in the *Political Quarterly* for January-March, 1952, on The Economic Aims of the Labour Party. "For the last 50 years at least," he writes, "socialist thought here has been for the most part practical and positive, concentrating on the two questions, 'What do we want?' and 'How do we get it?'" He goes on to deal with the problems of full employment and social equality rather than those of productivity and the balance of payments not because they are more important—on his own admission the balance of payments has come to dominate the whole economic situation—but because these subjects "happen to be the more distinctively socialist of the four."

I propose to adopt a precisely contrary course for one simple reason handsomely admitted by Mr. Gaitskell, namely that without a solution of the problems of the balance of payments and of productivity no other economic aim can be achieved.

The basic conception of the classical school of economists was that there are inherent equilibrating tendencies in international trade; and that an imbalance could automatically be cured by the play of free market forces under the rules prescribed by the mechanism of the gold standard. In short, international trade was pictured as a process of mutual adjustment through internal response to external change. This theory held validity during the comparatively brief period when the economic development of the world was directed by London, with strong support from the industrialized countries of western Europe. International trade was, on the whole, complementary. The territorial division of labour and capital was a reality. Specialization in production for world markets was widespread. In the words of Professor John H. Williams, western Europe created the modern world and was in turn remade by it.

This was too good to last. The rising productivity of the

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"underdeveloped" countries of the world, the growing industrial potential of Germany and Japan, above all the emergence of the United States as the dominant world economic power, shifted international trade from a complementary to a competitive basis; and in the ensuing struggle for markets the established export "lines" found themselves increasingly shut out from the national economies which they had created. Between 1870 and 1913 world production of manufactures increased fourfold, and between 1913 and 1939 it doubled; but the portion of manufactures entering into international trade decreased from one-third in 1870, to one-fifth in 1913, and to one-tenth in 1938. My conclusion therefore is that no underlying tendency towards an equilibrium in international trade exists; that the conditions which produced the balance of the latter half of the nineteenth century constituted a temporary phenomenon which cannot be repeated; and that the prevailing economic disequilibrium in the free world is due to no disobedience of rules for a game that is no longer being played, but to fundamental processes of change which have been going on for more than half a century.

The only modern statesman of note who perceived this quite clearly was Joseph Chamberlain. The imperial solution for the basic world economic problem which he envisaged and strove to realize might well have succeeded in the opening decade of the present century; and altered the course of history. It might also have prevented the first world war. For that was caused not only by the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was also caused by the German challenge to British sea power, which was a symptom of the intensified struggle for world markets. Chamberlain failed because of the infiltration of the Tory Party by Whig doctrines which reduced it to paralysis; and because the accumulated wealth of Britain prevented all but a few men of exceptional capacity and vision from even seeing the problem.

Out of power since 1906 the Conservative Party was returned in the autumn of 1922 with a clear majority. Baldwin, who succeeded Bonar Law shortly afterwards, was quick to grasp the fact that the problem of massive unemployment could never be solved without a radical revision of the classical economic theories which had held almost undisputed sway in Britain since the repeal of the corn laws. He appealed to the country, somewhat precipitately, on the issue of protection; but not, alas, on the full policy of imperial preference. The Tories were defeated,

and immediately jettisoned their economic policy. They were returned to power the following year on a liberal programme which precluded the effective protection of the home market, the development of agriculture, and any extension of the preferential system. This led inevitably to a return to the gold standard at the pre-war parity of exchange, and with it the restoration of the mercantile society. Economic power was confided to the Governor of the Bank of England. There followed the years of deflation which brought ruin to our basic industries, crippled our export trade, drove hundreds of skilled workers from the factories and thousands of agricultural workers from the land, increased the number of unemployed by over a million, and doubled the real burden of the national debt. "Did I not say", wrote Milner, "that the only thing which terrified me in looking ahead was the possibility of a restriction of credit? I always knew this mad nonsense would come. But I hoped the protests of the business community would check it before it went too far. . . . My difficulty about all these questions is that I am not supposed to be an authority about them, nor do I claim to be an expert, except in so far as common sense and long experience may make one. But I am up against theories strongly entrenched in the Treasury, the Bank of England, and certainly the greater part of the banking world; and supported by tons of literature from the abstract school of political economists who have held this country in their baneful grip for nearly a century."

The collapse of multilateralism and the gold standard in 1931 forced the British Government to protect the home market, to extend the preferential system, and to free the pound. This brought immediate relief, but it proved to be no more than a brief interruption of the general process of economic disintegration. By 1938 we were in the throes of a further deflation, and the financial conduct of the second world war was rendered possible only by the combination of lend-lease with rigid physical controls.

Then came Bretton Woods—in retrospect the worst international economic agreement that has ever been negotiated. It was designed, after a transition period, to restore international equilibrium, multilateral trade, and general currency convertibility. The transition period is over. And what has the annual report of the International Monetary Fund got to say? "The attainment of a stable international equilibrium . . . still eludes

large parts of the world, and there has been little secure or sustained progress towards the Fund objectives of unimpeded multilateral trade and the general convertibility of currencies." These are sad words, and the reason for them is not far to seek. The International Monetary Fund has been driven into the position of an impotent spectator of events by the failure of the Bretton Woods Agreement to provide adequate currency reserves, without which there can be no sustained expansion of world trade. Its offshoot, the American loan to Britain, foundered within a year; and since then, despite Marshall Aid, the remainder of the free world has been in increasing economic bondage to the United States, due to the inability of almost every country outside the dollar area to pay for the American goods it requires. The truth is that those who negotiated the Bretton Woods Agreement had no conception of the magnitude of the problem which confronted them, or of the kind of world we now live in. Keynes himself was miles off the rails. He predicted that the dollar gap would be closed by the United States becoming a "high cost high living country." In fact the productivity of the United States has far outstripped that of any other country.

The last word is surely with M. René Leon, who wrote at the time of the Bretton Woods Conference: "Under conditions of extreme readjustment, social, political and economic, can expansion of trade and also balance be achieved on the basis of fixed exchanges? My answer is, No. . . . Fixed exchanges are the conduits through which economic ills will flow and spread across the national boundaries. They will shackle the weak economies to the strong, and debilitate the strong without strengthening the weak. . . . The settlement of international balances by goods and services, which fluctuating exchanges always stimulate, will make for infinitely more employment and general well-being than will settlement by gold. Nor is the free convertibility of currencies, in times of great readjustment, the boon to mankind that some believe; for the 'integrity' of the unit of currency lies in its purchasing power—not its gold equivalence. If, *until we achieve some measure of quietude*, foreign trade is conducted on the basis of free exchanges and inconvertible currencies, exports will create more bank credits which can only be used to buy goods and services. This will create employment and two-way trade. But if, before we are ready, foreign commerce is conducted on the basis of fixed exchanges and gold settlement of balances, strong nations will soon gut

the weaker of their gold, to no good purpose for either."

The Conservatives were out of power when the Bretton Woods Agreement and the American Loan were flung at the House of Commons, and we were told to accept or reject them within 48 hours. Their conduct on that occasion was not heroic; but they cannot be saddled with any direct responsibility, and about seventy of them voted against the loan. They now face the basic problem of the dollar gap which, despite Marshall Aid, is as intractable as ever. The reasons for this are not obscure. The United States continues to tower over the entire economy of the free world. It produces more than 40 per cent. of the world's manufactures, but its imports have fallen from 10 per cent. to less than 5 per cent. of its national income. The size of its home market, its diversified resources, its immense productivity, its rapid technological progress, its comparative self sufficiency, combine to tug *against* equilibrium in world trade. Everyone outside the dollar area wants to buy American goods, and no one can pay for them with exports. As a result the gold and dollar reserves of the free world outside the dollar area are wholly inadequate (1) for the purpose of restoring confidence, and (2) for the purpose of expanding and balancing world trade.

As I see it, there are only two ways out. The first is to deflate the non-dollar world to the point at which an annual dollar gap of not less than five billion would be closed. Such a policy would involve a volume of unemployment, and an amount of hardship and suffering, which would be quite unendurable. The second is to build out of the sterling area and western Europe an economic unit which is able to cope on more nearly equal terms with the United States: and ultimately to match its dollar expenditure with dollar earnings. This involves the abandonment of "non-discrimination"; and the conscious planning, on an international scale, of investment, production, and trade. The so-called "Strasbourg Plan" sign-posts the road. It recommends the increased production of raw materials outside the dollar area, and the adoption to this end of a policy of deliberate economic expansion; the utilization of the resources of all the member states of the Council of Europe in developing overseas territories; the co-ordination of investment projects; and the creation of openings in the European countries for overseas products. It concludes by inviting the governments concerned to initiate negotiations for the establishment of a European Investment Bank; the conclusion of long-term contracts and international

agreements on basic products; and the introduction of a preferential system, on a reciprocal basis, between the Commonwealth and its dependent territories on the one hand, and western Europe and its dependent territories on the other. Thus the capital resources of western Europe would be used for the expansion of production and reciprocal trade throughout the non-dollar world.

These are revolutionary proposals, but they are not too revolutionary for the age in which we live. What is the alternative? The creation of a powerful industrial unit on the continent of Europe, under the domination and direction of Germany, whose capital resources would be devoted to a renewed struggle for world markets from which Britain could hardly expect to emerge unscathed, accompanied by a further attempt to return to the uncontrolled international economy of the nineteenth century which would bring another, perhaps fatal, crisis to the free world as a whole.

If the foregoing analysis be accepted as correct, the results of the Commonwealth Economic Conference of January, 1953 can only be regarded as disappointing. An extension of the preferential system was rejected, and so was the creation of any effective centralized machinery for co-ordinating the economic policies of the sterling area. It is only a temporary set-back. If a policy is right for the times, in the long run it will prevail. Moreover it is manifestly impossible for Great Britain and the Colonial Empire to finance, indefinitely, the dollar deficits of the Dominions, as they have been doing for the past six years. It follows that attempts by the United Kingdom to overcome its dollar deficit will be of little avail in the future, as in the past, unless they are supported by similar and co-ordinated action in the rest of the sterling area; and that, if the Commonwealth Governments refuse to play, Britain will be driven into closer economic union with the Colonial Empire and with western Europe.

In this grave matter of the dollar gap the Tory Party should stick to its policies and its guns; and derive encouragement from the considered opinion of Professor John H. Williams of Harvard University that the solution of the problem seems to lie in the development of larger trading units, and that the time has clearly passed when the sterling area can be expected to survive on such an informal and almost organizationless basis as in the past.*

* Stamp Memorial Lecture, 1952.

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The truth is that there can be no hope of establishing a good relationship between the sterling and dollar areas until an effective sterling area organization has been achieved.

We have been dealing with international problems upon the solution of which our economic survival as a nation depends. On the domestic front one clamant task stares us in the face. It is to increase, at all costs, the productivity of this island. I am glad that Mr. Gaitskell agrees. He adds full employment and social justice as major economic aims. I do not dissent. The differences between the Conservative and Labour Parties in this field are primarily those of emphasis; and it is only when he defines social justice as a classless society that I boggle, because I can imagine nothing gloomier.

The Conservative Party has accepted the welfare state, of which it was in some measure the architect, and also the need for rearmament on a very big scale. This means, and I regret to say it, that any substantial reduction of taxation in the immediate future is ruled out. The fact remains that industry at the present time is starved of capital, and that no individual in this country can save out of earnings. In the United States the rate of new capital investment per head of population is ten times as much as it is in Great Britain; and it cannot seriously be disputed that this is primarily responsible for the incomparably higher American productivity. Moreover there can be little doubt that a tax burden above a certain level produces an inflationary effect by pushing up wages and other costs to the point of tolerance, and by removing incentives to work and save.

Strict economy on the part of government is essential; but the only real avenue of escape lies along the road of a rapid increase in the national income, and therefore in taxable capacity. To increase exports by repressing industrial development at home is a policy of desperation. To shape economic policy with the object of maintaining the existing balance between the production of capital and consumer goods is even worse, because it is the recipe for economic stagnation. If the preservation of the existing structure of British industry and of the jobs people are already doing becomes the primary objective of Treasury policy, we shall be sunk.

The truth is that the British economy is far too rigid. Internal competition is conspicuous by its absence, restrictive practices abound, and labour mobility is practically non-existent. The remedy lies in a gradual restoration of the price mechanism, the

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encouragement of enterprise, the discouragement of inessential industries, and some relief of the burden of company taxation. I put the abolition of the excess profits levy high on the list of "recovery" measures, not because of the aggregate amount collected in the form of revenue, but because of its tremendous psychological effect in frustrating new enterprise. It is a specific tax upon improvement. We want more investment in productive capital; and, therefore, an increase in the savings of industry. We want—in the words of the *Economist*—a release of energy and initiative not in the effervescence of inflation but in the tension of industrial readjustment. Above all, we want an increased output of food, coal, steel and engineering products. Under existing conditions we are unlikely to get any of those things. I believe we require a Ministry of Production to stimulate enterprise where it is most needed: to allocate raw materials which are in short supply not in accordance with pre-war standards and past records, but in the national interest; to encourage managerial efficiency; and to facilitate the changes in our industrial structure which have simply got to be made. Such a ministry would not be redundant, for it would take over the Ministry of Materials, and also many of the anomalous functions at present discharged by other departments, including the Board of Trade, which could then concentrate on their real jobs.

To sum up, I believe, as against Mr. Gaitskell, that the problems of the balance of payments and of productivity are more important than those of full employment and social justice because, unless and until they are solved, we cannot hope to establish on sound foundations the kind of society or the standard of living that either he or I would like to achieve.

CONSERVATIVES AND SOCIAL SERVICES

By J. ENOCH POWELL, M.P.*

DEFINE, define! Whatever anyone else means by a social service, I mean this: the provision by the community for an individual or a family of a service for which he or it could not otherwise pay. Every word of this is necessary to distinguish a social service from a public utility on the one hand and a national service on the other hand. For example, the community provides water and transport to the individual and the family, but it provides them (nearly always) without a subsidy: I pay my water rate and I buy my ticket. Contrariwise, none of us would be able to provide for the defence of himself or his family with a jet bomber or a battleship; but the community provides defence for the community as a whole and not the individuals comprised in it.

The only point left vague is how far a "service" can be considered to include a payment or rebate in terms of money. I enjoy an income tax allowance for wife and dependants: presumably this is not a social service. If I received a grant from the National Assistance Board to buy bedding and keep my family when destitute of other means, this would be a social service. But how about the 8/- a week which I draw for my second child as a family allowance?—a borderline case undoubtedly. The principle, however, remains that of a subsidized personal service. It is the attitude of "Conservatives" to this element in our social organization about which I am to write. But if the definition of a social service could be briefly despatched, the definition of "Conservatives" is not so easy—though just as necessary.

Where do they start, with the Tamworth Manifesto or the "Right Road for Britain"? Do they include the conservative voter and canvasser of the last general election, the local tradesman returned as a conservative councillor to his town hall, or only the front bencher in the House of Commons, or are they

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to be just a cover name for the writer's own opinions? These questions are far from idle, and least of all in relation to the social services. If the subject were Ulster or national defence or nationalization, little harm might come from not answering them. Not so here. By appropriate selections from Disraeli's *Sybil*, the speeches of the Earl of Shaftesbury, and pronouncements of Mr. Neville Chamberlain and Mr. R. A. Butler, it would be possible to build up a fairly plausible and consistent description of the attitude of "Conservatives" to the social services. But would it be a true description of the attitude of the rank and file of the Conservative Party in 1846 or 1906 or 1953? I doubt it, and I must endeavour to resolve that doubt at the outset.

The fact must be recognized that a political party, especially in a two-party state, is immensely embracing and can include within its limits diametrically opposite opinions on almost all subjects except the one or two which happen to be the immediate ground of party conflict at the particular time. Yet, though so protean, it is nevertheless one kind of human society, however nebulous and loosely attached. As such it has a common memory, and the attitude which it is liable to take up towards alternatives presented to it in the present is influenced by a recollection, often partial and unhistorical, of the part which it played in a past event. Every political party has its Runnymede, its Agincourt and its Trafalgar.

Perhaps therefore the least misleading way to characterize the attitude of a party to a subject like the social services is to describe how it behaved at various critical points in history—on the presumption that, deliberately or unconsciously, it will reproduce that behaviour in its present and future attitudes. Even so, the scope for misrepresentation is enormous, both in the selection of the historic points and in the attempt to sketch briefly but accurately the main types of opinion represented in a great party at a particular time. It would be hard enough to give a balanced statement of public opinion in regard to the Iron and Steel Bill, 1953, with all the resources and insight of contemporaries. How much more so to describe what the British nation felt about the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834!

For 1834 must be the first of those historic turning points to be considered. Rightly or wrongly, I am going to pick three others: the Education Act of 1902, the National Insurance Act of 1911, and the "Welfare State" legislation of 1946. Now why?

All, or nearly all, those personal needs which are met today by the social services were embraced under the old Poor Law, by which I mean the parochial Poor Law of the 17th and 18th centuries. Housing, health, education, security—in a rudimentary form the parish overseer provided them all, and at some periods and in some parishes, with a completeness which only the disparity from modern conditions makes it hard to recognize. The attempt of the 1834 Poor Law to eliminate outdoor relief and to apply the workhouse test was a sharp reaction; the proliferation of what we should now call social services *within* the old Poor Law was brought to an end. They were to grow up again *outside* it. It was as though we were suddenly to substitute the National Assistance Board for the social service ministries. The behaviour of the Conservative Party (as it then almost was) in the revolution of 1834 cannot but be significant.

One social service, however, had existed largely outside the Poor Law since the 16th century. This was education. Consequently its development in the 19th century did not, like the other social services, have to await the break-down of the Poor Law structure of 1834. Of the three 'decisive battles' on education, 1870, 1902 and 1944, the middle one provides the most convenient standpoint for surveying the conservative attitude to it in the 19th century and after.

What is called the break-up of the Poor Law, which reached completion in 1948, was brought about by the action of two solvents: the principle of insurance and the separating out of the different social services. The introduction of national insurance in 1911 is typical of the former; the most striking instance of the latter is the way in which the public treatment of sickness progressively detached itself from the Poor Law institutions until it took the form of the National Health Service in the Act of 1946.

Thus the selection of the dates 1834, 1902, 1911 and 1946 may hope at least to avoid the charge of arbitrariness.

On 21st July, 1834, in supporting the Poor Law Amendment Bill in the House of Lords, the Duke of Wellington, as leader of the Tory opposition, observed: "The present remedy for the evils of the existing laws is unquestionably the best that has ever been devised." Without necessarily subscribing to the moral and economic theories underlying the famous report of the Poor Law Commissioners, the landowners of the Tory Party welcomed a measure which promised to reduce poor rates and stop rick-burning; and anyhow, after their beating in 1831-2, the

Poor Law was not the sort of ground on which they were prepared to stand and fight. They were rather in the mood and situation of the Conservative Party in 1946.

The bill which His Grace thus welcomed had been introduced in a long and eloquent speech by the Lord Chancellor, Brougham. It had included this (to us) significant passage: "What marvel is it to find county justices holding that the poor man has a right to be made comfortable in his own dwelling, when Mr. Pitt introduced a bill for legalizing the allowance system and for sanctioning the principle that every poor man has such a right and to be furnished with a cow or a pig or some other animal yielding profit, to be provided in proportion to the number of his children?" The antipathy which the reformers of 1834 felt towards the comprehensive character of outdoor relief under the old Poor Law is strikingly conveyed in these words. Equally unmistakable is the kinship between the social services of modern England and that earlier attitude dismissed so contemptuously by Lord Brougham as ignorant and outmoded.

Though the Duke of Wellington was speaking for his party, he was not speaking for all of it. A few days earlier the duke had received a visit from a Yorkshire gentleman, not so unknown now as then, by the name of Richard Ostler, the Tory hero of the early Factory Acts. Ostler was shocked that the duke intended to support the bill; but it was some compensation that the Marquis of Salisbury promised to vote against it, and that old die-hard Lord Eldon, though "it is sure to pass; for nowadays they will pass anything," confirmed him in his opposition. *The Times*, which in those days had the courage to be partisan, declared war on the new Act. There were 50 votes against it in the Commons and 13 in the Lords.

The best statement of the objections of this mainly, but by no means entirely, Tory minority, was given in a speech by Benjamin Disraeli on 8th February, 1841, when the appointment of the Poor Law Commission came up for renewal. Once again Sir Robert Peel and the official conservatives were with the Whig Government. Once again there was a minority of 54, not counting the two tellers, one of whom was Disraeli. "They have destroyed the parochial constitution of England for a mere sordid consideration and they are placed in the miserable condition of not having attained their object. . . . To suppose for a moment that in a highly civilized country the poor population can be controlled and managed by shutting them up in

prisons, is to suppose that which is contrary to every principle of humane society. It is impossible to immure a class of people in a single building without adopting a system of discipline which is attended by every circumstance of disgrace. . . . The next great feature of the new law is the establishment of a superior central and supervizing authority. . . . There does not appear to be the slightest reason why the controlling power shall not be local, as well as central, why it shall not be seated in the chief city of the district or in the county town, or why the noble lord has departed so widely from those principles of self-government to which he professes some partiality. . . . It is to the distance of this superior authority that I ascribe the absence of that softening and remedial practice of the law, the absence of which is very generally regretted. . . . I am strongly of opinion that the legislature, when it establishes a centralization of authority, shall always be anxious to confine it to subjects of a purely material character. As regards such subjects as the education of the people in a country like England, where sectarian views exist to so wide an extent, or the support of a pauper population in a country where the labouring classes depend so intimately and by so many ties upon those who are superior to them, the legislature ought to be most jealous of any centralization of authority."

Here there are four main points (1) the break-up of the parochial organization; (2) the "nationalization" of poor relief with its consequences of bureaucracy and inflexibility; (3) the inhumanity and inadaptability of indoor relief and the workhouse system; (4) the severing and denial of the reciprocal duties of one class to another and of the personal and voluntary elements in charity. It is interesting, too, that education and poor relief are mentioned in one breath, and the "religious question" alluded to. Religion indeed entered into the Tory attitude to the Poor Law as well as to education. This came out more clearly in the writings of a different type of Tory from Disraeli. In *Chartism* (1840) and *Past and Present* (1844) Carlyle denounced the Poor Law as founded on the half-truth of a view of society which excluded God. "How, with our gross atheism, we hear it (labour) not to be the voice of God to us, but regard it merely as a voice of earthly profit-and-loss and coldly see the all-conquering valiant Sons of Toil sit enchanted by the million in their Poor Law Bastille as if this were nature's law."

There was no doubt much to criticize and even to parody in the attitude of these conservative minorities to the Poor Law and

the social services. If we ask Carlyle, What then does he recommend, were he himself the Home Secretary? he eludes us in cloud and mysticism. At the Young England end, there was a great deal too much of Ye Good Olde Tyme. Typical is this of Lord John Manners from 1842: "Let us show the people, by adding to their comforts and pleasures in the only legitimate way a legislature can do, viz, by voting money to build public baths, to keep up or rather to restore public games, to form public walks, that we are their real friends. Let us give back the Church Holy Days, open the churches and cathedrals to them and let our men of power, in their individual capacities, assume a more personal and consequently a more kind intercourse with those below them. In a word, let society take a more feudal appearance than it presents now." Disraeli of course saw deeper and further, and was not above caricaturing this sort of thing, albeit kindly, in his trilogy of the 1840's. Nevertheless, it is the enemies of the 1834 Act rather than its authors who are in the true direct line of ancestry of the 20th century social services.

The generation which debated the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834 had passed away before Arthur Balfour introduced the Education Bill of 1902. This, however, followed very closely the lines of Gorst's Bill of 1896, and its threads ran back to the great debates on the Education Act of 1870 and beyond. If ever a party immolated itself for the sake of a single measure, it was the Conservative Party in the Education Act of 1902, which not only antagonized large bodies of what we have learnt to call "floating voters," but threatened to cause the split between Chamberlain and Balfour which developed on the eve of the next general election.

Read in the light of future events and the present state of the law, the 1902 Act may seem uncontroversial enough; to contemporaries it was anything but that. Its great features were the transfer of responsibility for state education from school boards to the new local authorities, with a considerable decentralization from the central government to those authorities; and what amounted to a substantial strengthening of the position of the voluntary, i.e. denominational schools. Here were two characteristic notes: distrust of centralization and a religious bias. The opposition were not particularly friendly to enlarged responsibilities for the county councils, which the conservatives had called into existence fourteen years before. But of course it was on the religious question that the controversy centred.

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The non-conformists and the secularists had confidently expected that the church schools would disappear as improved standards and requirements increased their costliness. The conservatives, by charging the maintenance of such schools upon the public, opened the prospect of their indefinite survival. The fact that the public was to bear the burden locally through rates, instead of centrally through taxes as heretofore, rendered this policy all the more obnoxious to their opponents. In 1902, however, the conservatives did not go so far as in 1896, when they had proposed to abolish the famous "Cowper-Temple" clause of 1870 and permit denominational instruction in state schools. Thus the voluntary schools, which had provided the great majority of instruction during the 19th century, were deliberately built into the fabric of 20th century education, side by side with the newer, undenominational state schools. Here was a third characteristic trait: the dislike of scrapping existing machinery because of its incompleteness rather than embodying it, even at the cost of patchwork or inconsistency, along with other elements in a more comprehensive system.

However much else in the 1902 Act, such as the provision of state secondary education, was inevitable in the course of things, the Conservative Party would not have impaled itself on the characteristic provisions of that Act, if it had not been compelled to do so by its very nature. The question of disestablishment, which it must be remembered was then approaching its acute phase, coloured every political move in regard to education. Today those hues have faded; but Mr. Butler is found pursuing the same objects in 1944—aye, and Miss Horsbrugh in 1953. In his famous definition of 'Tory democracy' at Birmingham in 1884, the present prime minister's father could include the following passage: "I see in the Church of England a centre and a source and a guide of charitable effort, mitigating by its mendicant importunity the violence of human misery . . . and I urge upon you not to throw that source of charity upon the haphazard almsgiving of a busy and selfish world. I view the Church of England eagerly co-operating in the work of national education, not only benefiting your children but saving your pockets . . . and I warn you against hindering the diffusion of *knowledge inspired by religion* amongst those who will have devolved upon them the responsibility for the government of this wide Empire." The last sentence (it will be noted) is the conservative version of Lowe's 'educating our masters'. The whole

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passage illustrates the near alliance between religion and the social services which existed in many conservative minds.

In the height of the constitutional crises which followed his budget of 1909, Lloyd George—on 4th May 1911—introduced the National Insurance Bill which created a system of compulsory state aided insurance against sickness and unemployment. His long speech explaining the Bill was followed by Austen Chamberlain, who assured the conservatives' arch-enemy "of a warm and cordial welcome on this occasion, because he came to set the foundation stone of a work which every party desires to see carried to a successful conclusion." More than that, Austen Chamberlain assured the Chancellor of his own party's "desire to be allowed to co-operate with him."

This halycon weather did not continue. The bill did not reach the Lords until 11th December; and the Lords by that time were in no mood to choose this as one of the measures on which to make experiment of the new Parliament Act. But the Conservative Party as represented in that House—and widely in the country—would by then have thrown it out if they durst. The following counts against it may be collected from the speech made on that occasion by the Marquis of Lansdowne, though he expressed himself as "committed to the principle of the bill" and believed that "if the fortunes of political war were to bring about a change of position in the two parties, we ourselves should probably be found ready to deal with this great question": (1) the stupendous dimensions of the taxation involved, amounting to as much as £40 millions by 1932; (2) the elimination of a large number of the friendly societies; (3) the view that the bill meant "the death of voluntary hospitals"; (4) the placing of the medical profession at the mercy of the health committees and insurance commissioners; (5) the effect of the contributions on wages, exports and the cost of living; (6) the substitution of state 'inquisition' into the private affairs of insured persons in place of the supervision of the friendly societies; (7) "the immense army of officials that will be necessary in order to superintend the working of this machinery"; (8) the enormous powers of the insurance commissioners, especially under the regulations to be made under the Act.

Beneath the outward differences of phraseology, there is an extraordinary underlying similarity between these objections and those which had been urged against the Poor Law Reform Bill 80 years before. The common ground may be defined

broadly as the defence of institutions which are local and autonomous and the hatred of bureaucracy and centralization. Added to these, as a new factor, is the economic doubt whether the direct and indirect cost may not be disproportionate to the national resources as a whole, and the disinclination to undertake responsibilities of which the burden will automatically grow without foreseeable limit.

The last phase of observed conservative behaviour in regard to the social services which falls to be considered is the party's reaction to the "welfare state" legislation of the 1945-50 Labour Government, viz, the National Health Service, National Insurance and National Assistance Acts. Both the National Health Service and the national insurance scheme had reached a fair degree of elaboration under the war-time Coalition Government and therefore although important, in some cases decisive, alterations in the plans were made by their labour successors, the opposition front bench of 1945-50 was peculiarly inhibited in criticizing these measures and confronting them with an alternative theory of the social services. Thus, while the characteristic criticisms were voiced again—the friendly societies ought not to have been destroyed, the medical profession was being turned into a state service, the hospital service was being severed from local government, the finances of the insurance scheme entailed a great burden on the next generation—it is rather to the utterances of the younger generation in the Conservative Party that we must turn to find a coherent rethinking of the conservative position on the social services.

This rethinking was partly conditioned by a difference between the modern socialist and the old liberal view of the social services. To the modern socialist the equalizing effect of social services supported by high taxation afforded a moral and political justification which took the place of humanitarianism and the non-conformist conscience. For example, Mr. Roy Jenkins in *New Fabian Essays* (1952), after noting that "the recent move towards equality can be largely accounted for . . . by the use of heavy taxation upon the rich to finance a gradually extended structure of social services", recognized with regret that "any further extensions in the social services which take place (defining an extension as an increase in the percentage of the national income devoted to the service) are unlikely to be redistributive in any broad class sense." Accordingly in recent Conservative thought about the social services, we find added to

the old motifs a new one, which protests against the concept of the social services as an equalizing force and which traces to that use of the social services many of the defects arising in the post-war "welfare state".

To this concept the modern Conservative Party opposed that of a generous and, if possible, rising minimum standard, in all the basic needs of life, guaranteed by the community to all individuals and families. In this formulation several terms are of critical importance. The "community" is not necessarily the state: it may be for the state to co-ordinate, to complete, or even to do the lion's share, but wherever possible the contribution of local responsibility and initiative is jealously guarded and individual beneficence is not regarded as having played out its role. Secondly, the emphasis is upon minimum—not in the sense of least possible, but as the opposite to average or uniform: the social services are not to be a levelling instrument. Finally, they apply only to the main essentials of decent life: it must remain for the less essential and the infinite range of varying standards to be pursued by individuals and families according to their inclinations and abilities.

The pamphlet *One Nation* (1950)—easily the most important pronouncement of the Conservative Party on the social services since the war—was an essay upon this theme. It argued that because the Labour Government had sought in health, in insurance, in education, in housing to supply through the social services an average standard for all, it had thereby in practice failed to meet the requirements of those in greatest need. The health service, by attempting everything at once, had starved some of the most essential branches like dental health and mental treatment; by building council houses only, the nation had obtained fewer houses altogether; by endeavouring to eliminate differences of educational opportunity, the state was threatening the standards of the ablest; the changing age structure of the population had been too little regarded in the planning of national insurance. The machinery of the welfare state was not helping the weak by its repression of the opportunities and independence of the strong.

It was a logical development of the idea of the minimum standard that two of the authors of *One Nation*, in *Needs and Means* (1952), posed and attempted to answer the question: how, if the social services were designed to meet need, was that need properly to be ascertained; and they arrived incidentally at the

conclusion that in the post-war period of inflation the new social services had in point of fact never met the requirements of the poorest.

The expression "welfare state", which has been used above in relation to the post-war form of the social services, would, correctly speaking, be repudiated by the Conservative Party, though it might frequently be found in use. Attention through the social services to the needs and standard of life of all members of the community is regarded by the Conservative Party as something which ought to flow from the nature and organisation of the community itself. The state in fact is not a machine constructed to produce welfare—as the expression "welfare state" implies—but an organism, which, if it is sound and healthy, will assure the well-being of its members. This sense of the relationship and proportion of the social services to the capabilities and prosperity of the nation as a whole underlies the characteristic conservative concern with the financing of the social services. The limit of what the nation can afford to redistribute through these services, though never capable of being precisely defined, is the final expression of that due relationship and proportion.

Thus a glimpse has been attempted into four epochs: Young England criticizing the 1834 Poor Law, the conservatives impaling themselves on the 1902 Education Act, the Lords critical of Lloyd George and his Insurance Bill, the Tory Party taking stock of labour's "welfare state" in 1950. It is astonishing in retrospect how much the four have in common. The visage is that of the same personality, unmistakable and fundamentally unchanging in its main features. And how should it be otherwise, seeing that conservatism, toryism or call it what you will, is a settled view of the nature of human society in general and our own society in particular, which each succeeding generation does but re-express?

A CONSERVATIVE VIEW OF THE COMMONWEALTH

By JULIAN AMERY, M.P.*

BRITAIN belongs to three worlds—"three majestic circles"—as Mr. Churchill has described them. She is the leading power in the Commonwealth. She has a special relationship with the United States. She is a European nation. The main task therefore of British statesmanship in the field of external policy is to order the priorities, to reconcile the differences and to combine the advantages to which this triple character gives rise.

The foundations of the British Empire were laid in the reign of the first Elizabeth. Our overseas possessions, however, were long regarded as valuable appendages of the island kingdom, rather than as integral parts of a worldwide imperial system. It was the genius of Disraeli and Joseph Chamberlain that they recognized the need to think imperially rather than nationally; that they saw in the empire, not just a sphere of interest, but the ground plan on which all British policies should be founded. The course of events has slowly converted British opinion to their conception. Modern means of communications have made it possible to bring the resources of the Commonwealth and Empire to bear rapidly at any point on the globe. Meanwhile, the relative decline of the United Kingdom among the powers has made a close combination with the rest of the Commonwealth the only means whereby we can maintain something of our position in the world. Britain, the island, could never have survived the storms of the last two wars. With the Commonwealth and Empire, however, Britain still counts as a great power in a world where the standards of power are set by the United States and the Soviet Union.

The economic development has been very similar. In the 19th century, when Britain stood in the van of the industrial revolution, she had assured access to the raw materials and markets of the world. There were no frontiers then to her economic empire.

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But as the winds of competition beat more fiercely upon us, as other countries adopted protectionist policies and grew in strength, so we were led increasingly to identify our economic with our political empire. The process was fostered by many considerations. We could rely on the co-operation of our Commonwealth and colonial partners in time of war. There was long standing mutual confidence between us. Above all, the existence of long term common interests, transcending the economic sphere, often helped to overcome short term difficulties of a purely financial character. The Commonwealth may never become a self-sufficient economic unit, but in a world divided by Soviet armed force and dominated by the immense economic power of the United States, it has provided a firm foundation for the livelihood of all its peoples and not least of the 50,000,000 living in the United Kingdom.

As the sheet anchor of Britain's economic strength, the Commonwealth has played a great part in preserving her social unity. The Commonwealth has been to the British economy what "the frontier" has been to the American. Imperial development has not only benefited the territory where the development has taken place or the company undertaking the enterprise. The whole British nation has shared in the profit. A part of it has been reinvested in the United Kingdom and has thus provided employment for the British people. Another part has gone through taxation into the revenue and has thus returned to the people in social services or other benefits. Imperial development has thus helped to reconcile or, at least, to soften the natural conflict of interests between the different social groups in the country.

No less important, it has provided an invaluable outlet for individual energies which might otherwise have been frustrated or turned to destructive purpose. For a hundred years and more, some of the ablest of Britain's working class population have migrated to the Commonwealth in search of new opportunity. But for this outlet, they might well have been driven into extreme courses. In much the same way, the younger sons of impoverished land owning and middle class families, the very element which might have developed fascist tendencies especially in the climate of the socialist government of 1945, have found in the Commonwealth the opportunities for action and adventure which seemed closed to them at home. The Commonwealth in fact has served as an economic foundation for Britain's social

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stability and as a safety valve against extremist tendencies.

No community can prosper unless it is inspired by faith in itself and a sense of purpose. It is, indeed, in the ideological sphere that the British people have come to identify themselves most completely with the Commonwealth. The imperial achievement remains for most Englishmen the supreme justification of their nation in their own eyes and before the world. To maintain and extend that achievement provides a natural sense of purpose and a vision which constitutes the nearest thing to a "mystique" in contemporary English political life.

* * *

The power, the livelihood, the social unity and even the moral strength of the British people depend upon the existence of the Commonwealth. If this assertion be true, it raises a question. What are the prospects of the Commonwealth surviving as an independent force in the world? Before attempting to answer it, we must consider for a moment the present structure of the Commonwealth and the lines along which it is developing. This we may do under four main heads: defence, economic, political, and ideological.

Defence

Traditionally, Britain was expected to undertake the defence of the whole Commonwealth and Empire. With one important exception, she could count on no forces, other than local militia, to assist her in her task. The exception was the Indian army. Two things have transformed this old conception of imperial defence. First, the Indian army is no longer at the orders of Whitehall. Britain, thus, has no major strategic reserve in the area of the Indian Ocean. Second, the scale of operations and the global character of modern wars make it impossible for Britain to undertake the defence of the whole Commonwealth and Empire by herself alone. The global conception of imperial defence has thus given way to a regional conception in which certain Commonwealth countries join with other friendly nations to safeguard the regions in which they are particularly interested. Thus Britain and Canada have joined with the other N.A.T.O. powers to ensure the defence of Europe and hence of the continental approaches to the United Kingdom. Arctic defence has

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been left to Canada and the United States. In the Pacific, Australia and New Zealand have joined with the United States to guard against a revival of Japanese aggression. South Africa, Australia and New Zealand have arrangements to contribute with the United Kingdom to the defence of the Middle East.

Despite this regional conception, there remains an unwritten understanding that, in an emergency, Britain will come to the support of other members of the Commonwealth with such forces as she can spare at the time. To do this she has to undertake, beyond the defence of the island and of the crown colonies, the maintenance of the main lines of imperial communications and the creation of some central reserve to bring to bear at any threatened point.

Let us first consider the defence of the main lines of imperial communication.

Seen from London, the most vital of these are the Atlantic approaches to Britain itself. On their security depends all communication not only with the rest of the Commonwealth but with most of the outside world. Without them Britain can neither live nor produce. The importance of these approaches readily explains the vehemence with which Mr. Churchill opposed the appointment of an American admiral as supreme commander in the Atlantic and his ultimately successful insistence that the command of the Western approaches at least, if not of the whole ocean, must be reserved for Britain.

Looking south from Britain, the West African colonies appear as indispensable bases on the sea and air routes to the Union of South Africa. The political future of the West African colonies is uncertain. But, whatever form it may take, it will be essential for the United Kingdom, by treaty or otherwise, to have at least one good air and naval base in West Africa.

The main artery of imperial communications is the line of the Mediterranean continuing through the Middle East to the Indian Ocean. Along or above it run the shortest sea and air routes linking the Atlantic sector of the Commonwealth (United Kingdom, Canada, West Indies, West Africa) with the still greater sector which lies in a vast semi-circle round the Indian Ocean (New Zealand, Australia, Malaya, India, Ceylon, Pakistan, Iraq and the Persian Gulf protectorates, Aden, East Africa, Central Africa and South Africa).

The Mediterranean-Middle East route is guarded by the fortresses of Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, the Suez Canal base, the Iraq

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air bases and Aden. It is often argued that this route will not be usable in time of war. In time of peace, however, or of cold war, it makes possible the rapid movement of troops from one threatened area to another. Even in time of real war, as the last war showed, it can be used in emergency. Its guardian fortresses, moreover, can be of the greatest military value. It is hard to imagine how we could have undertaken the landing in North-west Africa in 1942 without the use of Gibraltar or the interruption of Rommel's supply lines without the use of Malta.

More important, however, than keeping open the whole length of the Mediterranean-Middle East route, is the maintenance of the Suez Canal base. Here is the keystone of the structure of imperial defence. The Suez Canal zone is the only area in the whole Middle East which meets all the requirements of a major strategic base. It is too far from the threatened northern frontiers to be easily overrun. It affords the necessary combination of ports, air fields, road and rail communications, water, power, labour and food. It is so situated, moreover, that it can serve, not only for the defence of the Middle East with its vital oil reserves, but as a *place d'armes* from which to maintain order in North-east Africa, or to reinforce our associates both in the Indian Ocean area and in the eastern Mediterranean. Britain can only sustain the Commonwealth countries in the Indian Ocean area if she is a power in the Middle East. And now, even more than in the past, her power in that region can only be based on the Suez Canal zone. For Britain to evacuate the Canal base would be to snap the most vital link in the whole chain of Commonwealth defence. The route to safety for Australia and New Zealand would then lie not through the Suez but the Panama Canal.

It has been suggested that Britain might share her responsibilities in the Canal zone with other powers under some international defence organisation similar to the N.A.T.O. If such a development made it easier for Egypt to accept the permanent presence of our troops in the Canal base, it would deserve serious consideration. Even then, our special interests in the area would require us to play the leading part in such an organisation, providing British troops to man the key positions and maintaining the supreme command in our own hands.

For many of our allies, certainly for the Americans, the problem of Middle Eastern defence is mainly one of preventing Soviet infiltration or irruption into the area. For Britain, however, this is only one aspect of the problem. We have a permanent interest

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which existed before the danger of Soviet attack and will continue after that danger has passed. This is to maintain control of the key point in our communications with the Commonwealth countries east of Suez. This interest is openly shared by Australia, New Zealand and South Africa who have all agreed, in an emergency, to contribute to the defence of the Middle East. On the surface, the attitude of the Asian dominions seems rather different. They profess some sympathy with Egyptian nationalism. Their interest in continued membership of the Commonwealth, however, could not fail to be greatly diminished if Britain were to abandon the one position from which she could come to their support.

Across the Indian Ocean, Singapore stands as the main base from which British influence can be exercised in Malaya, with its indispensable supplies of tin and rubber, in the East Indies and along the China coast. It is also an essential link in the air communications between the Middle East and the Indian Sub-continent on the one hand, and Australia and New Zealand on the other. To maintain that base inviolate is thus essential to the security of our communications with Australia, to the maintenance of our influence in South-east Asia and Hongkong, as well as to the protection of the Indian Ocean area against attack from China or Japan.

The war in Korea, the threat to Hongkong, the rebellion in Malaya, the tension in the Middle East, the troubles in Kenya and the defence of Europe, have placed a great strain on Britain's armed forces. We have raised the equivalent of some eleven divisions. But we have no active strategic reserve at home; nor can we any longer count on the great Indian reserve. Mobilisation, indeed, would, after a time, provide reserve formations. An Empire, however, which cannot draw immediately on a reserve is, from a military point of view, in a very precarious position. How is this present weakness to be remedied? A part of the solution may be technical in character. Quite a small strategic reserve might serve our purposes provided there were sufficient transport aircraft to bring it to bear at whatever point was threatened. Even then, we should probably still be short of manpower. The only large untapped source of manpower suitable for military service would seem to be our African colonies. An African Army could never wholly take the place of the old Indian Army. It could never provide the number, nor for many years at least, the quality of the Indian troops. Nor could the

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African colonies pay for the whole upkeep of their forces as India did. Over a period of years, however,—and it is in the long run that the strain of our present commitments will tell—an African army designed for service in the Middle East and South-east Asia could provide a valuable element of the much needed strategic reserve which the defence of that area requires.

Economic

If defence is the bone structure of the Commonwealth, its economy may be compared to the system of blood circulation. Traditionally, London has provided the bulk of the capital to finance Commonwealth investment. This investment has produced the raw materials and foodstuffs required by the British people and British industry. It has also provided, in the Commonwealth, a growing market for British industry, which has thus been enabled to form fresh capital for fresh investment in the Commonwealth field.

This conception of the Commonwealth economy has been greatly modified by the course of events. The dominions, and indeed, the colonies, have grown to a point where Britain can no longer provide all their capital requirements. Commonwealth production of raw materials, moreover, now exceeds, in many lines, Britain's power of consumption. As a result, the different Commonwealth countries are tending to look outwards, and more particularly to the United States, for additional finance and markets.

In the face of this natural tendency and of growing American, German and Japanese competition, Britain will have a hard fight to remain the economic centre of the Commonwealth. Her prospects of success, however, are by no means forlorn. In spite of all changes, Britain remains and, in the foreseeable future, will remain, the foremost investor in the Commonwealth and its largest market.

Before the war, when food and raw material prices were low, the overseas members of the Commonwealth sought an assured market in the United Kingdom. They offered, in return, a similarly assured market to the British exporter. The policy of reciprocal imperial preferences was finally adopted at the Ottawa conference of 1932. The high hopes that had been set upon this policy were justified by all of its results. Inter-Commonwealth trade increased rapidly. So did Commonwealth trade with the rest of the world. The British countries were in fact, the

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first to recover from the great slump. Since the war, however, the American attempt to make the world safe for American exports, has led to a whittling down of the preferential system. In a succession of international agreements, the Commonwealth countries have bound themselves not to increase existing preferences, nor to introduce new ones. The Commonwealth producers have not seriously opposed these limitations on their economic freedom. Food and raw material prices have been high and, though sometimes haunted by memories of pre-war years, they have been confident of finding a market for their goods. Many of them, moreover, have preferred the security of long term contracts, to the more liberal but also riskier method of tariff preferences. The general change in the terms of trade, however, has made the limitation on preferences more serious for Britain. While the sellers' market lasted, we had little cause for concern. With the growth of foreign competition, however, we are beginning to feel the draught. Last year, for instance, British textiles had to yield first place in the colonial market to their Japanese competitors.

At the recent Commonwealth conference, the British Government proposed what was, in effect, an extension of the Ottawa system. They failed, to carry a majority of the conference with them. This was due, among other reasons, to the reluctance of the Commonwealth leaders to take any step which might cause offence in Washington, at any rate until the possibilities of obtaining American capital had been more fully explored. It may be that negotiations with the new United States administration will disappoint Commonwealth hopes of balancing the sterling area's "dollar gap" with increased American investment and a new Washington loan. If so, the dominions may presently reconsider their attitude to an extension of the Ottawa system and other means of giving priority to inter-Commonwealth trade and investment.

Meanwhile, the economic unity of the Commonwealth and the high level of inter-Commonwealth trade is sustained by the sterling system. The sterling area, today, is the world's broadest zone of multilateral trade. Many of its benefits, moreover, are extended to continental Europe through the E.P.U. In a world of inconvertible currencies, the sterling system has brought great advantages to its members particularly by encouraging them to trade with each other. The overseas members of the Commonwealth have tended to buy most of their consumer and capital

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imports from Britain. In return, Britain and the colonies have made available to them more dollars and other hard currency than they themselves could have earned.

Politics

The relative decline of the Commonwealth, as a world power, has led many observers to believe that it has also become less united. This is to overlook two developments of capital importance. In the first place, the overseas countries of the Commonwealth have developed so rapidly in the past twenty years that their co-operation with Britain and with one another has become not less but more effective than in the past. They are now in a position to give each other really useful help in peace or war. In the second, the processes of consultation and co-operation have been greatly extended and strengthened. The operation of the sterling area, joint planning for defence and consultation in foreign policy, have reached a level never previously envisaged. No centralized machinery, indeed, has been set up; but, with the advent of air travel, conferences between ministers and civil servants have become almost a matter of routine. To say this, is not to deny that the Commonwealth is subjected to greater strains and stresses than ever before. It is, however, to assert that those stresses have also tended to brace the bonds of unity.

Recent developments in the Commonwealth have raised interesting constitutional issues. One of these concerns the position of the Crown. India has become a fully sovereign member of the Commonwealth. She has been allowed to do so, however, as a republic, acknowledging the British sovereign only as "Head of the Commonwealth". This constitutes an important precedent; and other dominions, particularly the Asian dominions, may feel encouraged to follow it. The direct link with the Crown, however, is likely to be preserved in those dominions, at least, where the British racial element is substantial. Only in South Africa is the position in doubt.

Many observers have feared that the Indian precedent would seriously weaken the unity of the Commonwealth. It is, however, possible that the new formula will open the door to a renewed expansion of the Commonwealth system, rather than to its disintegration. In a world where the standard of power is set by the Soviet Union and the United States, many small countries are looking for some association of nations through which they can preserve their independence. In the past, the obligation to

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accept the British Crown might have seemed an insuperable obstacle to countries which otherwise might have wished to join the Commonwealth. Under the new formula, this objection would no longer apply. There is, however, another side to the medal. The admission of the three Asian Dominions to full membership of the Commonwealth raises a question. On what terms can other countries, whether foreign countries or evolving Crown colonies, become full members of the Commonwealth? Dr. Malan has claimed that new members can henceforward only be admitted to the Commonwealth with the unanimous consent of its existing members. This claim seems to have been accepted. But, while it may prevent Britain from enlarging the circle of the Commonwealth by her own decision, it cannot prevent her from conferring dominion status in relation to herself on any colony or, indeed, on any other country. It is thus, theoretically possible that Britain might become the centre of two or more commonwealths.

Ideology

We have considered the strategic, economic and political anatomy of the Commonwealth. But how far is there life in the body? In Britain and to the English element in the older dominions, the Commonwealth connection is a very positive force. To the Australian or New Zealander, England is still "home". To the English South African, it is the guarantee against absorption by the Dutch. To the English Canadian, the link with England has behind it the tradition of the united empire loyalists.

Among the non-English elements in the Commonwealth, the link with Britain has a more negative value. It is, however, scarcely less potent. To many Dutch South Africans, it offers the vision of a greater South Africa, extending through the Rhodesias and East Africa to the Abyssinian border. To French and, indeed, to many English Canadians, it is an alternative to absorption by the U.S.A. To the Asian dominions, it represents not merely an important cultural link with the west, but also the economic and military means of steering a middle course between the growing pressures of the United States and the Soviet Union.

Nowhere, perhaps, is the sense of the Commonwealth stronger than in Britain itself. Canvass any constituency; you will not find a street, hardly a family, which has not some link, however indirect, with the Commonwealth overseas. One relative has served in the Indian army, another in the Middle East or the

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merchant navy, while yet another has settled overseas or has active business connections with the Commonwealth. Active interest in Commonwealth affairs may be slight but the sense of belonging and the bonds of sentiment and tradition are very real.

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The greatest threat to the continued existence of the Commonwealth and, at the same time, the greatest stimulus to its closer unity, springs from the rise in world affairs of the United States and the Soviet Union. Both tend, in their different ways, to exercise a centrifugal attraction on different elements in the Commonwealth.

It is sometimes argued that the "cold war" is essentially a struggle between the Soviets and the U.S.A. Nothing could be further from the truth. A glance at the map is enough to show that, at almost every point of the compass, Soviet expansion threatens British interests before it threatens those of the United States. The sovietization of Eastern Europe has brought Russian air bases within reach of Britain and of her vital interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Soviet expansion into Persia would threaten our position in the Middle East and our fellow members of the Commonwealth in Pakistan. The Chinese occupation of Tibet hangs, like a sword of Damocles, over India. In South-east Asia, our interests in Malaya and Burma, like those of France in Indo-China, are the first to be affected by Soviet irruption. In China itself, British investments now in Communist hands are ten times as valuable as those of the United States, while Hong-kong stands almost a hostage to fortune. Beyond all this, the ferment of communism constitutes a greater danger to Britain's colonial empire, in an age of colonial nationalism, than it ever could to the United States. In these circumstances, there can be no question of neutralism for the Commonwealth. The Asian dominions, torn by the Kashmir conflict and conscious of their military weakness, may still hesitate to declare their hand. Broadly speaking, however, the influence of the Commonwealth can only be cast in favour of the cause of freedom.

To defend their ideals and interests, the Commonwealth countries must work as allies of the United States. In the long run, however, the American alliance may do as much as the Soviet menace to draw the Commonwealth closer together. The old fear of Whitehall, has become a fear of Washington and of Wall Street. American investment is needed. American exports

are in demand. But American economic influence has alarmed national sentiment among the Commonwealth nations. The Pacific pact concluded by the United States with Australia and New Zealand, has done much to arouse suspicions of United States policy, not only in Britain, but in Australasia as well. So has the American attitude to our interests in the Middle East, whether at Abadan or in the Suez Canal. These things do not only cast a shadow between Britain and the United States. They are carefully watched in the Commonwealth overseas. There is a growing determination among its members that the defence of the free world should not transform the British Commonwealth into an American empire.

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Weaker than the United States or the Soviet Union, the Commonwealth stands, nevertheless, as a world power. But to survive the pressures of the next few years, it needs to broaden its base both militarily and economically. How is this to be done? It is a good principle in times of weakness, to look around for comrades in misfortune. The nations of continental Western Europe stand in much the same position as we do ourselves. The Soviet danger presses upon them. France, Belgium and Holland have far-flung interests in Africa and the East. To a greater or lesser extent, all are victims, as we are, of the dollar gap. Here is a group of nations which could provide new markets for Commonwealth food and raw material producers and which could help to supply some part, at least, of the Commonwealth's investment needs. How could these two systems—Europe and the Commonwealth—be brought together? How could we call in the old world to redress the balance of the new?

Mr. Churchill was the first statesman of the front rank to call for a United Europe. His pronouncements on this subject, at Zurich, at the Hague, and at Strasbourg, suggest that he envisaged Britain as an essential part of any European union. The Labour Government of the day, however, failed to grasp his vision. They dragged their feet in the movement towards European unity. As a result, the leaders of continental Europe went ahead without us and went ahead on federal lines.

Britain cannot join a continental federation. The reasons for this are worth restating. The Commonwealth is not something static and achieved. It is still in the making and Britain's first mission is to further its development. Now federation involves

closer ties than does the Commonwealth system. Britain cannot, therefore, subordinate herself to a European federal government without weakening her power to fulfil her mission in the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth proceeds by means of continuous consultation between its several members. Every day, hundreds of telegrams pass between the Commonwealth Relations Office and the governments of the dominions. These communications mostly bear upon defence, foreign trade and foreign policy. Yet those are the very subjects which would naturally be reserved to a European federal authority if one were instituted. For Britain, therefore, to surrender control over these sectors of her policy, would be to cut herself off from that daily consultation with other Commonwealth governments upon which the working of the Commonwealth system so largely depends.

But federation is not the only form of constitutional association between states. We have ourselves devised another, the Commonwealth relationship. In many ways, indeed, the British Commonwealth may offer a more practicable model for linking the different states of Europe, with their famous and distinctive traditions, than does the American federation risen from the union of young and sparsely peopled British colonies. Britain cannot join a federation. But there is no reason why she should not join a united Europe organised upon Commonwealth or confederal lines, provided always that, for the purpose of her relations with Europe, Britain's relations with her own Commonwealth were regarded as a domestic matter.

How far would such a conception of European unity be acceptable to the continental states? The continental conception of democracy regards power as emanating from the people and proceeding by delegation upwards. This leads logically to a federal conclusion; and there is no doubt that most of the continental leaders and particularly the governments of France, Germany and Italy, originally envisaged European unity in federal terms. The French and Benelux countries, moreover, saw in federation a means of preventing an independent revival of Germany. But the more the parliaments of the six countries have studied the problem in the grain, the less acceptable it has become to their public opinion. Europe is already split in two by the iron curtain. "Little Europe" thus represents only half of a half of Europe; and within this half, at least half of public opinion is opposed to the Schuman-Monnet-Adenauer conception. It is still possible that, under American

pressure, the six-power community will take shape. The odds, however, are against it. And, even if it does come to light, it is as likely as not to be stillborn. Britain may thus be given a second chance to take the lead in bringing about a wider European community, founded on Commonwealth lines—a community in which Britain would provide a natural element of balance against the danger of a German revival.

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It is important that the conception of a British Commonwealth interlocking with a European community should not be regarded as a step towards the creation of a neutral third force. There can be no question of neutralism, seeing that it is British and European interests which would be the first to be threatened by further Soviet expansion. What is needed, however, is that, within the free world, there should be, both economically and politically, an internal balance. It is only if such a balance exists, that we can help the United States carry the burdens they have assumed, instead of being ourselves a burden on them. It is only then that we can work with America, not as satellites, but as allies.

The United States, Europe and the Commonwealth are faced with the global challenge of world communism. To meet it they must organize upon a global scale. They must stand together at all threatened points. The N.A.T.O. is a first step in this direction. It is not, as is sometimes thought, a rival conception to the Commonwealth or Europe. It is on an altogether different plane. It seeks to combine, in the North Atlantic region, the three main forces of the free world—the United States, Europe and the Commonwealth. The weakness of N.A.T.O. is that it is still purely regional. It excludes the greater part of the British Commonwealth—Australia, New Zealand, Malaya, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, East Africa and South Africa—as well as the Middle East, Indo-China and Indonesia, all intimately associated with European powers. What is needed is that N.A.T.O. should be expanded to cover the defence of the whole free world. Under such an expanded Atlantic community should come S.H.A.P.E., the projected Middle East defence command, the United Nations command in Korea, and a combined command in South East Asia. The United States, Europe and the Commonwealth should be represented in all of these commands. Together they should lead the free world.

CONSERVATIVES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

By HENRY BROOKE, M.P., L.C.C.*

FOR hundreds of years past, in this country, local people have been chosen or empowered to perform various local duties and services. For 65 years it has been generally though not universally accepted that our system of local government should rest on a basis of popular election by way of the ballot-box. Those who first advocated that basis believed that it could be relied on to bring into positions of authority the individuals who were regarded by their fellow-citizens as the best qualified to represent them and act in their name.

This is local democracy. It is very young, as English institutions go. We need not be afraid of modifying its form and outline. What we must not do is to weaken its spirit or strike at its heart. Whatever the other merits or demerits of British local government, it is one of the finest and firmest safeguards against the misuse of central power. The deeper the roots of the tradition that no minister of the Crown can dictate to a local housing authority whom it shall or shall not accept as tenant of a council house, or to a local education authority what shall or shall not be taught in one of its schools, the harder will it be for any despotic individual or political party to wield totalitarian power.

This is the first, but not the only, reason why conservatives strive to uphold a system of local government that is truly local. We also trust the individual more than we trust the State; we dread the coldness of remote control. We like to see decisions reached by people who have had at least some chance to examine the question in detail on its merits, and have not merely been led to their conclusion by a general rule or conviction which, in practice, may be a bad guide in the particular case.

The essential duty of an elected councillor is to serve his own neighbourhood well. The local people have elected someone else to be their member of Parliament, to act for them in national

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affairs. They elect their councillors to see that local affairs are run as they would wish, and if the councillors fail to speak up boldly for local needs and hopes, no one else can do it. The local case will go by default.

This is where, in one's experience, conservatives and socialists come to the parting of the ways. Conservatives have no interest in fixing upon the whole British nation a single political purpose or an identical attitude of mind. The thought horrifies us. We believe in the dispersal of powers and the interplay of varying ideas, and in no set formula for national greatness. The difference between the parties is that, as *Let us Face the Future* stated decisively eight years ago, "the Labour Party is a socialist party, and proud of it; its ultimate purpose at home is the establishment of the socialist commonwealth of Great Britain". Fundamentally that is how it comes about that the labour councillor tends to fix his eye on national purposes and policies, the conservative councillor on what the local situation demands.

A personal reminiscence will illustrate this. A certain borough council which had run its own electricity undertaking with efficiency and was able to fix unusually low charges for light and power was called on to express its view of the proposal of the 1945-50 Labour Government to nationalize electricity. The labour members moved that the council should support nationalization, despite the facts that it was bound to result in a levelling up of the favourable local charges, and that they claimed to be the champions on the council of those who had the smallest margin to live on. The idea of the socialist commonwealth had to prevail over what was beyond all doubt the desire of the local community to keep its lighting and heating bills low.

It is this loyalty of the labour councillor to the national measures of his political party, whatever from time to time they may be, which has led to his astonishing acquiescence in the stripping of so many functions from local authorities between 1945 and 1950. Already in the years before 1939 there was evidence of yearning in his parliamentary party for a more unitary system, such as would ensure that policies decided upon by a labour cabinet would be universally implemented, and nowhere held up by elected local bodies asserting their right to decide for themselves how to conduct their administration. The grievous post-war development—grievous to all who set store by local autonomy and responsibility—was the lack of resistance offered by labour councillors to the inevitable centralising pull of the socialist state.

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It was only the conservatives who cried out against all that local democracy was losing. "Nationalization" won hands down; even for "municipalization", as a possible ingredient in the socialist commonwealth, there was no fight put up. The conservatives were the only councillors to protest with vigour and reasoning against the hospital service (for instance) being taken away from democratically elected bodies and handed over to ministerially-appointed regional hospital boards—a step right away from democracy and genuine local control.

The whole conservative conception of local government rests on two practical beliefs, that the local people should have an untrammelled say in choosing who shall exercise local power, and that the men and women thus chosen should feel their primary responsibility to be towards those whom they are elected to represent. From this follows a further basic fact. They should regard themselves as trustees for the contributors of the money which it is their duty to spend. This means that they are to think of themselves as trustees for every householder, rich or poor, because all householders pay rates, and indeed also for every man and woman in their area, because in these days everybody is called on by way of taxes to pay towards the funds which reach the local authorities through the channel of Exchequer grants.

It is not a bit easy for the ordinary councillor to grasp that he ought to be as careful when he is thinking whether to spend public money as he is when spending his own. All sorts of schemes will come before him. Most of them have some element of desirability. He may say to himself, "Is this an attractive proposal?", and answer in the affirmative. But that is not enough. What he ought to be asking is, "Is this such an attractive proposal that the people of the neighbourhood will approve of my deciding that they are to put their hands into their pockets to pay for it?" That is what a sense of financial responsibility means, and for a conservative that question is the touchstone. Sometimes the answer will be "yes" and sometimes "no". Whichever it is, the councillor must be prepared to defend and justify his own decision, and not imagine that he can shift the onus on to others.

There is another common attitude nowadays towards spending. It is that the opportunities should be seized for using the rate fund to further the redistribution of wealth. Wealth is unjustly divided, runs the argument: the Chancellor of the Exchequer does something to correct that: but if we spend

freely from the rates, that will fall heavily on the largest rate-payers, and so redistribution will be pushed another step. Moreover, as it is national policy to offset inequalities of wealth by differential taxation, local authorities ought to regard themselves positively as agents of the central government in carrying that process farther, and for constant enlargement of their welfare services should not hesitate to make greater and greater demands on the Exchequer for grants out of national revenues.

This view of the part which local authorities should play has, needless to say, no thread of connection with the original historical purpose of local government. It is an unsound view, conflicting with the principle that local government exists primarily for the more satisfactory administration of services and duties which can best be handled by the people who are literally on the spot. There are jobs to be done nationally and there are jobs to be done locally. A man who is both a councillor and an M.P. may properly urge different considerations in the two assemblies where he has the right to speak for the distinct bodies of electors whom it is his duty to represent. But if people start to speak and vote in the council chamber as though they were debating and deciding national questions in the House of Commons, just as much harm may be done to the proper balance of government as if members of Parliament in the House think they are only there to speak for the parish pump.

Following the same line of argument, conservatives see local government as a valuable and essential instrument for doing necessary things which individual people in the neighbourhood, unless acting collectively, cannot well do for themselves. The council should take up just those duties—for the good of the place and its inhabitants—which otherwise will be left undone. It is not the business of the council to impose rates in order that it may do by compulsory levy what is already being satisfactorily done by voluntary organizations or private firms or individuals.

Conservatives therefore regard it as the duty of a housing authority to help people to get homes for whom private enterprise is not able to provide. We challenge the idea that there is virtue in the housing authority rendering it difficult for private enterprise to build and then stepping in to establish itself as the sole purveyor of houses.

For the same reason a conservative council will not enter the field of municipal trading unless there is some clearly needed service which normal commercial enterprise is failing to provide.

Where a case of that sort arises, it may become the duty of the council to act. But the ordinary councillor has quite enough on his hands to run the necessary administrative services of the area. Administration and commerce are not one and the same thing, as many people have discovered to their cost. The fallacious argument that, because a public body is non-profit making, it will therefore provide goods and services more cheaply than a commercial concern which has the prospect of profit as a spur to efficiency, deceives nobody nowadays except the ignorant.

A striking example of the difference of approach was to be seen in connection with the war-time restaurants which were in due course transferred to the ownership of local authorities in pursuance of the Civic Restaurants Act, 1947. The largest number was in London, and the conservative opposition on the London County Council urged that the right policy for the council was to continue them in all places where a genuine need for good cheap meals existed which commercial caterers were, for whatever reason, failing to meet, and that the remainder of the restaurants should be progressively closed as being no longer necessary. The labour majority on the council, on the other hand, took the view that the existing restaurants should be looked on as the nucleus of a great municipal catering service to be built up throughout London. Because it would be non-profit making, it was imagined that the council would be able to challenge and outdo the ordinary commercial catering firms, which would discover to their chagrin that the public found better value in the L.C.C. restaurants and chose to transfer its custom to them. To cut a long story short, the conservative view proved correct. The new restaurants opened by the L.C.C. to compete with the established catering trade turned out costly failures. The municipal service had to have its losses met out of the rates, until it was ultimately decided to close down all but a handful of the L.C.C. restaurants—those which are managing to justify themselves by just paying their way. The conservative idea, of running a social service to meet a need where it could be proved to exist, was unhappily set aside in favour of a rash experiment which has proved once again that administration and not commerce is the forte of local authorities.

This happens to be one of the all too rare cases where it has been possible to test how much a facility provided by a local authority was truly wanted. The public stayed away, the takings went down, and however enthusiastic the speeches in the council

chamber, they could not stop the accounts from showing a loss. A debit balance has at least the merit of forcing everyone to attend to realities.

Constant talk goes on nowadays about altering local government boundaries, and re-allocating functions, and even creating new categories of local authority. All these are important, but they do not come first. The task which must take precedence over them all is to give local government once again a firm and intelligible financial basis. Councils must not be so heavily dependent on Exchequer grants, linked with their volume of current expenditure, that constant supervision by Government departments in the spending of the money is difficult to resist. Councillors must again be made to feel—as in former days they certainly felt—the immediate impact of their own policy decisions upon the amount of the rate which each year they have to levy.

Originally a council had to raise from the local people almost all the money that it desired to spend. The chain of responsibility was direct and inescapable. If the rates went up by fourpence, the public wanted to know the reason why, and they knew whom to ask.

All that has changed. The rate which each council needs to levy will nowadays largely depend on a complicated system of Exchequer grants and equalization grants, which few but the treasurer can fully understand, still less explain. Extravagance may even earn a larger grant. Vigilant economy may produce no visible reward, for it may have its results wholly masked by the financial repercussions of some national decision over which the council had no power at all. It is so tempting in these circumstances to slip into easygoing ways, and to turn aside from the effort and perhaps the unpopularity which a tight control over spending entails. Yet if administration goes slack it will be bad for everybody, and in the long run the whole system of local government will be discredited.

In 1938-39 the local authorities of England and Wales collected £191 million in rates and received £139 million from the Exchequer, 42 per cent. of the total. In 1950-51 they collected £305 million in rates (including payments in lieu of rates) and received £304 million from the Exchequer. For 1952-53 the Exchequer share is likely to have exceeded 50 per cent. of the national total, and in some areas certainly went above 75 per cent. In 1938-39 the average rate levied was 12/4 in the £1. In 1951-52 it was 19/4, in 1952-53 it topped 20/-, and when the

average for 1953-54 is known it may well be found to exceed 22/-.

The higher the rate poundage, the worse does it aggravate the known inequities of individual valuations. The rates are an inelastic means of collecting revenue; they have such a restricted basis that they cannot be pushed ever higher without causing an outcry to which any Government must listen. The system of national taxes is far more broadly and fairly based; we could not have paid for the war otherwise.

On attaining a birthday a son may be given a latchkey, but he is not his own master till he achieves financial independence. This is exactly what British local government is progressively losing. Its expenditure is outsoaring its local revenues. To close the gap it must look more and more to the Exchequer—that is, to the proceeds of taxation collected nationally. But if the national taxpayers provide most of the money, how far will they want to allow the X county council and the Y borough council and the Z district council a free hand in the spending of it?

From the dilemma there is no logical escape, except either by finding and allotting to the local authorities fresh sources of local revenue, or by overhauling (for the third time in recent years) the principles and the formulae of all government grants, in order to make more sure that they act as a spur to efficiency and economy, and that they obviate meticulous central control and duplication of work. If a royal commission on local government finance had been set up five years ago, Parliament would have the benefit of its recommendations by now. The time is late, but not too late. To think of reforming local government without first deciding how to tackle this financial question, which goes right to the root of the matter, is to court disaster.

The Local Government Manpower Committee in its first report (1950) said correctly that the general approach should be:

“To recognise that the local authorities are responsible bodies competent to discharge their own functions and that, though they may be the statutory bodies through which Government policy is given effect and operate to a large extent with Government money, they exercise their responsibilities in their own right, not ordinarily as agents of Government departments. It follows that the objective should be to leave as much as possible of the detailed management of a scheme or service to the local authority and to concentrate the department's control at the key points where it can most effectively

discharge its responsibilities for Government policy and financial administration."

It was a grand achievement of the committee to put that conception of local government into print. But so great is the power of the purse that these admirable sentiments will not adequately influence practical action, until a financial solution has been devised which will exert its pull towards, and not against, the purpose which those words embody.

Without doubt there must be some re-drawing of boundaries and re-allocation of functions too. Responsibilities can only be bestowed on local authorities which are financially and personally strong enough to discharge them in a worthy way. Conservatives agree that some of the really weak and small authorities in their own class may have to merge, not because we love what is large, but because without that kind of modification it may not be possible to sustain the true freedom and power which we are determined to restore to the local government world as a whole. In illustration of that, many of us look forward to the time when the non-teaching hospitals will again be a local government service, for we do not believe in appointed regional boards as a permanent system for running the hospitals; but we recognise that that time cannot come, until all the suitable units of local government are strong enough to act as hospital authorities.

As conservatives, we emphasize personal strength, not financial strength alone. We believe in the kind of local government where each member, from varied talents and experience, is able to make his or her own personal contribution. Thinking power should be no less important than voting power.

The alternative view, which we reject, is that a council should consist of a few powerful leaders, perhaps only one, supported by a crowd of followers who can be relied on to vote as they are told, but are not expected and indeed may not be able to say anything useful. Under an outstanding leader, this sort of council may pursue a strong, consistent, imaginative, possibly ruthless policy. It will get things done. For a time it may focus admiration on its apparent achievements. But conservatives will remain deeply convinced that that is the wrong way to govern and administer. Our ideal is a free and varied society of human people, not a centrally controlled socialist commonwealth, nor a hive of bees.

We set so much store by the personal contribution that we

shall judge every blueprint for a new local government system by this test. It is easy to argue that the needs and techniques of the twentieth century demand local government areas that are larger and larger. Even the County of London, with its 3,400,000 population, is demonstrably not a large enough theoretical unit for certain purposes. But conservatives will refuse to judge by functional tests alone. We shall ask, "How are you going to find the men and women with the qualifications and the leisure to devote to serving on these outsize bodies, which on paper look so fine?" And if there is no valid answer to that question, we shall stay unconvinced that the great "supra-local" authority is a desirable solution to impose. To our mind, the local government unit must be not only financially sound and functionally sensible; it must be such as will attract to its membership a steady flow of men and women who are up to the job.

Some men and women of that calibre think it their duty to maintain that if party politics come into local government, they stay out. When that occurs, it is a heavy loss to the neighbourhood, and the blame lies on those who have talked and behaved as if party politics mattered more than simple service to the place and its people. There can be no excuse for treating local government as a mere means to serve party ends, and the council chamber as a pulpit in which to say and do whatever may help to win the next parliamentary election.

The greatest object in local government is not to win political victories, but to try to get the affairs of one's own neighbourhood run in a way that sensible, understanding, honourable people would wish them to be. If others, with an aim of inflaming the neighbourhood with class suspicions and allegations which are not really true, stand in the road, they must be challenged, fought, and overcome. The fight will be part of one's training for the constructive work which lies beyond. We need to ask only to be judged by what we each can do for our little bit of England, so that people who come after will say it was well done.

HOW CONSERVATIVE POLICY IS FORMED

By IVOR BULMER-THOMAS*

IN theory there is a profound difference between the way in which conservative policy and labour policy are formed. The labour theory is that policy is determined by the party conference; the conservative view is that the party's policy is determined by its leader. There is undoubtedly a real difference in the practice of the two parties, but it may be doubted whether it is so sharp as this theoretical distinction suggests. The views of the Labour Party conference on what the party's policy should be may be manipulated or disregarded; and the leader of the Conservative Party does not normally act without consultation and, in particular, without taking into account views expressed at his party conference.

Before we can proceed further it is necessary to take note of a difference in terminology between the two parties. The Conservative Committee on Party Organization presided over by Sir David Maxwell Fyfe in 1948 and 1949 made in its final report the following distinction between principles, policy, and programme:

"It will be agreed that the three phases in the evolution of a party's intentions are principles, policy and programme. Party principles are stable; the Disraelian principles are as valid to-day as when they were first propounded.

"The party programme contains the party's specific proposals whereby its policy can be given practical effect. The preparation of the programme must be a continuing process; but, as the final document has to be related directly to circumstances existing immediately before a general election, the final proposals are normally presented in a party manifesto by the leader on the eve of a general election, and are his responsibility.

"Policy is the basis upon which practice and programme are founded. It relates conservative principles to the national and international problems of the day, usually in general terms. The

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specific plans for the application of policy are contained in the party programme. Endorsements and pronouncements on party policy are the prerogative and responsibility of the leader, who is served by the various policy committees. These in their turn are influenced by the views of the party as revealed in the various resolutions at the party conferences."

This is a valuable distinction, but it is not always observed in practice, and this leads to a certain amount of confusion in controversy. Common usage does not make such a sharp distinction between policy and programme. The Oxford English Dictionary defines policy, in this sense, as being "a course of action adopted and pursued by a government, party, ruler, statesman, etc.", and this would include "programme" as defined by the Maxwell Fyfe committee. It will be inevitable that in this article the term "policy" should be used to cover "programme" as well as "policy" in the Maxwell Fyfe committee's interpretation. It may be presumed that what the reader will expect to find when he sees the title of this article is how the measures that the Conservative Party places upon the statute book when it has the opportunity, and the courses of action that it pursues in domestic, imperial and foreign affairs, come to be adopted.

It is well to remember this linguistic point in contrasting labour and conservative practice as labour usage is different. The constitution of the Labour Party, clause V, runs:

"The party conference shall decide from time to time what specific proposals of legislative, financial or administrative reform shall be included in the party programme.

"No proposal shall be included in the party programme unless it has been adopted by the party conference by a majority of not less than two thirds of the votes recorded on a card vote.

"The national executive committee and the executive committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party shall decide which items from the party programme shall be included in the manifesto which shall be issued by the national executive committee prior to every general election. The joint meeting of the two executive committees shall also define the attitude of the party to the principal issues raised by an election which are not covered by the manifesto."

Here the term "programme" is used for what the Maxwell Fyfe committee calls "policy" and the term "manifesto" is used

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for what the committee calls the "programme"; in the committee's eyes the "manifesto" is the final stage assumed by the "programme" before a general election. It does not greatly matter so long as we are clear about the sense in which the terms are used.

However the word is used, the predominant role in the formulation of policy in the Labour Party is played by the party conference, and nothing can be put into an election manifesto unless it has been approved by a two-thirds majority of the party conference; whereas the predominant rule in the formulation of policy in the Conservative Party is played by the leader. (The Maxwell Fyfe committee described him as "the main fountain and interpreter of policy".) The contrast has a historical explanation. In the Conservative Party the leader preceded the conference, whereas in the Labour Party the conference preceded the leader. There was a Tory Party in Parliament for more than 150 years before there was any conservative organization in the country and for about 200 years before there was a party conference. The party in the House of Commons or the House of Lords necessarily had to have a leader, and the leader was often called upon to take quick decisions on the floor of the house. Sometimes he would be able to sound his followers at leisure, but frequently he would not be able to obtain more guidance than could be obtained from whispered consultations on the front bench, and occasionally he might be called upon to take decisions on his own responsibility while standing on his feet in debate. Even during the recesses, when communication with other members was slow and uncertain, he might find himself called upon to take decisions on policy with little opportunity of consultation. In such circumstances it was inevitable that the leaders of the Whig and Tory parties should be invested with great responsibility in the formulation of policy. It is perhaps an anachronism to say that they laid down the policies of their parties. We must be careful not to read into those days the conditions of our own times. Lord Chatham or Lord Bute laid down his own policy, and those who felt as he did clung to him and supported him by speech and vote. When party organization in the country began to arise, after the Reform Bill of 1832, the dominant position of the leader in the shaping of policy remained unchallenged for a long while. The Prime Minister in one of Trollope's novels* whose casual reference to a country

* I apologize to lovers of Trollope for the imprecisions of my reference.

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meeting to the establishment of the church made it a burning election issue might be thought an exaggeration if we did not have the case of Mr. Gladstone thrusting home rule for Ireland upon his party in 1886 almost without consultation.*

When the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations was set up in 1867 it made no claim to dictate policy. Cecil Raikes, one of its founders and its chairman from 1869 to 1874, declared that "the union had been organized rather as what he might call a handmaid to the party than to usurp the functions of party leadership."† The first nine conferences passed no political resolutions. Though no conservative leader to-day could echo the words of Balfour, who is reported to have said that he would as soon consult his valet about policy as the conservative conference, it is still true that the resolutions of the annual conservative conference in no way bind the leader of the party in his formulation of policy. The practice is rigidly followed that the conservative leader does not take part in, or even attend, the annual conference. After the close of the conference it is customary to hold in the same town a mass meeting at which the leader is invited to speak; but the mass meeting is not part of the conference and it is convened for the purpose of hearing the leader, not of telling him what to do. The convention that the leader must be invited to speak at the mass meeting is observed so punctiliously that in a recent year the arrangements nearly came to grief because, through an oversight, no invitation had been sent to Mr. Churchill; when it was learnt that he had no plans to address the meeting, the error was discovered and the invitation hastily sent!

It was Joseph Chamberlain in his radical days who stated the claim for a party conference to settle policy—always with the *arrière pensée* that he would control the conference. When he and Francis Schnadhorst invited liberal associations in 1877 to send delegates to Birmingham for the purpose of forming a National Liberal Federation he expressed the hope that they might see in the federation "a really liberal Parliament, outside the imperial legislature, and, unlike it, elected by universal suffrage and with some regard for a fair distribution of political power". For this reason Disraeli dubbed the federation "the Birmingham caucus". The conception was as alien to the liberal front bench as to Disraeli and they sought how they might control

* See *Gladstone and the Irish Nation*, by J. L. Hammond, pp. 444-5.

† Report of the conference of 1873.

the new body. When Chamberlain broke with Gladstone in 1886 and Schnadhorst adhered to him, the opportunity seemed to come. Nevertheless the federation at its conference at Nottingham in 1887 adopted a series of resolutions on policy which the parliamentary leaders felt obliged to disclaim; and although in the same year Schnadhorst became honorary secretary also of the Central Liberal Federation—"the whip's office" and instrument of the parliamentary leaders—the federation at its conference at Newcastle in 1891 adopted a wholesale programme of reform which seriously embarrassed Gladstone and his colleagues when they took office with a small majority a year later. This conception was therefore already in existence when the Labour Representation Committee was formed in 1900, and it was wholly natural that the Labour Party (as it became in 1906) should begin with the idea that party policy was settled by the party conference. Until 1906 its Members of Parliament could be counted on one hand, and even when it obtained a larger representation the practice of changing the leader every year, which persisted until the first world war, militated against his obtaining a strong position vis-à-vis the conference. The Labour Party in those days had no expectation of holding office, and therefore the conference could lay down any policy it pleased without the restraint that would have come from a leader who might have the responsibility of carrying it out.

The difference between the labour and conservative attitudes has therefore been determined to a great extent by history. But it ought to be added that individuals have always played a bigger part in conservative *ethos* than in labour. (I do not mean that abstraction, "the individual", but particular individuals, whether leaders or lesser men.) In the Labour Party "the movement" is exalted and the part played by individuals is minimized. No phrase is commoner at labour meetings than, "The movement is bigger than any of us." It is part of the ritual after the selection of a labour candidate that he declares himself proud to be the standard-bearer of the party, and if he is successful he tells the electors that he is well aware that they voted, not for his unworthy self, but for the great party he represented. Among conservatives party is deprecated as a necessary evil; and far from a candidate minimizing his importance in relation to the party, his not-always-unspoken thought is that the party is jolly lucky to have his services. The notion that a member of Parliament should suppress his own views because a majority of

his parliamentary colleagues thinks otherwise is made obligatory by the standing orders of the Parliamentary Labour Party but would not occur to conservatives. This colours the party from top to bottom, and there have been few leaders of the Conservative Party, from Peel to Mr. Churchill, who have not been prepared to break with their party, and even to break their party, if they considered this course demanded by the interests of the country. Ramsay MacDonald took the same line in 1931, but the upshot showed that it was a conservative rather than a labour attitude.

The importance of individuals, and especially of the leader of the party, in the formation of conservative policy is well illustrated by Baldwin's decision to go to the country on protection in 1923. Protection for domestic agriculture and industry had again become one of the party's principles as a result of Joseph Chamberlain's campaign between 1903 and 1906; but after the disastrous electoral experience of 1906 conservatives hesitated to place it in the programme. It was "in solitary walks at Aix"* that Baldwin determined to seek release from the fiscal pledges of his predecessor and to deal with unemployment by means of a tariff. "The Cabinet, was evidently uneasy", continues Mr. G. M. Young, "and tried to bind the Prime Minister to a personal statement".† In a speech at Plymouth on 26 October, 1923, Baldwin said: "I have for myself come to the conclusion that . . . having regard to the economic environment, having regard to the situation of our country—if we go on pottering along as we are we shall have grave unemployment with us to the end of time. And I have come to the conclusion myself that the only way of fighting this subject is by protecting the home market."

There was tremendous fluttering in the conservative doves next morning when this statement was read, but in a little while a united Conservative Party went to the polls on this policy; and although it was soundly beaten on that occasion, protection for the home market was written in to the statute book nine years later. The solitary walks of the party leader at Aix had given a sharp turn to the party policy.

The decisive influence of the leader on policy—in a slightly different sense of the word—was again shown in 1931. Neville Chamberlain, already the second man in the conservative hierarchy, stated that on 23 August, 1931 he went to bed expecting

* *Stanley Baldwin*, by G. M. Young, p. 65.

† *Ibid.*, p. 65.

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to see Baldwin at the head of a conservative administration the next day; but what, in fact, he saw was a "National Government" with Baldwin as the principal lieutenant of MacDonald.

If it may be regarded as established that the leader of the party is "the main fountain and interpreter of policy", and that his personal interventions have occasionally been decisive, the sharp contrast between labour and conservative theory must now be qualified. On the labour side, the conference is the final authority in the shaping of policy, but voting on resolutions takes place in accordance with the card system, and the national executive committee of the party is generally able to ensure that a majority of the votes are cast in favour of the policy it desires, or at any rate that two-thirds of the votes are not cast in favour of a policy of which it disapproves. Even though the party conference decides what specific proposals are included in the party programme, it is left to the national executive committee and the parliamentary committee (as the executive committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party is now called) to decide which items from the programme shall be included in the manifesto issued before a general election. A proposal which the party chiefs dislike need never find its way on to an election manifesto. As for those proposals that are included in the manifesto, it still remains for the Parliamentary Labour Party to decide how and when to attempt to obtain their passage; and if the party forms the Government, the effective power of decision rests in the hands of the Cabinet. There are several outstanding cases in which a Labour Government has refused to be bound by emphatic policy decisions of the conference. Before 1945, for example, the conference repeatedly passed motions in favour of creating a Jewish state in Palestine, but between 1945 and 1947 the Labour Government made no attempt to establish a Jewish state in Palestine and directed its efforts to creating a unitary state of Jews and Arabs. For three years running while the party was in office the conference passed resolutions in favour of the abolition of the tied cottage, but Mr. Aneurin Bevan, as Minister of Health, opposed the resolutions on the ground that "while it is the task of the conference to decide policy, it is the onerous task of the Government and the parliamentary party to decide how and when to implement it." Apparently he found this task too onerous.

If labour chiefs can in the last resort ignore the instructions they receive from their party conference, it is equally true that

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the conservative leader cannot afford to ignore the advice received from his party conference. Though conservatives insist that the leader is invested with the sole prerogative of formulating and enunciating policy, and though in the past conservative leaders have sometimes acted on their sole responsibility, to-day the leader is helped with a considerable volume of advice.

Even in olden days, a conservative leader would rarely act without any consultations, but the consultations were generally behind the scenes. It is likely that the leader's consultations would in the first place be with the more senior of his parliamentary colleagues with whom he habitually exchanged confidences in Cabinet or on the front bench. The responsibility for the policy as finally enunciated would be his, but several hands would have gone to its shaping. In every Cabinet—labour Cabinets not excepted—there has usually grown up an inner group of ministers in whom effective power resides. Several foreign writers have come to the conclusion that the control of the British parties is oligarchic, and this is neither unnatural nor unfair. The leadership of the Conservative Party at all stages of its history might certainly be described as oligarchic rather than dictatorial. The Foreign Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer by virtue of their offices are virtually bound to be members of the oligarchy, and it will probably include one or more of the incumbents of the sinecure offices.

Most leaders have come also to rely on unofficial counsellors, and some have been more attentive to the advice of newspapers than others. The responsibility belongs to the leader alone, and he cannot be grudged any means that he finds useful in making up his mind on great issues. The man who "knows his way about Whitehall" will get to know the persons who have the ear of the leader, and they may find it best to convey their own advice through the accepted channels.

The elder statesman has played a bigger part in conservative policy-making than in other parties. Trollope's Duke of Omnium is a type of patrician who can be recognized at all periods of conservative history. Such an elder statesman was the late Lord Salisbury, father of the present marquess. Though he himself never held the highest offices, it would have been inconceivable that any major decision in conservative policy should have been taken without his knowledge.* The part that

* In the case already cited, Baldwin's conversion to protection, it was, for example, he who invited some of his colleagues to meet and consider their attitude. (G. M. Young, *Stanley Baldwin*, p. 66.)

such elder statesmen have played by a combination of birth, force of character, experience and abilities is well understood in the Conservative Party and their role is respected, but to those outside it is sometimes a source of exasperation. When Lloyd George attempted in 1910 to secure a party truce, his proposals found some favour with Balfour and other conservative leaders in Parliament, but Balfour said there was one other man he would have to consult, and he thought Lloyd George would be surprised when he heard the name. His surmise was right. Lloyd George was indeed astonished to find that it was necessary to consult Akers-Douglas, who had been the conservative chief whip but had gone to the House of Lords as Lord Chilston and had ceased to play any public part in political life.*

The back-benchers in Parliament have always been a formidable force in Parliament when they have chosen to organize themselves. A party leader cannot survive unless he has the confidence of the great majority of his followers, and if that confidence is withdrawn, or even sensibly diminished, there is no course left to him except to resign. In older times it was only on occasions of great importance that conservative back-benchers exerted themselves collectively, but in recent generations a highly-articulated system of parliamentary committees has been developed within the Conservative Party as within the Labour Party, and these also are not without their influence on policy.

The whole body of members who receive the conservative whip in the House of Commons is called the Conservative and Unionist Members' Committee, but is still more commonly known as the 1922 Committee from the decisive part it played in terminating the coalition in that year. It is often pictured in the imagination of opponents as a highly sinister body imposing its will upon conservative chiefs. If it had a collective view on any issue and chose to enforce it, the Conservative and Unionist Members' Committee could undoubtedly play a decisive part in the shaping of policy. But the picture entertained by opponents is far from the truth, and a main reason is that the committee differs fundamentally in character from the party meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party. At its full party meeting the Parliamentary Labour Party decides, by a majority vote if

* Lloyd George's embittered comment was: "Mr. Akers-Douglas, however, turned down the project for co-operation in settling these momentous national issues, and there was an end to it. It very nearly came off. It was not rejected by the real leaders of the party, but by men who, for some obscure reason best known to political organizations, have great influence inside the councils of a party without possessing any of the capabilities that excite general admiration and confidence outside." (*War Memoirs*, Vol. II, p. 25.)

necessary, the attitude to be taken by the party on the issues to be debated in the House of Commons. For that reason the party chiefs play an active role in the party meeting, and even when the party was in office Mr. Attlee, Mr. Morrison and other leaders felt obliged to devote much of their time to it. The Conservative and Unionist Members' Committee is essentially a back-benchers' organization, and makes no claims to decide the policy of the party, even when the party is in opposition. The members of the Cabinet or "shadow Cabinet" are members of the committee, but it is rare for them to attend unless invited. The committee normally meets once a week on Thursday evenings to consider the business for the following week announced on the floor of the House a little earlier. Far from being sinister, the meetings are usually small and humdrum. If critical views were expressed by any considerable body of members, they would be conveyed by the chairman or chief whip to the minister or "shadow minister" concerned, and though they would not bind him he could not fail to take them into account. When members are deeply stirred about an issue, the committee can, and does, play a big part in the control of policy; but normally it is content to hear what is proposed.

The Conservative Party in the House of Commons has some dozen committees specializing in particular subjects which are, in effect, sub-committees of the 1922 Committee, and report to it. They correspond to the main ministries or groups of ministries and what has been said about the main body can be applied *mutatis mutandis*, to their role in the formation of policy. A chairman, one or more vice-chairmen, and one or more secretaries are appointed for each of these committees, but there is normally no fixed membership; any member receiving the conservative whip is free to attend, but normally only those members specializing in the committee's subject do so. The minister or "shadow minister" in charge of that subject may be invited to address the committee or to explain his policy, and the committee can play a part in the formation of policy proportionate to the standing of its members. But the Conservative committees do not make the same claims to control policy as the corresponding Labour groups, and their meetings are usually more harmonious.

When any party is in office, the influence of senior civil servants in shaping their policy is bound to be immense; for the civil servant knows facts which the politician cannot know until he has been some time in office. This influence is great even over

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the Labour Party, but it is probably even greater over conservative ministers, inasmuch as conservative ministers tend to hold themselves more aloof from the back-benchers and their party organization than labour ministers. (It is unthinkable, for example, that any conservative Foreign Secretary should have emulated Arthur Henderson, who told the Foreign Office that his policy was contained in a Transport House pamphlet, which he desired to be circulated to the staff.)

These influences—parliamentary colleagues, private friends, newspapers, elder statesmen, civil servants—still have their influence in the shaping of the leader's policy, but the greatest development in the formation of conservative policy in recent years has been the establishment of an advisory committee on policy as a committee of the National Union.

This committee has its origins in the Post-War Problems Committee set up, as a committee of the National Union, in October, 1941. Sub-committees were created with instructions to prepare reports for submission to the leader. The resultant comprehensive report was published as the ideas of the committee, but it was intimated that it was a document on the basis of which party policy might be framed; and many of the suggestions found a place in the manifesto issued by Mr. Churchill for the general election of 1945.

In November, 1945, the post-war problems committee was re-constituted under the name of the Advisory Committee on Policy and Political Education. The members were to be chosen, not as representing any particular section of the party, but because of their knowledge of the subjects to be considered. The work of the committee was to be closely co-ordinated with that of the Conservative Research Department, and in particular its chairman was to be the head of that department. The persons chosen to serve on the committee were approved by the executive committee of the National Union. Mr. R. A. Butler was selected as chairman, and under his leadership the committee produced a number of "charters" and other documents that did much to re-establish public confidence in the Conservative Party after the electoral disaster of 1945.

When the committee or party organization under the chairmanship of Sir David Maxwell Fyfe came to examine the work of this committee it pronounced a favourable verdict, but it thought that the powers of the committee should be defined so that the party should have absolute confidence in it. "What is

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needed", the Maxwell Fyfe report said,* "is a committee so strong that the executive of the National Union will have full confidence both in its examination and in its approval or disapproval of all policy documents submitted to it which are designed to be published under the authority of the party." It was hastily added: "This has nothing to do with governmental decisions or statements when the party is in office. Cabinet responsibility cannot be shared."

The Maxwell Fyfe committee therefore recommended that the Advisory Committee on Policy should be re-constituted and should cease to be concerned with political education. It should consist of a chairman, and deputy chairman, appointed by the leader, and of at least fourteen others, half to consist of peers and Members of Parliament, "to be chosen by whatever means other than his personal choice the leader considers appropriate", and half selected by the executive committee of the National Union from its own members.

This recommendation was accepted by the National Union in 1949. Mr. Churchill appointed Mr. R. A. Butler as chairman and Lord Swinton as deputy chairman. Seven members were appointed by the executive committee of the National Union, five members by the conservative members of the House of Commons and two members by the conservative peers. Though the committee has necessarily played a less active part since the conservatives have again been called to office—for "Cabinet responsibility cannot be shared"—it may prove a big development in the shaping of conservative policy.

Lastly, there have been signs that the conservative conference may wish to take a more active part in the shaping of that policy. Hitherto the conservative conference has been in the main a party demonstration rather than a body for the formulation of policy. Its resolutions have, indeed, been "conveyed" to the leader, but the resolutions have normally been matters on which conservatives have been united. Most resolutions have been carried unanimously or by a substantial majority. When voting has been necessary, a show of hands has usually been sufficient. It is only rarely, as when Mr. Churchill made India a burning question in the thirties, that a division has been called.

It is still too soon to say whether a revolution in the formation of conservative policy was initiated at the conservative conference of 1949 at Blackpool. On October 13 a motion on

* p. 37.

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housing was introduced by Miss Irene Dowling, and Mr. Lionel Heald proposed to substitute for certain words, "to adopt and give high priority in the party's election programme to a strong and courageous housing policy, designed to remedy the present grave situation". Neither the motion nor the amendment mentioned a figure, but at a certain point the following dialogue took place:

"A representative: On a point of order, would it be in order for you, madam chairman, to test the feeling of the conference as to whether the figure of 300,000 houses should be mentioned in the amendment?"

"The chairman: I am afraid it would not be in order. Thank you for mentioning it. I think the conference has that figure indelibly stamped upon their minds."

The mover accepted the amendment, but when the motion, as amended, was put to the conference there was a scene which even the official report described as "uproar". It was evident that the great majority of the representatives present were determined to see a figure of 300,000 new houses a year set as the objective of conservative policy. Lord Woolton, chairman of the party organization, came to the rescue.

"Lord Woolton: This is magnificent. You want a figure of 300,000 put in. (Cries of 'Yes'). Madam Chairman, I am sure that those of us on the platform here would be very glad indeed to have such a figure put in."

And put in it was, though according to a witty contemporary account in the *News Chronicle* by the late Ian Mackay, after saying to the conference, "This is magnificent", Lord Woolton added *sotto voce*, "This is deuced awkward". It certainly seemed awkward to many economists at the time, for the Labour Government had not succeeded in building more than 200,000 houses a year, and to impose the task of building 300,000 houses a year on a conservative administration seemed to be setting it an impossible task, or at any rate a task that could be accomplished only by giving to housing an unjustified share of the labour and raw materials available for building.

The figure of 300,000 houses, like the rest of the resolution, was only advice, and could have been disregarded; but there was no mistaking the wish of representatives to see this made a conservative aim, and it was accepted. Having been accepted, it

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has been found, under Mr. Harold Macmillan's vigorous direction, not to be impossible; it is likely to be achieved this year, and achieved without any obvious injustice to other demands on the building force and building materials.

In the light of this success it may be that the conservative conference will demand a greater share in the formulation of conservative policy in future. It is limited to advice, but the advice may be of such a forceful character that it cannot be disregarded. Personally I should regard this as an unfortunate development. Because the conservative conference was right over the housing aim, on which it was able to draw on expert advice from the industry, it does not follow that it would always be a suitable instrument for the shaping of party policy. The atmosphere of a mass meeting is not conducive to the cool consideration needed for a right judgment on complicated issues. It has been a perpetual *tour de force* to keep the Labour Party from being committed to some folly by its conference, and it would be regrettable if the conservative conference should attempt to control the party chiefs in their assessment of the country's needs. The Conservative Party's method of vesting the formulation of policy in the leader has been attacked as undemocratic, but in fact it is the most flexible and the most satisfactory method yet found. Though there is the theoretical danger that the leader might announce a policy without consulting anyone, in practice it enables him to take the widest possible range of advice without committing him to acceptance of any particular element in it, however influential the quarter from which it may come. Having seen both systems at work, I am left in no doubt that the conservative method is the better.

CONSERVATISM AND LIBERALISM

By CAPTAIN COLIN COOTE, D.S.O.*

"THE Tory Party will be turned into a Liberal Party, and in that transformation may yet produce a powerful governing force."

This prophecy, uttered by Lord Randolph Churchill more than two generations ago, seems to me to express exactly what has happened. The label of the "powerful governing force" remains "Tory", but its contents are composed pretty extensively of what "Liberal" signified in my youth. Perhaps that is why our country is unique in possessing a party openly called conservative which, in spite of adult suffrage, is always a formidable and often a successful contender for office.

The decline of the Liberal Party as another effective and distinct competitor should be no source of pleasure or pride. A melancholy feature of democracy is that a strong Centre Party is always theoretically desirable and never for long practically existent. I remember very well how in the Parliament of 1918-22, rocking beneath the impact of unprecedented problems, large numbers both of the conservative and the liberal supporters of the coalition made a great effort to form a Centre Party. The effort failed completely, though it enshrined a perfectly logical and sensible objective. I should be extremely surprised if any similar effort today to translate into a new political alignment the fact that every party, except the communists, contains a number of people whose views are not so far apart as they seem to be, met with any better success.

The declarations of the Liberal Party that they intend to remain a separate political force and hope to be regarded as an alternative government are magnificent but not practical politics. Balaclavas and Thermopylaes are glorious, but they are not victories. From the moment the Liberal Party became a Centre Party its only hope was occasionally to hold the balance of power in Parliament. Compared with that operation, walking a tight rope for the first time is easy. The job quickly and insensibly becomes walking the plank. Whether we like it or not, the prospects are that in all save a small and declining number of constituencies, liberals will have to decide whether to vote conservative or socialist.

Forty years ago the name "liberal" aroused in many breasts the

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emotions described by Ronsard as produced by the scent of the rose and the sight of his lady. I myself wrote an article to that effect at the time of which I am still not ashamed, because I think that there was and is a distinctive attitude of mind called liberal which has contributed and still contributes (whatever its possessor be called today) to civilized thinking and conduct among mankind. The question therefore is where can such an attitude of mind best find its spiritual home? The answer involves some analysis of political history and of political trends.

Until modern totalitarians revived, with a number of monstrous refinements, the worst features of classical tyrannies, it was always difficult to believe that one's political opponents were not only wrong but damned. Even today, it would be a gross over-simplification to paint in stark black or white any of the political parties whose wits have not been bemused and whose souls have not been withered by the incantations of dialectical materialism. To a liberal therefore, the choice between the Conservative and the Labour Parties may not seem as easy as it does to a conservative or a socialist. I myself was brought up to believe that conservatives and socialists held essentially similar political philosophies. Both believed in extensive and pervasive action by the state.

The idea was not so silly as it sounds today. Fascism and communism are in their philosophy and in their actions quite indistinguishable. The extreme Right and the extreme Left both gravitate towards the same pit. Hitler called his movement national socialism. The tycoons of the Kremlin are a photograph of the tycoons of Berchtesgaden. When we come nearer home, we find Disraeli writing "the divine right of government is the keystone of progress". Five years after Joseph Chamberlain became the liberal-unionist pillar of the Tory mansion he wrote in the *North American Review* on "Some Favourable Aspects of State Socialism". That aspect of his views was why he was anathema to reformists like Bright, Morley, and Gladstone himself. It is true indeed that the Radical section of the Liberal Party had a similar hankering for the displacement of private by state or municipal enterprise; but the Liberal Party as a whole had not. Its motto was "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform". It was a revivalist party, advocating a new heart rather than a new body politic.

In this fact lies the explanation of that measure of affinity which always existed between the Conservative and Liberal

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Parties. The transition to a liberal attitude of mind which, I contend, has been made by the Conservative Party has been an entirely natural one. The previous struggles between the two parties up to 1914 were certainly not sham fights, but underneath there was always a degree of unity about fundamentals. There was certainly little difference between the quality and the content of, say, conversations within the Fourth Party, or between "The Souls", and those delightful and discursive symposia at Mr. Asquith's house near Oxford. The Conservatives had a fringe of Blimps, and the liberals a fringe of bombshells; but their fabric was not essentially dissimilar. As for their differences, it is always unfair to judge a political party by the issues which pre-occupy it at any particular moment. None of the major topics between liberals and conservatives which prevailed from 1880 to 1910 have proved to be permanently controversial. Home Rule has disappeared. The House of Lords has become a subject for a study circle, but not for a crusade. Tariffs have come to be recognized as empirical matters and not as articles of faith.

The taxation of land values has proved barren to the revenue and baffling to the administrator. Withers are no longer wrung by disestablishment. The welfare state has become a balloon blown up by both conservative and liberal puffing—for nothing is more false than the Labour Party's claim that it is inflated by a purely socialist helium. In all these controversies there were always some people, and sometimes many people, in one of the parties which took the view of the other party. Mr. Churchill himself could be fully entitled to argue (as he does!) that he has intermittently changed his party label to suit unchanging views, and not his views to suit a changing assortment of labels.

This fundamental affinity between large sections of the two parties was enormously strengthened by the rise of Labour Party and its gradual obsession by a completely different political philosophy. I say "gradual" because it was not until 1945 that the Labour Party proclaimed itself to be "a socialist party and proud of it". I say "completely different", because nothing in the ideologies of politics is more inane than the contrast between "progressives" and "reactionaries". Some liberals, outwardly and otherwise apparently sane, are still attracted towards the socialist party because it calls itself "progressive". Communists find a similar claim extremely effective in gulling a certain type of socialist into co-operation with them. Europe is littered with the corpses of Left-wingers thus induced to form popular fronts with

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the communists, only to find that a common front is the most convenient formation in which to be stabbed in the back. There is indeed an affinity between communism and socialism because both erect the state into a Moloch. (I have not forgotten the Marxian theory of the state "withering away", but the date for that consummation is obviously the Greek Kalends.) The difference between them is between ruthlessness and flabbiness of method—the communists assassinate their opponents whereas the socialists only slander them. But just as the communists reserve their principal contempt and hatred for socialists, so the socialists fundamentally despise and detest liberals more than anybody else. The occasional advances which communists make towards socialists, and socialists towards the liberals, are purely tactical moves—both are not after political mates but after a political meal.

It may, of course, be argued that conservative advances towards liberals are equally cannibalistic. The official liberal attitude is that both conservatives and socialists are equally anathema. But if the liberal propaganda is studied, it will be found that though the practical points of quarrel with socialism are legion, the case against conservatism rests solely on the allegation that the conservatives do not really mean what they say. This is really a quite unconvincing assertion—it is even contrary to all probabilities. For the inevitable result of the conversion of the Labour Party to state socialism has been to diminish any earlier trend among the Conservative Party to flirt with that philosophy. Some may retort that the Labour Party started in 1900, and that the conservative slide towards liberalism was not noticeable until much later. But in those early days the Labour Party—absit omen!—was little more of an electoral force than the Communist Party is today. There were no more than 40 lib-labs in the enormous liberal majority of 1905; and of those 40 many were reformists. The socialist philosophy was still largely left to so-called intellectuals maundering away in a relative obscurity from which it is a thousand pities that they ever emerged. For the political intellectual is a person equally cocksure about what ought to happen and bewildered by what does happen.

Until the first world war, therefore, the opposing masses were the liberals and the conservatives and there was nothing much else to distract the energies of either from opposing the other. But after the war, when the Labour Party ceased to be frightened of socialism and started to glory in it, the political alignment was

changed. In four and a half years of war, people had got used to the state regulating most aspects of their lives. Since state regulation had evidently been necessary to win military victory, the impression became prevalent that it was equally necessary to win economic prosperity. Few remembered that state regulation had been the child of horror and had gone far to destroy the bases of the economic prosperity built up before it existed and largely because it did not exist.

The Labour Party cashed in politically on this new psychology. It adopted massively the dogmatic, sectional philosophy of the "public ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange". By so doing it became the alternative to conservatism, whose philosophy was, and is, essentially empirical. The Labour Party broke away from the Liberal Party from which it had sprung, and became something wholly different from its parent.

Let us just see, for a moment, how different. The old Liberal Party was deeply attached to the doctrine of free trade. The new socialist philosophy is emphatically protectionist—it has to be, or the closed shop would not last for a moment. The old Liberal Party was against monopolies. The new socialist philosophy is founded on the creation of enormous monopolies. It will be said, of course, that there is a vast difference between private and public monopolies. From the point of view of the consumer, there is no difference at all. Both kinds of monopolies are syndicates to fleece him for the benefit of those engaged in the monopoly. No doubt the idea of those who nationalized our basic industries was to create "public" services. But the idea of those who listened to their propaganda was very different. Their idea was to create sheltered syndicates within which, whatever the general economic climate, a progressively good time would be had by all. The old Liberal Party was a party of economy. The new socialist philosophy is based upon vast expenditure. Indeed without inflation socialism cannot work at all. The old Liberal Party was internationally minded. The new socialist philosophy is narrowly nationalistic. It is true that the socialists started off with a claim that "Left could talk to Left". In fact, Left spits at Left. As I have already pointed out, in the communist vocabulary "bourgeois socialist" is the highest form of abuse. It follows that the talk so prevalent in Bevanite circles, of a "socialist foreign policy", is complete rubbish.

One further point must be made. The tendency of all Left parties is to go further Left. When their theories are applied, and

fail, being dogmatic and not empirical, they never think the theories may be wrong, but only cry that they have been insufficiently applied. Hence that Marxian ectoplasm called Bevanism which is exuding from the Labour Party today, and which will certainly mean that the gulf between liberalism and socialism will widen.

I must leave it to the other contributors to this issue of *The Political Quarterly* to set out in what ways modern conservatism is more attractive to liberals. Anything which I have to say on the point would necessarily be repetitive. I need only point out that the programme and the philosophy which they have delineated makes it nonsense to talk of conservatism as being "reactionary". I would add one fact which has come to my personal notice. Forty years ago the cream of the universities was going Left. Even 20 years ago, the Oxford Union (partly, no doubt, out of adolescent bravado) was passing its resolution about refusing to fight for king and country. In my experience the tendency of the exceptional undergraduate today is to be Tory. That would not be so if conservatism were unconstructive and illiberal.

I have written on the assumption that the Liberal Party can never again become a source of an alternative government. Many liberals may argue that it would so become if only our electoral system were changed. They make rather pathetic calculations about the number of liberal M.Ps. who would be elected under this or that form of proportional representation. Well, if the sky fell, we should no doubt catch a great many larks; but the sky is unlikely to fall and proportional representation is unlikely to come on any larger scale than a restoration of the university seats. Even if it did, and even if there were no great variation in the present virtual equality of the conservative and socialist vote, the liberals would not hold more than the balance of power, and would still have to decide whether to support the conservatives or the socialists. As long ago as 1924, their experience in supporting the socialists was, in Lloyd George's words, to be "goaded along like patient oxen". If such things were done to them by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, what would they experience at the hands of Mr. Morrison—or Mr. Bevan? I see no real alternative for liberals but to become the fifth wheel of the conservative coach, nor do I think the prospect should arouse in them any despondency; for the coach is travelling a road which Gladstone, Rosebery, Campbell-Bannerman, Asquith, and Lloyd George would have been glad to follow.

BOOK REVIEWS

- HAROLD LASKI. By KINGSLEY MARTIN. (*Gollancz*. 287 pp. 21s.)
 THE DILEMMA OF OUR TIMES. By HAROLD J. LASKI. (*Allen & Unwin*. 272 pp. 18s.)
 THE ATTACK. By R. H. TAWNEY. (*Allen & Unwin*. 194 pp. 16s.)

It is an instructive, salutary, and saddening experience to read these three books and the reviews of them which have been published in the daily and weekly papers. It is as though upon the screen of one's mind a mental movie of the sociology and politics of the last fifty years in Britain were thrown with the cynical grimness which belongs to truth. Harold Laski, Tawney, and Kingsley Martin have the same sociological and political background. It is not without significance that all three had paedagogic roots in the London School of Economics, for Mr. Martin, before he abandoned the academic for the journalistic life, was a junior colleague of Laski in the Department of Political Science in Houghton Street. The theory and practice of politics, both on the Right and on the Left, in the first half of the 20th century have been greatly influenced by the staff of the London School of Economics; on the Left, British liberalism and socialism in their modern form were largely moulded in Houghton Street, and professors and lecturers of the School have played a prominent part in the Labour Party and Labour Governments. The extent and range of that influence can be realized by recalling a few of the famous names from Sidney Webb, L. T. Hobhouse, Graham Wallas, and Lord Beveridge to Tawney and Laski and then again to C. R. Attlee, Hugh Dalton, and the late Evan Durbin. Nearly all of these professors and lecturers were, of course, Fabians and the strong Fabian colour which British socialism and Labour Party policy have acquired came very largely from them.

In origin and temperament no two men could be more different than Laski and Tawney, yet in politics and social philosophy they stood always on the same side and for the same things; to public events and the horrible tragedy of European history through which they lived their intellect and their emotions gave them the same reactions. Laski was and Tawney, happily one can still say, is a dyed in the wool intellectual, and that is why their political influence has been narrowly circumscribed and in many quarters bitterly resented, for, although in fact our politics, both in theory and practice, have been to a great extent dominated and directed by intellectuals—from Locke, Burke, and Bentham, Russell, Disraeli, and Gladstone, to Webb and Beveridge, Balfour, Asquith, Churchill, and Attlee—our economic ruling classes, capitalist and trade union, have a dislike of the intellect which amounts to a conditioned reflex, if not a neurosis, and use all the engines of their power to make the public believe that any one who thinks about politics must be either a knave or a fool, and more probably both.

The great organs or manipulators of public opinion, the newspapers, and many of his political opponents habitually represented Laski as both fool and knave. The gross misrepresentation of him has continued post mortem, as many of the reviews of Mr. Martin's biography show; some of

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them which I have read equal, or possibly exceed, in unfairness to book, author, and subject any thing which I can remember. Some of the fault—20 per cent. I should say—can be attributed to Laski himself and his character, but 80 per cent. of the discredit remains on the shoulders of the reviewers and politicians. Mr. Martin's biography is admirable and does not ignore or conceal—as some of these reviewers allege—Laski's faults of character and intellect. These failings of his were serious and the most serious were the most exasperating, because they were so entirely silly and unnecessary. This is particularly true of his habit—of which the hostile reviewers naturally make so much—of telling untrue stories of his relations with great men, what for instance Roosevelt said to him and he said to Roosevelt. This kind of lying is, no doubt, always despicable, the object being to claim untrue intimacy with the great; what was so maddening in the case of Laski was its silliness, because, as letters and documents show, he was intimate with e.g. Roosevelt and the lying was in fact quite unnecessary, so far as personal vanity and prestige were concerned.

Harold Laski's chief vice was vanity, a really childish vanity. When you have said that, you have really come to the end of his serious defects of character. He was a very remarkable and lovable man. He was that very rare thing, a great teacher, as the work which he did at the London School of Economics for a quarter of a century shows. Mr. Martin includes in his book a "tribute" of several pages from Mr. Norman MacKenzie, who was one of Laski's pupils. Such tributes are usually as unconvincing as the formal, stony eulogium on an 18th century tombstone, but Mr. MacKenzie makes one really feel and understand the immense personal influence which Laski had upon hundreds of young men and women. There were three things which, in combination, made him a great teacher. First, the charm of his character; the often misused word "sympathetic" is eminently correct when applied to him. He seemed able to understand and get into good relations with every kind of person, to like and be liked by them, and he treated the humblest as he did the highest; he spared himself nothing in time or trouble if he could help them. Secondly he had a first class brain, a supple and subtle mind, a keen historical sense, an astonishing memory, all of which he put absolutely at the service of his humblest pupil or indeed of any one who sought his advice or assistance. Finally he had that rarest of gifts, intellectual enthusiasm, which is delight in the operations of the mind, the impersonal use of the intellect in the pursuit of truth; and that enthusiasm he was able to communicate to those whom he taught.

As a practical politician, Laski had his weaknesses, but also his strength, and within the limits which he himself set to his own activities he had considerable success. Nothing could be more untrue than the picture of him, drawn or insinuated by political opponents and others with less excuse, of an alien who politically did not understand the country he lived in or the people he lived with. This is not the portrait of a politician elected year after year by half a million votes to the Executive Committee of a political party which provides either Her Majesty's Government or Opposition. Strategically his political judgment was good; an illuminating example will be found on pages 138 and 139 of Mr. Martin's book where the correctness of his judgment and the soundness of his policy in 1940 as regards Hitler and the U.S.S.R. and the Finnish war are clearly shown. His tactics were often less

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sensible and successful, partly because he was habitually overoptimistic and partly because he usually had neither the time nor patience for the interminable tactics in committees which are necessary for success.

Finally there is the question of his stature as a political thinker. His early books on the state and on sovereignty were of great interest and gave promise of high achievement. The promise was never fulfilled. The reason was that he wrote much too much and thought too little. He did too many things to allow himself the time to think or indeed to write, for it is the people who do not give themselves the time to write who write too much. He slipped into the fatal habit of thinking and writing the same thing over and over again, and of writing, not in words with a life and meaning of their own, but in a mechanical jargon. To compare Mr. Tawney's book *The Attack* with Laski's *The Dilemma of our Times* shows the enormous difference between them as thinkers. It is a pity, I think, that this book of Laski's which he neither finished nor revised should have been published. It repeats again and again and again in different words and forms the formula: "The social system of the U.S.S.R. is abominable because the government does X, Y, and Z, but there is this excuse that we or the Americans have done Z, Y, and X." Compare this with Mr. Tawney's book which is a collection of reviews, articles, and lectures and which therefore, a priori, might be expected to be slighter and more ephemeral than a book of 268 pages written about the most vital dilemma of our times. The contrary is the case: there is hardly a page in Mr. Tawney's book which does not throw more vivid light upon the many political and social dilemmas confronting us than the whole 268 pages of the other book. The main reasons are, I think, two. First, Mr. Tawney was given in full measure by the gods, the fairies, or the muses a gift hardly vouchsafed at all to Harold Laski, that very peculiar thing, intellectual imagination. His reason works, his mind analyzes, but then there is a sudden flash, and a light emerges which is something more than a syllogism. In the second place—and it is not entirely unconnected with the first—Mr. Tawney never allows either his thoughts or his words to become mechanical. He gives himself the time to think and write slowly, and every word, sentence, paragraph is individually alive. There is no jargon, therefore, because, as religion is the opiate of the masses, so is jargon the opiate of the intellectual.

LEONARD WOOLF.

RUMOURS OF WARS. By A. J. P. TAYLOR. (*Hamish Hamilton*. 262 pp. 15s.)

IN this interesting book Mr. Taylor touches upon the great international conflicts of the past hundred years. However, those who look for the continuous development of an explicitly stated logical theme running through the various chapters, giving the book coherence, may be disappointed. The first four chapters are in the nature of critical essays in which are assessed the contributions of recent historians to contemporary methods of writing history—Tocqueville, "the despairing conservative prophesying the mass age", Trevelyan, writing from the standpoint of "nineteenth century liberalism", Sir Lewis Namier, originator of the "Namier method",

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Toynbee, "the moral historian", and many more are subjected to Mr. Taylor's pungent criticisms.

Next comes a character sketch of Louis Napoleon, "the man of December", and then we are suddenly plunged into a discussion of the origins of the Crimean war. Each succeeding topic—the detailed history of the rivalry between Austria and Prussia, and of Bismark's contribution to German unity, the painstaking scholarly investigation of the disputes in which Britain was engaged at the turn of the century (i.e. the Boer War and the quarrels with France over the Nile and Morocco), the pen pictures of Queen Victoria and Joseph Chamberlain, each is interesting in itself, and each sheds new light on the subject with which it deals. But the links between them are not apparent. Mr. Taylor gives us a series of brilliant articles rather than consecutive chapters in a historical survey.

The latter part of the book examines the origins of the second world war and of the cold war in which we are now engaged, taking into consideration the characters of the men concerned in the making of policy. Hitler, De Gaulle, Roosevelt, Stalin—a shrewd estimation is made of the personality of each. Caution and honesty are the keynotes of Mr. Taylor's attitude towards the "cold war". He places his finger on the greatest problem facing the western world, when, speaking of Russia and her policy, he says: "We know nothing about it." We can only guess, and Mr. Taylor's guess, as he says, is worth as much as any one else's. In his opinion fear is still the dominant motive in Russian policy, which is fundamentally non-aggressive. We are warned against the error of believing that because conciliation or "appeasement" was in a sense the cause of the second world war, it will necessarily be the cause of all future wars. Mr. Taylor emphasises that Stalin is not Hitler, and suggests that the west should show evidence of good faith. We should not delude ourselves with the hope that Soviet Russia and communism will somehow disappear. Our policy must be practical—"Be strong, be united, and then be friendly."

Mr. Taylor's method of approach is open to the objection that he uses too much the advantages of "hindsight". He is looking at the spring and summer of 1939 through the windows of the present when he minimises the importance of Germany and of Europe generally, on the grounds that the United States and Russia were potentially more important. Power potential has to be accompanied by a positive policy if it is to influence events. In 1939 Russia was pursuing a defensive, and the United States an isolationist, policy. It is difficult to agree with Mr. Taylor that the Chatham House survey *The World in March 1939*, which devotes a great deal of space to Germany and Eastern Europe in comparison with the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union, gives a picture which is out of focus. After all, the two great giants which dominate the international scene today played little positive part in the prelude to the second world war.

The last pages of the book are optimistic. Mr. Taylor believes that the men of the western world are finding a new, practical faith which will help them to solve the problems of the next half century. Let us hope that he is right.

E. JOAN PARR.

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THE PASSING OF PARLIAMENT. By G. W. KEETON. (*Ernest Benn.* 208 pp. 21s.)

OUR PARLIAMENT. By STRATHEARN GORDON (4th edition), (*The Hansard Society.* 247 pp. 15s.)

PROFESSOR Keeton has taken as the theme of his new book a subject of great importance, namely, the immense increase in the power of the executive. In *The Passing of Parliament* he contends that all the forces on which we in Britain have hitherto relied to safeguard us from despotic rulers and to protect the citizen from the overweening power of an omniscient state, have either been swept away or reduced to a position of impotence. Parliament no longer governs but merely criticizes. By acquiring delegated authority "the departments have for all practical purposes established an independent legislative power" (p. 21). The House of Lords has been progressively deprived of its ability effectively to delay, much less impede, the will of the Government. The courts have failed to stem the tide of administrative power and have almost relinquished their historic function of controlling and limiting executive discretion. Impeachment has fallen into disuse. Retrospective legislation imposes liability to taxation on transactions entered into under conditions of legal immunity. Property rights no longer possess any guarantee of security. The land is once again in chains, though now the fetters are fashioned by the state rather than by landowners. Party reigns supreme; and a political party which has a majority in the House of Commons possesses almost unlimited power.

For these reasons Professor Keeton declares that both the rule of law and the sovereignty of Parliament have become polite and increasingly meaningless fictions. We are, he thinks, on the road to Moscow—and one of his chapters bears that very title. "Today, in Great Britain, we live on the edge of dictatorship. Transition would be easy, swift, and it could be accomplished with complete legality" (p. 33). Indeed, the only remaining barrier against absolutism is constitutional ethics, which are now more important than constitutional law.

The Passing of Parliament is written with deep sincerity and an extensive knowledge of public law and constitutional history. In drawing attention to the vast growth of centralized power and the untrammelled sway of the executive, the author diagnoses political and administrative maladies for which we ought to seek and apply appropriate remedies. This is a task which can and should enlist the sympathy and interest of men and women belonging to all political parties.

Unfortunately, Professor Keeton weakens his case by attacking the whole collectivist movement. He appears, indeed, to reject almost all the features of the welfare state. He denounces nationalization in unmeasured terms. He is opposed to the agricultural legislation which imposes minimum standards of efficiency on farmers and agricultural landowners in the social interest. He finds only ground for criticism in our new system of town and country planning, while economic planning is anathema to him. Indeed, one can find in his book no aspect of contemporary policy which he does not roundly condemn. In consequence, his book appears to be in part an eloquent plea for a return to the laissez faire state of the mid-nineteenth century.

At one point the author seems almost to reject political democracy. If, he

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says, we examine the century and a quarter since the first Reform Bill "we can only conclude that the movement to invest the adult population of these islands with political significance has been substantially a failure. Voting was an act of some personal significance when electorates extended to a few hundreds, but the political significance of the vote has diminished with each extension of the franchise" (p. 58). Just what the "political significance" of the vote was before the Reform Bill is shown by some interesting information provided by Mr. Gordon in the new edition of *Our Parliament*. In 1831 Lord Ashley (who later became Lord Shaftesbury) was faced with bills for £15,600 after winning Dorset as an anti-Reform candidate. Of this sum, £12,525 had been paid to public houses for providing free drinks to the voters. In 1820, it cost an unsuccessful candidate £13,000 to contest Carlisle. At Liverpool, Lord Penrhyn spent nearly £30,000 in 1790 in a vain attempt to secure election, while in 1830, no less than £80,000 was spent in the same constituency to bribe 2,060 freemen. In 1816, out of 658 members of Parliament, only 171 were returned independently, while 300 were nominated by peers and 187 by the government or commoners. Boroughs could be bought or sold, and between 1812 and 1832 the market price for a seat was £5,000–£6,000 for a Parliament or £1,800 if rented for a year (p. 58).

Only by overlooking uncomfortable facts such as these, and by ignoring the immense improvement in the condition of the people which has resulted from the working of democratic government during the past 50 years, could Professor Keeton have persuaded himself that public life is worse to-day than it was in the past. In any event, neither Britain nor any other modern state will turn back on the path towards laissez faire. We have to solve our political and constitutional problems in terms of the aims and objectives which appeal to the vast majority of people in our own time. If Professor Keeton could make this the point of departure of his further thoughts and writing, he could perform a service of great value at the present time.

The reference we have made to *Our Parliament* is a typical example of the interesting information which is contained in Mr. Gordon's useful little book. One can discover at a glance in the appendices the number of persons summoned to Parliament at different times, the duration of Parliaments, the hours of sitting, the total number of questions asked each session since 1847, the annual number of public bills, the number of private members' bills introduced and passed each session, etc. The text of the book is mostly descriptive and historical. It is competent, reliable, and unexciting. The penultimate chapter summarizes the various criticisms which have been brought to bear on the Parliamentary institution in recent times. The author closes with an exhortation to the nation to ensure that none but the finest representatives come to Westminster to serve "the matchless political instrument which is the heritage and responsibility of seven centuries of freedom."

W. A. ROBSON.

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THE BRITISH ECONOMY, 1945-1950. Edited by G. T. N. WORSWICK and P. H. ADY. (Oxford University Press. 621 pp. 35s. net.)

THIS work is a notable attempt by Mr. Worswick and Miss Ady, with seventeen other Oxford economists, to write a critical history of the British economy from the end of the war to the end of 1950. As always in collective works of this kind, the quality is uneven; some of the contributions are purely descriptive, and some are so analytical that the facts are lost. But the editing has been well done, and although the contributors write from very different political and technical points of view, there is a general consistency about most of the work, and there is a refreshing desire to be objective and to avoid polemics.

The verdict of Mr. Worswick—whose contributions are the most distinguished—and his collaborators is on the whole favourable. Full employment was maintained—in contrast to the five years following the first world war; industrial and agricultural production and productivity expanded fast and continuously; personal consumption was restrained, so that the expansion of production went where it was needed most—into exports and investment. The export drive, though not enough to prevent repeated crises, scored impressive successes. By 1950, a substantial overall surplus had been achieved in the balance of payments; a great deal of investment had been done, both in industry and in housing; the pre-war level of consumption had been attained—but much more evenly distributed—and a series of major new social services and nationalized industries had come into being. These are accomplishments, as Mr. Worswick says, which “will bear comparison with the recovery of any other country which was in any way directly damaged by the war”, and those who have disparaged these achievements have done their country grave disservice.

This favourable verdict by the Oxford economists does not, however, carry with it by any means an unqualified approval of the course of policy during this period. The over-anxiety to avoid unemployment led to a persistent tendency to “err on the side of inflation”; the “cheap money” policy gave a fillip to inflation at the time when inflation was the danger; the nationalization experiments failed to provide a quick solution to the problems which they had been designed to overcome. There was an underlying inconsistency in international economic policy between the aim of freer world trade reflected in the international undertakings to which successive Governments had become committed, and internal policies which relied upon import and exchange controls to insulate the economy. The contributors themselves seem to tend to under-estimate both the importance of the role which Marshall Aid played, and the uniquely favourable conditions for our export trade in this period, with widespread discriminatory restrictions against United States exports, Germany and Japan still only in the first stages of recovery, and a great re-stocking demand, spurred on by high commodity prices, in most of the main markets of the world.

The book is a good illustration of the perils that beset the writer of contemporary economic history. The book runs to December, 1950—to the flood-tide of United Kingdom recovery. Some of the contributors have carried their stories into 1951, but they have been unable to give a measured judgment on the events of that year. One is bound to wonder whether, if they had taken December, 1951 or December, 1952 as their terminal point

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instead of December, 1950, the conclusions would have been the same. Or would the violence of the 1951 crisis have led them, after mature reflection to wonder whether there were not greater weaknesses in the structure in 1950 than the analysis suggests? Mr. Worswick says that “the crisis of 1951, and indeed the earlier crises of 1947 and 1949, were caused to a greater or less extent by changes in the outside world”. And so in a sense they were, for any external financial crisis must by definition be the result of an impact of external forces upon the internal economy. But it is the United Kingdom which is the sufferer from these repeated crises, and it is cold comfort that they are caused by changes in the outside world. It is surely the nature of the United Kingdom economy that it is highly vulnerable to changes in the outside world; ability to resist these pressures and to adapt to world change—both in the short-term and in the long—is a vital condition for our economic survival. The reconstruction of 1945-1950, though successful in many ways, did not give strength to the economy at this its most vulnerable and vital point.

Looking at this important book in the after-knowledge of the 1951 crisis, indeed, the layman is inclined to ask whether Mr. Worswick and his collaborators have really asked themselves the right questions about the period 1945-1950. They have devoted close attention to the translation into public policy of the Keynesian revolution in economic thought, and they have given much consideration—though without reaching any clear conclusions—to the bearing of full employment and the welfare state upon incentives and the lifespings of economic progress. But they have devoted so much thought to what one might call the tactics of the management of the national economy—the manipulation by the Government of the flow of incomes in a way which will avoid inflation and deflation—that they have tended to ignore the strategy. In particular, the layman finds in this book no answer to the most baffling question of all—that of whether a great international debtor country dependent upon imports for its whole existence, can both conduct the range of internal policies which are accepted in this book as axiomatic and maintain its external financial stability and flow of essential imports without foreign aid or repeated crises . . . and if it can, how it does it. It is clear that the post-war reconstruction of the United Kingdom has not decided this question. If it cannot be decided in the affirmative, then the whole superstructure of policies and analysis discussed in this book must be regarded as being of very doubtful validity. It is to be hoped that in their next volume, Mr. Worswick and his collaborators will be able to concentrate upon this decisive question, and find a satisfactory answer.

THE BRITISH IMPACT ON INDIA. By SIR PERCIVAL GRIFFITHS. (Macdonald. 513 pp. Maps. 45s.)

THE INDIA I KNEW, 1897-1947. By SIR STANLEY REED. (Odhams. 262 pp. 21s.)

ASIA AND THE WEST. By MAURICE ZINKIN. (Chatto and Windus. 300 pp. 15s.)

THE failings of the British way of political thinking are the defects of its virtues. We see political developments in almost geological terms. The rocks of political institutions, we say, have been laid down, strata after strata, over the ages of time. What was grown as a green wood may decay, but does

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not disappear; pressed down, it becomes the seam of coal which supplies a later generation. Nothing is completely lost; everything is conserved and acts as a foundation for something that follows. In the same patient fashion, the contours of our present political life have been formed by the weathering of political climate, the steady erosion by the several streams that irrigate and keep fresh that countryside. But geology knows more than slowness and patience; it knows also the cataclysmic eruption and the sudden inundation. And so, whether we choose to notice it or not, does politics—even when under the best management.

In fact, we often do choose not to notice. Consider, for instance, the reflections of most of us about the date August 15th, 1947. It is true, we admit, that on that day India became independent. But, we hasten to add, this was only the culmination of a process which began certainly with the British Government's 1917 declaration, perhaps with the reforms of the 1860's. It was, moreover, a step envisaged even earlier; this day was after all—and now we really warm to our theme—the day Macaulay had foreseen in 1833 as the proudest in English history, and not only Macaulay, but others before him. And somehow we seek to imply that change anticipated is hardly change at all. (As if starting to contemplate the age of eighty in childhood is likely to make it any less than eighty when it is reached!) We also try to minimise the extent of the change itself. We point out that India remains a Dominion—and, when even that ceased to be true in 1949, that she is still a member of the Commonwealth.

This is an amiable habit, for it discourages the dramatic view of politics and may do much to discourage dramatic politics. The belief that politics observes a gentle, unobtrusive and gradual law of nature is perhaps the best way of making politics gentle, unobtrusive, and gradual. But it suffers from one big drawback: seeing little change where in fact change has occurred, we often fail to adjust our ideas with appropriate agility. Ice is water, and water is steam, but it is foolish to behave towards each in the same way.

On August 15th, 1947, the British Empire in India came to an end. Here, if anywhere, was an epoch-making event in the most proper sense of the phrase. Those conservatives in Britain (and there were a few in India, too) who chose vivid and colourful language in which to express their alarm may not have had their hearts in the right place nor their ears attuned to the melodies of history, but they were more right than the rest of us in recognizing that some big meaning attached to that moment; the colourful language was not ill-chosen.

The Empire in India, then, is dead; if we wish to turn this into a slogan by adding "Long live the Commonwealth", let us at least try to be clear as to what is entailed. Now one of the great advantages of Empires is that so long as they are going concerns, everyone involved, whether ruler or ruled, knows with adequate precision what is required of him. Thus, on the British side, business man, missionary and soldier alike knew his job and did it without apprehension or doubt. And so, above all, did the administrator, the member of the "steel frame" of the Indian Civil Service. The British ruler—whether Viceroy or Home Member in the Executive Council, Governor or Chief Secretary in a Province, Deputy Commissioner or Judge in the districts—knew his role and was dedicated to it, recognized a code of conduct and to an astonishing extent adhered to it.

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But a Commonwealth—what is expected of a member or partner of this new kind of association? The Empire is dead and so I am presumably no longer my Indian brother's keeper; but have I nothing to do with him? Or "only" so much as common humanity demands? Or a little bit extra because of the communist danger? Or what? It is no doubt natural that we should be somewhat unclear on these points; the new Commonwealth really is new, and it really is a very subtle and delicate affair. Yet we have to try to build a new pattern of responsibilities and expectations, and we have to build on a recognition that a profound change has taken place. One feature of the change can perhaps be stated: whereas Empire required a system of duties which demanded much of a few, the new Commonwealth will demand something of most of us. The British Empire in India relied to a great extent on the devotion of the Indian Civil Service élite and called for little on the part of the British public. The new connection between Britain and India may well ask something of certain groups—businessmen, technicians, scholars—but it is almost certain to require the sympathetic understanding of the public opinion in this country. Partnership and co-operation are not less exacting than Empire, only exacting in a new way.

Asia and the West need each other and India's connection with the Commonwealth is central to this relationship. But before this partnership can begin to work effectively, we have to know each other better than we do. What India has to offer and what India needs—and I do not, of course, speak of material things alone—have to be more generally understood. India's independence makes it possible, perhaps for the first time, for us to see each other straight and see each other whole.

The three books under review are at once a sign that this is happening and an influence in the desired direction. The books of Sir Stanley Reed and Sir Percival Griffiths are both concerned with the past, but they are both most relevant to the task of spreading understanding of India; for the Britisher, the starting-point must be an objective assessment—so far as possible—of the Empire that is dead. Until we are reasonably clear on that, we shall be hazy about what the future requires.

Sir Stanley Reed's book is a personal story, a memoir of Bombay life in the first quarter of the present century. It is a chatty tale, but the conversation is interesting. The author was for much of the period editor of the important *Times of India* and in that capacity was on the fascinating fringe of the political struggles in the municipality, in the province, and at the centre. He met and knew most of the actors in the drama and had to think out critical yet responsible judgments on them and their actions. These he now reproduces in attractive form.

Sir Percival Griffiths has attempted and succeeded in achieving a more systematic survey of the whole period of British rule. He has read widely and covers a great deal of ground, yet so well has he digested and arranged his material that the result is most readable and affords an admirable introduction to the subject. After a sketch of Indian history up to 1858, he discusses the British impact in terms of administration, politics, and economics. In all this, description and discussion are well balanced and the judgment is that of the serious student supported by the exceptional experience of a career in the Indian Civil Service, in the Legislature, and in commerce and industry.

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The same combination of administrative and commercial experience is brought by Mr. Zinkin to his task. His book is much more directly addressed to the present problem, and is inspired by a proper sense of urgency, while supported by a good deal of careful and valuable statistical data not otherwise readily available. His book is not restricted to India—it is an economic guide book to the new Asia—but he agrees in thinking India central to the theme. It is a compact and well ordered work of reference; it is also one of the most important and exciting books on its subject.

Here then are three very different books. Each has tackled a useful job and each has done it well. All three authors have been moved to write by that real and profound affection for India which is so valuable a starting point and aid to understanding. Together they should constitute a substantial contribution to the education of the West.

W. H. MORRIS-JONES.

THE DECLINE OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA, 1855-1914. By HUGH SETON-WATSON. (Methuen. 406+xvi pp. 32s. 6d.)

THE hypnotic condition which the Russian revolution has so often produced in the observer of its vast economic and political effects is not a good one for intelligent understanding. A messianic coming, like the triumph of good over evil or evil over good, is a matter for belief or unbelief not appraisal. Yet the revolution is more than a date in the Marxist calendar; it is an event in Russian history. And increasingly the questions which it would seem most profitable to ask about it have that connection. How complete a break with the past did it really make? How inevitable was it and how likely to be unchanging in its main features? For, although generally there is little to be gained from speculating on historical might-have-beens, some assessment of the forces and values the revolution overthrew may suggest Russia's relationship to the main stream of modern European history and to the common ideas which make possible human communication across political frontiers.

Professor Seton-Watson's book illumines the Soviet Russia of today. It does so mainly indirectly, however, for that is not the task he set out to perform. This was not so much to draw parallels between present and past or suggest where ideas or practices have been inherited by one regime from the other. Rather is it a purely historical study made with impressive objectivity, coldly rational and rarely impinged upon by emotion. But anyone reading it with attention and imagination will find many things that should help him to understand the behaviour and language of present-day Russia. This is partly because, after all, some of her leaders grew to maturity against the background here described, and partly because most of them had their ideas formed so largely by it. The atmosphere of autocracy, oppression, imprisonment, exile, and conspiracy, factional strife, revolutionary plotting, sometimes exposed and sometimes assisted by the secret police, clouds the scene and renders interpretation extremely difficult. The threads are so diverse that the pattern is not easy to see.

There are two recurring themes in this particular interpretation. The first, fairly familiar, is the arrant stupidity of the autocracy. This makes it more astonishing that it survived as long than that it ultimately collapsed, more

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surprising that it was able to carry on the war of 1914, materially contributing to the allied victory and even achieving some success against the central powers, although understanding so little of the requisites for the conduct of the war, than that it should have plunged ultimately to so disastrous a defeat. But, at least to a mind schooled in the western experience of modern political development, it would appear patent that there could be no hope for the monarchy when it was controlled by a man who refused utterly to contemplate any change that would set constitutional limits to his despotic power. That being so, it would seem that the recurring theme of lost opportunity is unreal, for the opportunity could lie only in a direction that was already ruled out. Whether an effective alliance between the two forces which were growing by 1914, of an industrial proletariat "with a considerable education, skill, and class consciousness" and a bourgeois middle class, could ever have forced the Tsar to cease to rule it out, was a question that was never posed and can now never be answered. As it was, "the Russian professional revolutionary" was "essentially the product of a society in which the nineteenth or twentieth century intellectual is driven to revolutionary action by the spectacle of his people living in the Middle Ages and unable to climb out of them, a situation in which the links between the intellectual and the people are, and can be, only very tenuous." It may have been true that "Russia was drawing rapidly nearer to Western Europe. In such conditions the conspiratorial revolutionary was becoming an anachronism, and was so regarded by a growing number of Russian Marxists." But the war determined that it was too late.

The second recurring theme of Professor Seton-Watson is that there was no predestined rightness about the thesis of Lenin who "in 1917 came into his own. Yet if history had not made him a present of chaos his talents might have been wasted in the frustration and intrigues of exile. . . . The course of military events in 1914-17, and the proved suitability of Lenin's revolutionary tactics to the Russian developments in 1917, do not prove retrospectively that the Bolshevik 'line' from 1903 onwards was 'correct', 'scientific' or historically predestined." In many of the most fundamental factors on which he relied he was proved wrong: revolution outside Russia did not come.

A third theme, perhaps of greater importance today, is that there is nothing in the history of this period to show that Russians are by nature outside the pale of western political institutions and methods. "The Soviet regime was imposed, and is maintained, by force and terror" showing similarity to, but far more efficient than, the Tsarist terror. "The comfortable dogma that the Russian people neither understands nor desires representative institutions, is not justified by the election campaigns of 1906, 1907 or 1917, in which not only townsmen but also peasants clearly showed the desire and ability to choose who should represent them. Still more groundless is the assertion that the Russian people does not value personal liberty."

But there are also two ways in which the Soviet system stands in a line of clear development from Russia's recent past. The first can be traced back to Chernyshevski's belief that the interests of the people could be served by despotic methods, that it was possible to be a democrat and not a liberal. The second is the Slavophil belief in Russia's special mission, not to learn from Europe but to contribute a new principle. This again is constantly recurring.

H. R. G. GREAVES.

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MAU MAU AND THE KIKUYU. By L. S. B. LEAKEY. (*Methuen*. 115 pp. 7s. 6d.)

INTRODUCING EAST AFRICA. By MONA MACMILLAN. (*Faber*. 312 pp. 21s.)

DR. LEAKEY was born and has lived among the Kikuyu most of his life: he speaks their language fluently, and is a member of one of their age-groups. His main work has been on pre-history: but he has written with the help of his Kikuyu friends a long book as yet unpublished on the customs of the tribe. He has produced this short book now to help Europeans to understand their grievances, real or imagined; it was our original failure to understand the Kikuyu customs, especially about land-tenure, which led up to the present discontent.

The book falls into two parts: the first part describes the organized life of the Kikuyu before the intrusion of the white man: land held individually, not tribally, and inalienable without the consent of the family (in its wide Kikuyu sense); the payment of "bride price", acting as insurance for the stability of the union; a rough birth-control, allowing an interval of three years between births; education for right conduct continuing all through a man's life; drunkenness (except for grandfathers) and stealing strongly reprobated and causing social ostracism; oath-taking as a means of settling difficult disputes. Oath-taking was an effective sanction: it involved a man's family and relations, and they would not let him invoke the curse unless they felt sure he was in the right. And in contrast to the Mau Mau oath, the ceremony had to be voluntary, in public, and by day.

Unfortunately, at the time the white man came wanting land (about 1902-1907) the Kikuyu had just been decimated by four plagues: small-pox, rinderpest, famine, and locusts; and part of their land was temporarily unoccupied. And the coming of the white man, while it decreased the land, increased the population; war and epidemic disease were stopped, and along with other tribal discipline went birth-control.

What is the remedy? Something the African can do for himself; he can relearn birth-control in modern terms; he can abolish the bride price, which now only acts as an additional economic burden. But the main remedies can only be supplied by government, and they all require skill, patience, and much money. Additional land outside can be found; but big irrigation works will be necessary. The title to land already occupied can be regularized by a comprehensive survey. And better and more permanent houses can be provided in the towns. Besides these economic difficulties, there are the imponderables. The real Christians among the Kikuyu have clung to their faith with the heroism of martyrs. But many Africans have abandoned the old religion with its magic sanctions, without acquiring the new. And, of course, the colour bar must go which prevents taking an African friend for a meal into an hotel that admits the worst behaved European.

Dr. Leakey's sympathies are naturally with his brother Kikuyu, but he holds the balance fairly, and recognizes all the benefits brought by the white man. His is an interesting and valuable book; it should help to clear away basic misunderstandings.

The title of Mrs. Macmillan's book is a little misleading, suggesting that East Africa has not been introduced before; whereas this is a book of the

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same kind as *Sorcerer's Apprentice* and *Last Chance for Africa*. It suffers too from its method of composition; published in December 1952, it is largely based on journeys taken in 1949 and 1950; things have been moving fast in East Africa and some of the statements are out of date. For instance, Makerere students no longer live in "small cells" in a "dreary place" (if they ever did); their present quarters would compare favourably with new buildings at Oxford or Cambridge. It is now a doubtful statement that Uganda advanced education leads East Africa.

Even in 1949 the route from Kampala to Cairo was no more "precarious" than that from London to Paris. And some inaccuracies are not due to time; there never has stood "a Roman Catholic equivalent school" (whatever that means) beside the Alliance High School at Kikuyu: and its Principal, Mr. Carey Francis, never has been "the Rev." Most serious of all is the inaccuracy of the map at the end of the book, useful though it is; at the foot it rashly claims to show "practically all reliable roads and railways". People at Kitale would be surprised to learn that they have no link by road or rail with Eldoret; still more those of Kisumu, the original railhead of the line, that they are completely cut off from Nakuru and Nairobi.

But perhaps inaccuracies are unimportant in a book of this sort. Certainly I enjoyed reading the part about Tanganyika, which I could not check. Mrs. Macmillan sees the country with a woman's eye; she is interested in the dress of African women, in the comforts and discomfort of the white woman's home. She rightly points out that the Kikuyu in spite of their vaunted progress treat their women worst of any tribe in East Africa. It is hard to forget the sight of a Kikuyu man strolling along swinging his stick, followed by his wife bent double under a load, held by a strap round the forehead, which would tax a Swiss porter. Due credit is given to the charming manners of the African; Mrs. Macmillan describes how when you hand something to an African or give him your hand, he takes your hand between both his, "as if it were infinitely precious". On the other hand a memsahib at the Rift Valley Farmers' Club had to be carried to her car at two o'clock in the afternoon. Not that Mrs. Macmillan is biased against the settlers; she wisely observes: "The rather rough and ill-tempered expressions of . . . dissatisfaction with Africans so often on European lips do not mean a corresponding rough treatment of Africans themselves. On the contrary they are the safety valve for the strain on patience and temper, and few casual visitors understand this."

The book is pleasant reading, in spite of the liberal use of exclamation stops. (Surely one might have been spared for the statement that the Chagga have so cleverly devised their water channels, that "in places the water actually runs uphill".) And if a criterion of a book of this sort is the degree in which it makes the reader want to visit the places described, it deserves high praise. I long to go and visit the Southern Province of Tanganyika.

F. M. HICKS.

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THE BRITISH GENERAL ELECTION OF 1951. By D. E. BUTLER. (*Macmillan*. 289 pp. 21s.)

BRITISH psephology—the study of elections—is now becoming firmly established, for this is the third of the series of surveys of British General Elections to be sponsored by Nuffield College. This volume is similar to its predecessors, although there are some innovations. Mr. Butler has made an investigation of the work of party headquarters during a campaign, and has given us some stimulating comments on election broadcasting and telecasting. There is also a series of reports from half a dozen constituencies in widely separated parts of the country contributed by observers drawn from the university world. The chapter on the election in Northern Ireland by Mr. Neill is fascinating; it serves to show once again how far the spirit of a democracy depends not upon constitutional law, but on conventions which are the result of the prevailing attitude to matters of political organization. In general, this book makes more attractive reading than the account by Mr. Nicholas of the 1950 contest as there is less recapitulation of events we have forgotten. Yet one omission, common to the earlier volumes, is exasperating. The actual election returns, constituency by constituency, are nowhere to be found; the presence of seven pages at the end of the book which are innocent of print renders their absence unforgivable.

Mr. Butler, who was responsible for the statistical analysis in the earlier volumes, has again made a careful examination of the results. The myth that “Bevanite” candidates fared better than other Labour candidates is dispelled, and it is shown that M.Ps. with a long record of service in a constituency have little advantage over newcomers. But in spite of the phrase quoted from a midland constituency—“I would vote for a pig if the party put one up”—neither of these propositions proves that the personality of a candidate is wholly unimportant. It may be that ageing members who have held their seats for some years are rather below the average quality of all M.Ps. It may be that “Bevanite” candidates tend to have oratorical powers which compensate for the effect which their opinions have on the marginal voter. The calibre of the individual candidate cannot be evaluated by statistical enquiry and it would be unfortunate if references to averages gave the impression that it had no effect on the final results.

The probable redistribution of the Liberal vote caused by the absence of a Liberal candidate in 1951, or resulting from a fall in the Liberal vote in constituencies which had a Liberal candidate in both 1950 and 1951, is considered in some detail. In a few seats the ex-Liberal vote must have been divided about four-to-one in favour of the Conservatives; at the other extreme Labour seems to have won the support of a slight majority of ex-Liberals in a few areas. This is a most important variation and one which would repay further study. Are there any factors common to those constituencies where ex-Liberals were markedly pro-Conservative, or where they were most sympathetic to the Labour cause? Or has this variation any connection with the character of the Liberal candidate in 1950? The material collected in the preparation of these Nuffield surveys should provide some pointers on these questions, and my chief quarrel with Mr. Butler is that in reviewing the results he refuses to speculate on this type of problem. He is

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careful not to argue that his figures prove more than they do, but when the figures fail him the discussion comes to an end.

Two features of the 1951 contest were unusual in British electoral experience. The campaign was not predominantly an inquest on the past record of the majority party and, if public opinion polls mean anything at all, the campaign did have a considerable influence on the result. Although not more than 3% of the voters were converted by the campaign, because of the working of our electoral system, this conversion reduced the Conservative majority in the Commons by up to one hundred seats. In his book Mr. Butler has been very careful not to relate these two features of the election. The “war-mongering” issue is dealt with in a most objective fashion, and the evidence of the opinion polls, showing a steady swing to Labour in the month before polling day, is set out separately in another chapter. Such restraint demands admiration.

What is the value of these election studies? No doubt they will be of use to historians in later years. If this book has any considerable sale abroad it will increase international understanding of the British way in politics: a work of equal standard on the recent American presidential election would be welcome. And professional politicians will study with care the tables which show the implications of the cube law. So far so good. But will psephologists of the future move on from statistical analysis and the narration of contemporary events to an examination of *why* people vote as they do? They may aim to discover the most potent forms of political persuasion. Would the results of such enquiries tend to lower the level of political argument at election times? Are the stunt, the scare, or irresponsible demagoguery the surest roads to a parliamentary majority? These questions are not new; what is new is that they may soon be answered with some pretence to authority. Mr. Butler does well to hint at these problems; any refusal to face them implies the belief that our democracy has been founded partly on illusions about the responsibility of the British electorate.

PETER G. RICHARDS.

SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, 1939-1946: THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE WAR. By GEORGE KIRK. Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. (*Oxford Press*. xiii + 511 pp. 42s.)

THE Middle East, for Mr. Kirk's purposes, is the entire western Moslem world from Morocco to Persia, with a southwards glance to Abyssinia and the Somalilands, but excluding Turkey. All the countries comprised in that general definition, except Israel, are primitive or semi-primitive. All have, in recent years, claimed the right to stand on their own feet, to shake off the last remnants of European tutelage. The war of the great powers between 1939 and 1946 was, for most if not all, irrelevant *per se*; their only concern was the extent to which they could use it as an opportunity for further steps to independence, playing off one belligerent against another, associating with none except when there were definite advantages to be gained thereby.

There is material in the tale of the impact of the war on these peoples for a tremendous piece of historical writing, a social and political document of the

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highest significance to a world in which European domination is dying everywhere. The chief criticism that must be made against Mr. Kirk's book is that it does not try to be that. It is (and this must be made clear from the start) a massive work of scholarship, in which a huge assemblage of facts has been sorted, evaluated, and woven into a coherent and readable narrative, which suffers only occasionally from the ponderousness of style that the atmosphere of St. James's Square seems to encourage in those who write for Chatham House. It deserves to be read both by the serious historian and by the general reader if he is not deterred by the regrettably high price. Also, and because it is so valuable even in its present form, it deserves considered criticism.

Much of the material dealing with the causes and nature of the internal changes in the area is to be found in the book. But it is still not a history of the Middle East in the war. It is a history of British policy in the Middle East, and every event described, every movement analysed, is viewed from the angle of its impact on British interests and behaviour. Rashid Ali is not described in terms of his place in Iraqi politics nor Ali Maher as a figure in Egyptian history; they appear in the story because they impeded British designs. Dentz, Catroux, and de Gaulle are not to be seen as men attempting to preserve a particular type of semi-imperial control which an Arab might be forgiven for not distinguishing from the British, but as embarrassments to the London government and the Cairo headquarters—a pity, this, because a comparative study in French and British handling of the Arab world would be useful. David Ben Gurion and the Jewish Agency are less the exponents of a new nationalism than disloyal plotters against the security of British forces.

Moreover, two of the main characters in the story are missing almost altogether. I have not studied the German and Italian source material for this period in this area, but I should be surprised if there was not a great deal more than Mr. Kirk uses; a few quotations from the press of both countries and from the Nuremberg dossiers are all. The Italians pass lightly over the pages, gorgeously arrayed figures of fun who were refused as fares by a Damascus taxi-driver. Neither their policy nor that of the Germans is effectively analysed, though surely it consisted of more than purely tactical support for "anti-British" politicians. Early in the war the Axis was confident of success in the Middle East; had they no idea of what they were going to do with the area, and were they not preparing the ground beforehand? Mr. Kirk does not even ask these questions.

These are the chief structural shortcomings of the book. Yet these are not what will irritate the reader most. I do not mean it as a disparagement when I say that reading it made me really cross; for Mr. Kirk is a man of many prejudices which seldom coincide with mine, and the whole study is stamped with his personal views. He is anti-Zionist and anti-Free French above all. But he does not suppress or distort facts—he is much too good a historian—but simply interprets them in a highly individualistic way which (to my mind) adds to the fascination of his narrative, even when it makes one most angry.

Zionism and the Free French were, after all, two of the main political factors in the wartime Middle East. After serving in Palestine for most of two years I came away a convinced Zionist, though I could understand why some of my colleagues did not. I do not think that Mr. Kirk properly assesses the Jewish attitude to the British during the White Paper period. His account of

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the *Patria* incident is, I suspect, not quite accurate, and there is much more to be said than he tells about the arming of the Haganah. Jewish opinion was deeply divided on many of the most important issues, but the tragedy of British policy was that it compelled even the most moderate Jews to despair of persuasion as a political instrument. As for the Free French—yes, they were difficult allies, though the fault was less completely theirs than Mr. Kirk suggests. He has some delightful hints of the atmosphere in Beirut when nerves were at their tautest; I wish he had said a little more, though I suppose it might have provoked libel actions.

Despite the criticisms, this book should be read. I am surprised that anything so individual escaped from Chatham House. But if I must choose between the Olympian detachment of earlier Chatham House Surveys and Mr. Kirk's subjectiveness, I prefer Mr. Kirk.

T. E. M. McKITTERICK.

THE PRIVATE PAPERS OF SENATOR VANDENBERG. (*Gollancz*. 559 pp. 25s.)

THIS collection of extracts from the private papers of the late Senator Vandenberg presents a valuable picture of the average American caught up in the maelstrom of war-time and post-war international politics. The Senator was notable for what he did, and the manner in which he did it, rather than for what he was. His letters and diary entries reveal a man with little taste for international diplomacy. His sense of duty to his country and his recognition of the new and unavoidable role of the United States forced him to work

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for the establishment of an international authority whose ultimate purposes were never clear to him and whose day to day operations often left him mystified. His approach to international issues was that of the intelligent newspaper reader whose basic desire for peace burdened him with a duty to persevere in spite of all setbacks. His reporting of the great events in which he was so important a participant was accurate, commonplace, unreflective and free from any attachments to concepts of grand strategy or theories of diplomacy.

The Senator worked desperately hard on the United Nations, but one feels his sense of relief when he has to turn from his international labours to the more familiar and congenial task of expounding and defending his policies to his Senate colleagues. There he was confident; there he had no doubts as to what he could achieve, and his most important task was to fight at the United Nations for lines of advance and statements of objective which would receive the overwhelming support of the Senate. The tragedy of Woodrow Wilson was always in his mind. This mastery of the Senate was his greatest contribution to the new internationalism of the American republic.

Vandenberg's progress from isolationism to internationalism is the epitome of the American conversion. In 1939, a staunch though never a rabid, isolationist, he took a full part in the discussion of Roosevelt's "provocative" policy towards the Axis. His isolationism was in no way mitigated by his opportunities for contact with the diplomats in Washington. Indeed he complains that he and his Senate colleagues were wholly ignorant of the reasoning behind Roosevelt's foreign policy before Pearl Harbour. (This is an interesting point for those who think that the congressional system of government gives the legislature an excessive amount of information and excessive opportunities for interference with the policies of the Executive.) Pearl Harbour changed his attitude, but did not change his suspicions about the false objectives of earlier "lend-lease" policies. How far the Senator convinced against his will allowed doubts about the Roosevelt policy to affect his views as a United Nations delegate is an important question. He suspected the intentions of the British, French and Russians during the war years, but any evil plans for imperial aggrandizement which Britain and France may have harboured paled into unimportance beside the twin problems of Russian obstinacy at San Francisco and the legacy of Yalta. In urging the repudiation of unjust settlements made by the Roosevelt administration the present Republican leadership is acting in accordance with the Vandenberg testament. But would he have wished a formal repudiation of Yalta in 1953? The question is worth asking, for, lacking a clear alternative to the Security Council device, Vandenberg continually forced himself to accept the unacceptable.

In his unhappy progress from isolationist to internationalist Senator Vandenberg did his duty towards peace; but old doubts crowded in upon new situations, and new problems refused to be solved without some looking back at old principles and prejudices. In this, as in his determination to put present practice upon some basis of equity, and to build imperfectly, rather than not to build at all, the senator was a true representative of the American people who, so recently, have had international greatness thrust upon them.

R. H. PEAR.

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SHORTER NOTICES

POLITICAL TRACTS OF WORDSWORTH, COLERIDGE AND SHELLEY. *Edited*
by R. J. WHITE. (Cambridge Press. 303 pp. 30s.)

THIS is an extremely interesting and valuable book. Mr. White, who is a Fellow of Downing College, has collected in this volume five political tracts, written between 1809 and 1821, and which, as Mr. White says, their authors intended as "Tracts for the Times", beacons in the political darkness of the Napoleonic wars. The five tracts are: Wordsworth's *Convention of Cintra* (1809), Coleridge's *The Statesman's Manual* (1816) and *A Lay Sermon* (1817), and Shelley's *A Philosophical View of Reform* (1819-20) and *A Defence of Poetry* (1821). Only one or, at most, two of these have hitherto been easily obtainable, and collected in a single volume they give an illuminating picture of the reactions of three great poets to the menace of events similar to that through which we have lived or are living. Mr. White has written an admirable introduction and notes.

A BREVIAE OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1917-1939. By P. FORD and G. FORD. (Blackwell. 571 pp. 52s. 6d.)

AN immense amount of information about almost every subject of political, social or economic importance is to be found in the reports and proceedings of royal commissions, departmental committees, and similar bodies. As the number and scope of these documents increases, both the intelligent general reader and the serious student or politician are faced with growing difficulty in finding their way through the maze of blue books, white papers, etc. The material one seeks is probably available; but how does one trace it quickly—especially if one has not got access to a first-rate reference library?

The answer is provided by the *Breviate* which Professor and Mrs. Ford have produced with the aid of a team of research assistants. The work covers the inter-war period, and summarizes about 1,200 reports, giving the names of the chairman and members of the committee or commission, the terms of reference, the findings, contentions, conclusions and recommendations. The entries are arranged under an intelligent subject classification, comprising such headings as machinery of government; national finance; currency and monetary policy; agriculture and food supply, trade and industry; coal, fuel, power, water; transport, post office and telecommunications.

The work has been compiled with great care and shows a high standard of scholarship. Professor and Mrs. Ford deserve our gratitude for their patient and devoted labours, and we hope they will continue with the preparation of a second volume to cover the period from 1939 to the present day. The volume they have produced is an indispensable code of reference for everyone interested in public affairs. Professor Ford has contributed an interesting introduction, in which he points out that the *Breviate* gives a picture of the British people trying to grapple with the problems of adjusting themselves to changing circumstances. In almost every field, the record shows individuals of the most varied political background uniting in making recommendations which call for greater intervention by government.

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THE DOMINION OF CEYLON. By SIR IVOR JENNINGS, Q.C. and H. W. TAMBIAH. (*Stevens*. 319 pp. 55s.)

THIS is the seventh volume in the series of treatises on the British Commonwealth which Messrs. Stevens are publishing under the editorship of Professor Keeton. The book aims at expounding both the laws and the constitution. The first part is concerned with public law. It contains a brief outline of the constitutional history of the island, a description of the present constitution, and its relation to the legal system, and especially to administrative law. The second part is devoted to the courts of law. This deals not only with the existing machinery of justice, but also with the historical development of the Sinhalese and Kandyan courts, the Portuguese and Dutch courts, and those first established under British rule. The third part describes the civil and criminal law. The complexity of the legal system is due to the fact that the laws of Ceylon are a mixture, or perhaps a confusion to use the author's expression, of five systems of law: The Roman-Dutch, English, Hindu, Kandyan, and Islamic.

AUTONOMY AND DELEGATION IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT. By EMMELINE W. COHEN. (*Institute of Public Administration*. 81 pp. 6s.) *Foreword by W. A. ROBSON*.

IN 1944 the Education Act introduced a new system of local administration whereby the county councils, which were made local education authorities for all purposes, were required to submit and carry out schemes for delegating some of their powers to divisional executives. In the National Health Service Act, 1946, a similar shift of power from district council to county council took place. The county councils acquired many local health functions previously carried out by district councils. At the same time they were authorized to set up area sub-committees and to delegate functions to them. The Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, also permits delegation of planning control powers from county councils to district councils. Miss Cohen was asked by the Institute of Public Administration to find out how this new device of delegation was working in the spheres of education and health. The results of her extended field study are contained in this useful and interesting report. She shows the great variety of methods which are in existence, and the great disparities in the amount of discretion given to the subordinate bodies. This study shows the value of the empirical research work being carried out by the Institute of Public Administration.

LA PENSÉE ÉCONOMIQUE EN FRANCE DEPUIS, 1945. By ANDRÉ MARCHAL. (*Presses Universitaires de France*. 240 pp. 700 fr.)

LA POLITIQUE SOCIALE DE L'ANGLETERRE CONTEMPORAINE. By JEAN L'HOMME. (*Presses Universitaires de France*. 717 pp. 1,800 fr.)

THESE are two volumes in a series "Bibliothèque de la Science économique". They are well worth reading. The first gives an intelligent analysis of our social and economic history since 1939 as it appears to a French sociologist or economist. It deals mainly with wages, cost of living, and employment. M. Marchal, who is Professor of Political Economy in Paris, deals with the "crisis", as it has been called, in economic thought which has affected all European countries, though he himself considers the term "crisis" to be inaccurate, and he traces the most important developments in economic theory in France during recent years.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN foreign affairs history or fate or events are coiling themselves into a crisis, working themselves up to a turning-point more momentous than anything which has happened since Berlin and the Nazi empire collapsed on the head of Hitler in his cellar. The stages in this process have been the death of Stalin, the speech of Sir Winston Churchill in the House of Commons, and the decision that there should be a meeting between the President of the United States and the Prime Ministers of Britain and France. For the first time in eight years the clouds have begun to thin instead of to thicken; there is a prospect of peace instead of an ever growing menace of war. A prospect, only a prospect, it must be remembered; and in such a situation, it may perhaps be useful to examine, if possible, impartially and unemotionally, the elementary facts and factors making for war and peace.

* * *

The years 1945 to 1953 have been dominated by the antagonism of Russia and the United States and the gradual building up of two great blocks or loose alliances of states bitterly hostile to each other. These two blocks are divided by the shadowy iron curtain into East and West, the communist and the free world. They are heavily armed and arming against each other. Neutrality in this cold war has become more and more difficult. In Korea the war is not even cold any longer, for behind a fictitious façade a dress rehearsal of the third world war—this time between communism and democracy—is being fought in grim earnest. After 1914 and 1939 the mechanism of the historical process which ends in a world war has become well known—there is no mystery about it or about the ways in which such a war might be avoided. The focal danger is in the policy of great powers, the determination of a great power and its allies or satellites to attain some large object by force or the threat of force and of another great power, complete with allies or satellites, to resist the other's object by force or the threat of force. The fundamental danger of a war between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. lies in the Russian determination to make the world safe for Russia and communism and the American determination to make the world safe against Russia and communism.

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From the British point of view—the question what should be the policy of a British government—it is extremely important to judge accurately and objectively the nature and consequences of this determination and counterdetermination. The first thing to notice is that the *détente*, as diplomatists call it, the relaxation in the international tension, the first sign that the wheels might be turning to peace instead of war came less than three months ago when Stalin died and the voice and even actions of the Soviet government became less hostile and menacing. It is significant that much about the same time there was a change in the head of the United States, but that if President Eisenhower had made the same slight movement from hostility to conciliation which has been observed in the government of Malenkov, it would not have had anything like the same effect. The reason is that, although there are pernicious elements, highly dangerous to peace, in the United States, they are not the American government nor have they ever controlled its policy; the initiative which has divided the world by an iron curtain and into two armed, hostile blocks came from the Russian government and the deliberate policy of Stalin. His ultimate policy may have been merely to make the world safe for Russia and communism, but he persistently showed that he thought this object could be attained only by making the world unsafe for everyone and everything else.

* * *

The hopes of peace depend primarily upon whether the Malenkov government is really prepared to abandon the Stalin policy and to substitute a policy of live and let live. Russia is still a totalitarian police state, with an absolute dictatorship as its form of government. It is therefore totally impossible for anyone outside Russia—and for all but a tiny clique in Russia—to know whether in fact Malenkov is really prepared to abandon the Stalin policy. It follows that the right policy for the western democracies is to meet the Russian advance with the greatest friendliness and conciliation, but also firmness, and as soon as possible to put it to the test. This in the broadest sense is the course outlined in the Prime Minister's speech, as we understand it. The further and logical step of a personal discussion of policy between the American, British, and French statesmen is to be welcomed. It is essential that the three democracies should have a common policy, but everything depends upon its being con-

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structed on the right lines. The idea, entertained by some people, that we should aim at a meeting "on the highest level" with the Russians to discuss a world settlement between east and west is the wrong way to approach the problem. Such a settlement at the present time is almost certainly impossible; to attempt it would be to play into the hands of the most dangerous elements in America; it would rapidly lead to a breakdown as between east and west and probably to disastrous dissension between ourselves and the U.S.A. The right way to test the possibility of peace with Malenkov is on three specific questions, on the settlement of Austria, the ending of the war in Korea, and the settlement of Germany. The first two questions should be tackled first. The policy of the British government at the meeting with our allies should be to try to get agreement on the terms of settlement to be proposed to Russia. Both in Austria and in Korea it should be possible now to propose settlements scrupulously fair to all concerned.

* * *

There remains the question of Senator McCarthy and the bellicose, witch-hunting anti-Russians and anti-communists for whom he is chief spokesman. We do not underestimate the danger of this campaign; its power of blackmail upon the minds and policies of government and individuals is deplorable; it forms a sinister conspiracy of powerful interests which corrupts the political life of Americans and threatens the peace of the world. But the Briton, particularly if he is on the Left, should not exaggerate the importance of McCarthyism or of his own role as a David facing Goliath. McCarthyism can be defeated only by Americans. It cannot be destroyed by non-Americans and least of all by nagging. The continual nagging against McCarthy and his gang, degenerating occasionally into just nagging against America, practised by some of our papers and Labour M.Ps., defeats its own object. It strengthens the Senator by making it more difficult for sane Americans to oppose him. It is necessary that the facts about McCarthyism should be known in this country and that our opposition to it should be shown, when any important opportunity occurs, whether officially or unofficially. But it is fatal to exaggerate its influence upon the government and it is a golden rule for international relations not to nag, not to insist too often upon the moles in one's neighbour's eye.

THE PRINCIPLES OF LIBERALISM

By J. GRIMOND, M.P.*

NO two people are likely to agree about the principles of any political party—least of all perhaps of the Liberal Party. I need hardly say then that my views are only my own, and in no way official. Liberal principles too have ramified so far and wide into political practice that whatever sharpness they ever had has been lost. I can now only pretend to deal, not so much with principles, but with what seems to me the climate in which Liberal judgments should be formed.

Liberalism to me is the political philosophy of British empiricism. It springs from the philosophy of Locke and Hume. A philosophy based on the individual and his experience. A philosophy profoundly suspicious of deities, innate ideas and dogma. A philosophy which finds that all our knowledge comes from experience, the “blooming, buzzing confusion” of which William James wrote—a confusion on which some sort of order is superimposed by personality.

The sheet anchors of Liberalism seem to me therefore to be the individual, and the continual examination of our experience. This may not seem very enlightening. It sets Liberalism, however, in opposition to all abstractions, whether of the “noble savage” or “economic man” type or of the “oversoul” type. It also denies to Liberals pleasant dreams of an ultimate utopia. Nothing in experience supports the view that the process of change is going to end one day. No Liberal can believe that anything like communism or social credit, the destruction of private property or all the non-aryan races or even the advent of compulsory profit sharing or proportional representation are going one day to produce heaven on earth. “The troubles of our proud and angry dust are from eternity and shall not fail.”

Nor can Liberals find comfort in superhuman sanctions. Mr. Law in a remarkable book *Return from Utopia* has written: “For the first time in his history, man has assumed the undisputed captaincy of his soul. Until our own day he has always acknowledged a master, whether it was God or the gods, or the Law or the Way. Always there has been a rule which he accepted, a

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rule which was beyond amendment and beyond dispute. To-day there is none. He knows no master. He has freed himself at last. He has thrown off his chains. He has cast aside his unknown superstitions. And in doing so he has surrendered himself to a tyrant more arbitrary and more capricious than he has ever known. That tyrant is his own will. We have been overtaken at last by the neurosis of humanism.”

I agree with much in this book but I do not agree with the implications of this passage. It may be a serious error that man has abandoned God (if he has). It may be disastrous for personal morality that the grip of Christianity has been weakened. But it is not necessarily disastrous for the politician. The pagan or the humanist may be an excellent citizen. It is no part of the politician's business to rely on super-human sanctions. Nor indeed can he in any case hope to re-create a lost belief in them. Human beliefs are merely part of the material which he must study.

It seems to me that between John Stuart Mill and Walter Lippman, the party came adrift from its philosophical moorings. It ceased to study experience. It took to abstractions. It forgot that man is a social animal who has always lived in communities and who has never been moved by purely economic considerations. Some Liberals, just as much as some Marxists, seemed to think of men only as abstract lay figures who must be abandoned to the force of economic laws. The party failed, therefore, at the very height of its power, to examine the destruction of society under the industrial revolution. It was left largely to the Webbs, Graham Wallas, Tawney, and later Laski, to examine the results of laissez-faire. They found many of the results shocking and swung political thinking over to collectivism as a corrective to individualism. The swing was accentuated by the import of Hegelian nonsense into British philosophy. But it was the individualism which was faulty—and faulty not because it carried out its philosophy, but because it abandoned it. It did not examine the real world with the infinite ramifications which bind individuals in a community. It forgot that men live by other aspirations than economic gain. It was not until Lippman that Liberalism got back to the true road.

But of course it is little use examining experience, unless you know something of what you are looking for. You must have some idea of the purpose of political study. Here we come to the relationship of morals and politics—an exceptionally difficult subject. I should myself say that a politician's primary duty is to

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make men happy—to that extent I am a Benthamite—to produce a reasonably fair society, and to create the conditions in which they can be good.

This is not to say that politicians must not be influenced by moral considerations. But they must in my view be very careful when they touch on morals. Some of the greatest evils—the crusades, the Inquisition, Hitler, communism and fascism have been brought by men who thought they knew what was right for their fellow men. The moralists have created far more misery than the cynics. If politicians can do something to remove obvious causes of unhappiness such as illness or cruelty to children they might well be content.

Now this is not a popular view among Liberals. There has long been a strong ethical strand in the party. Drink and gambling have been denounced. Appeals have been made to high spiritual ideals. Mr. Gladstone was a great preacher, as well as a great politician. In so far as any politician is partly preacher, I have no objection to that. Nor certainly have I any objection to the mass of welfare legislation which in fact makes men happier, which makes the community firmer and more united—and which indirectly may make them better. But the attitude that the “gentlemen in Whitehall” know best not only in technical but in moral matters is surely illiberal. Indeed, different views about the treatment of morals by politicians in my opinion divide Liberals from collectivists of all kinds. To take an illustration: it may be said that it is necessary to have some check on the building of cinemas, because otherwise too much scarce material will be used on them instead of on homes. The Liberal agrees, if it is clear that the majority of people want houses rather than cinemas but may be prevented from getting them because a few rich men can corner the materials. They should demand, however, some stringent enquiry into how this undesirable state of affairs comes about. But if it is clear that the people at large believe themselves to be adequately housed and actually want cinemas rather than better houses, then Liberals must be profoundly suspicious of any attempt to thwart them.

All phrases such as “social justice”, “socially desirable” etc. too often spring from a very pessimistic view of human nature. The argument behind them very often is that if you let people spend money themselves they will spend it wrongly. They can’t be trusted. This isn’t a very popular political cry so it is often coupled with a rosy promise that if only we will trust our betters

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now we shall have a wonderful time in some remote future. “Pie in the sky” is not a capitalist so much as a collectivist mirage. Liberals think better of their fellows than collectivists. They don’t believe that it is only by the promise of sherbet and dancing girls in the future coupled to controls in the present that they can be induced to behave even reasonably well.

Again the difference between the Liberal and collectivist outlook seems to me to be illustrated in their views on equality. Liberals believe in equality of opportunity. But equality of opportunity must lead to inequality. If we are all to have full opportunities in education the clever boy will get on. If we are to have equal scope for the use of such talents as we have been given, the quick or clever man will get ahead. I would not deny that in the interests of the happiness of the people at large there must be considerable interference in this process. To begin with, the start in life must be reasonably fair: secondly, the fabric of society must be maintained: thirdly, a reasonable life must be guaranteed to even the slowest in the race. But in the infinite changes of human life politicians should not be too rigid in their views, nor attempt to fix the ends of human existence. I cannot put it better than Lippmann does in his analogy with traffic control:

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Officials can regulate the traffic on the roads, they can see to it that the ruthless and the reckless do not interfere with other drivers. By progressive refinements of the rules they can make it more and more possible for all drivers to reach their destinations as safely and conveniently as circumstances permit. But if, instead of depriving the rights of all drivers, the officials seek to prescribe the destination of each driver, telling him where he must start, by what route he must go, and when he must arrive, some few, those who have the ear of the authorities, will undoubtedly go just where they want to go, more pleasantly than under a free system of equal rights. But the rest will be going where they do not want to go, and it must be their ambition to oust the existing traffic officers and install officers who will direct the traffic to their advantage. Yet many arguments can be advanced in favour of the authoritarian system. It can be said that by intelligent discrimination it might be arranged that those who have the most important errands shall not be held up by a clutter of cars full of persons who are merely out for a ride, or are on their way to some frivolous pastime, perhaps even an immoral one. It can be said that the biologically finer breeds, or those with the higher intelligence quotients, or those with the best moral character, ought to get to their destinations first.

In the nineteenth century, though an immense amount of traffic got on to the road, the traffic control was so poor that

smaller vehicles were crushed and some chaos and great unhappiness caused. Very well: the remedy is better traffic control, better roads perhaps, but not an attempt at endless discrimination, or worse still the dictation of where the traffic is to go. In fact, what is wanted is to improve the society in which people must live. Man is not born a free animal but should at best be a free member of a free society. This leaves ample opportunities for the politician. If he will keep his eye on the comparatively humble ball of happiness for the greatest number and scope for their development he will find plenty to occupy him.

For society is partly natural and partly man-made. All government, as Burke said, is a "contrivance of human wisdom to satisfy human wants" and must be judged by its success in satisfying them. There are immensely important fields, such as education, financial policy, and the development of the social services, in which political organization and human wisdom should have a great part to play in moulding a more suitable society.

Of late it seems to me that education has been neglected by Liberals. Education is obviously extremely important both as the sally-port for ability and as a powerful cement in society. The richer classes in this country have left their cohesion and absorbed powerful new elements largely through a formidable system of male education. A system which with all its faults allowed the cleverer boy to get on while launching him together in outlook with the not-so-clever. It seems to me that for those who are guided by Liberal principles the Butler act is not at present giving equality of opportunity, nor is it entirely satisfactory that the only variety introduced into education should be a distinction between rich and poor.

If we want the immense output which private enterprise at its best produces, without the unhappiness which it created for the mass of the people, we surely should look first at such things as company law, and then to laws of inheritance. The degeneration of political philosophy from Hume and Burke to Herbert Spencer, and of economics from Adam Smith to complete *laissez-faire*, has led to the assumption that there is no resting ground between "cut-throat competition" and state direction. But the conditions of *laissez-faire* were in themselves the creation of governments. There is no reason why these conditions should not be altered without involving direct intervention by the government at every point of industry and commerce. As to the

laws of inheritance: it is still at the start of life that inequality of opportunity is most apparent. There may be a strong case for allowing a man to leave substantial sums to his children, but there is equally a strong case against allowing his grandchildren and great grandchildren to live on his wealth.

As to political organization, it is too often assumed that Liberalism can be equated with the reduction *ad absurdum* of democracy in which the counting of heads determines the issue but yet no steps are taken to fill the heads with the right information. Certainly, in the last thirty years political questions have got no simpler. Yet we have made little effort to break down these problems to manageable size, or to devise new political institutions to tackle them. In theory, Mr. Churchill and Mr. Attlee must debate before the scurrying mass of the population questions far more technical than those which Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli explained to a small and time-endowed intelligentsia. In theory, we elect a Member of Parliament under a barrage of irrelevant propaganda to speak for us on every question under the sun. In practice, the electorate either shrug their shoulders and get on with their football pools or fix their eyes on their own interests and put their shoulder to some organization which will forward it. There is nothing Liberal in the theory or the practice. The very least Liberals should demand is a fair presentation of the problems and a decent debate before decision. They long realized the danger from panic or corruption, and for those reasons sought a constitution with adequate checks and balances which would protect the individual against the tyranny of sectional interests of the executive.

As to the social services: if you take a reasonably optimistic view of mankind you should pay them in cash and not in kind. By all means have high pensions, high family allowances, high unemployment pay, in the name of happiness. But do not insist upon men eating starch instead of protein in the name of morality. Nor is it defensible, if any importance is attached to the individual, to take so much out of his pocket that his free development is threatened.

It is also a characteristic of the empirical philosophy which Liberals should seek to acquire that it concerned itself with practical problems. The study of experience does not, as I say, encourage the creation of ideal systems. In this Liberalism and empiricism stand in sharp contrast to the Hegelian views which have so deeply coloured collectivism. Liberals, if true to their

principles, should be chary of interfering with things which work, however eccentric they may seem. They should in my view save their energies for difficulties which are widely encountered in daily life. In foreign affairs, for instance, it seems to me that Liberal principles should encourage us to try to improve such institutions as exist rather than create new systems however attractive. They should teach us to be content with the piecemeal approach. A little more trade, a bit of investment in Africa or Asia, the establishment of reasonably good relations between states, even if their political philosophies are antagonistic, is better than crying for the moon of complete free trade or universal world government.

I do not deny that there are times when the government must, so to speak, take the people by the scruff of the neck and force them in a certain direction. Such a time is war. But I do say that these moments usually arrive—as in war—through a break-down in the mechanism of society. Or you may say through the absence of the conditions which Liberalism requires if it is to work. If such conditions become the normal state of the world then the most Liberals can do is patiently to continue to examine and question what is happening. Society is not held together only by laws, but by traditions, customs, beliefs, hopes, dislikes and by the exchange of information on all topics. Liberals should keep always in mind the words of Burke: "The legislators who framed the ancient republics knew their business was too arduous to be accomplished with no better apparatus than the metaphysics of an undergraduate and the mathematics of an exciseman. They had to be with men and they were obliged to study human nature. They had to study citizens and they were obliged to study the effects of those habits which are communicated by the circumstances of civil life."

Human nature to date has taken all sorts of curious turns. All that we can hope to do is to inform ourselves of the facts of life and study them without fear or prejudice; to see how they can be moulded to achieve the greatest happiness and the best conditions to enable human beings to come, of their own initiative, to the right moral decisions.

THE LIBERAL PREDICAMENT

By PHILIP FOTHERGILL*

THE Liberal predicament is only too obvious. Less obvious but no less important, the Liberal predicament is in part a national predicament involving the quality, independence, and constructive energy of public life. The Liberal predicament is proclaimed every time the sickening formula is repeated on the wireless "the Liberal candidate lost his deposit". Stated in crude terms the question is whether the Liberal struggle for parliamentary representation is worth the effort and not a hopeless waste of time.

It is argued that there can no longer be any place for the Liberal Party in British politics when in election after election it emerges with only a very few successful candidates, and those tending to diminish in number. Some go further and denounce the Liberal Party as an electoral nuisance on the ground that the active competition of a minority party merely upsets the two party system and distorts election results. Liberals are exhorted for reasons of patriotism and of expediency to wind up their organisation and divide their remaining assets between their more successful competitors.

Liberals are not oblivious to their condition nor indifferent to the advice which presses on them from all sides. Some, indeed, after much searching of soul (or calculating of advantage!), have gone elsewhere. Others have withdrawn completely from politics. Many have grown apathetic and dispirited. Yet the astonishing fact remains that although the Liberal Party has not held power since 1918 there are active associations of Liberals in 458 out of 542 constituencies in England and Wales alone. In addition, there is more useful research going on in the party at this moment than for a long time past and such faith in the future that only six months ago a new general director of the party's administration was appointed. These are not the signs of abdication or retreat, still less of annihilation.

The continuing vitality of the Liberal Party after nearly two generations in the wilderness is a phenomenon deserving of study. That its vigour is not insubstantially based is clear when the position is examined more closely. For a decade, the

* Chairman of the Liberal Party Executive; President, Liberal Party, 1950-2.

Liberal vote has fluctuated between seven and ten per cent. of the electorate. In 1950 when the party fought with 475 candidates it polled 11.8% of the votes in the constituencies contested. The latest Gallup poll published on May 11th 1953 estimated the Liberal strength at 8% or just over 2½ million votes. A more impressive indication of the Liberal potential was disclosed in 1950 when the organisers of the Gallup polls asked the electors how many would vote Liberal if they thought the Liberal Party would get a majority. No less than 38% answered in the affirmative. In considering the value of these figures it is important to realise that apparently over the years natural wastages through death have been made good by new recruits. The experience of the party organisers confirms the view that the enlistment of young people continues at a steady rate.

It is not sufficiently understood that the Liberal predicament is not so much one of failure as of frustration. With all its not inconsiderable strength, potential and actual, the Liberal vote is at present represented by six members in the House of Commons. It needs no subtlety to realise how strongly Liberals feel about a system which is making it increasingly difficult for any candidate not endorsed by one of the two major parties to be elected to parliament.

This gross injustice, of which all independent parties and individuals are the victim, has acted in different ways upon Liberals. Undoubtedly it has kept out of effective political life many of the most capable members of the community. One thinks not only of the active leaders of Liberalism who have been excluded from office, but of bankers, industrialists, economists, lawyers, who, because they have been virtually debarred from public service as Liberals, have turned their back on politics and applied their talents elsewhere. The high intellectual quality of Mr. Asquith's administrations has been absent from more recent governments, not because Britain no longer breeds men of calibre but because the avenue of Liberal opportunity has been closed. The supreme exception of Sir Winston Churchill adds support to this contention.

But the electoral handicaps suffered by Liberals have also acted as a goad. If the Party had so languished that in fact it was only entitled to six members of Parliament there would be no kick left in it. Part of the kick is the result of a burning sense of grievance which arises not only from the fundamental iniquities

of the electoral system but from the way they are exploited by the modern party machine.

Even thirty years ago the situation was by no means as desperate as it is to-day. The electoral system was the same but there were three vital differences in practice.

- (a) The tyranny of the party whips was in its infancy.
- (b) The new techniques of mass psychology had not yet been applied to a mass electorate.
- (c) It was not then the rule for the Tory and socialist machines to fight each other in every constituency.

There used to be some unopposed returns and, significantly, many more straight fights in which candidates of a junior party stood a chance of election. In political conditions very much less rigid than to-day the Labour Party gained its foothold largely as a result of straight fights against the Tory in which the Liberal candidate stood aside.

In the elections after the first world war, when fewer candidates were adopted, all parties won a proportion of their seats in straight fights. In 1924, the Liberal Party out of a total of 42 members elected to Parliament won 28 in straight fights. Even in 1935 the proportion was still 14 straight fight victories out of a total of 21. The returns for the 1950 election show up the contrast. Out of 475 Liberal contests, all but two (which the Liberals won) were three cornered.

No Liberal would object in principle to the fighting of every seat by any political party. The effect of the former practice, however, was beneficial in that it provided some compensation for the mathematical injustice of the electoral system. Many wonder whether the more recent tactics of the Conservative and socialist machines in putting up a candidate in virtually every seat can continue indefinitely. Finance is presumably the governing factor, and fat subscriptions, whether from the T.U.C. or from industry, may not be so readily forthcoming in future. Meanwhile, the obstacles to any 'up and coming' party are all but insuperable, and not only the Liberal Party but the nation suffers in consequence.

The Liberal demand for electoral justice is based on far more than self interest. It is disquieting, to say the least of it, that successive governments in Britain have held power on a minority of votes. An extreme example of what could happen here was seen in the recent South African election when Dr. Malan's

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nationalist party won an overall majority of 29 seats on a minority of 142,496 votes.

But an equally serious danger arises from the growing immobility of British politics due to the exploitation by party managers of the weaknesses of the electoral system. The 'wasted vote' argument, used by the Conservatives against the Liberals for the first time on a national scale in the 1950 election, may have been a clever electioneering dodge, but it was a highly dangerous innovation—dangerous not only to the Liberals but even more to the democratic health of the nation.

The abuse of the three line whip in the House of Commons against which members have been so reluctant to protest, is another indication that all is not well. The party boss is able to impose discipline on his rank and file only because his powers of personal destruction are so overwhelming. Undoubtedly the growing arrogance of those who control the two major parties goes far to explain the disappearance of independent members from Parliament as well as the unnatural pressure upon Liberal representation. Not without significance is the fact that the important propaganda instruments of sound and television broadcasting are all but monopolised by the two ruling powers.

But it would be an exaggeration to suggest that the Liberals are the victim of some sinister totalitarian conspiracy. One of the reasons why this situation has developed is that it is honestly believed by some that democracy in Britain depends more than anything else upon the effective working of a two party system. Thus every act of political suppression is justified if the effect is to strengthen the hold over the electorate of one of two opposing groups, each capable at any given moment of forming a government.

The fable about the two party system dies hard. The fact is that we have never had a two party system in Britain. And in any case how, without doing violence, can an electorate which reflects at least three clearly defined points of view be forced into a two party mould? If democratic government derives its authority from representative institutions it is surely to endanger the ark of the covenant to expose to ridicule the whole idea of representation. Thus it is primarily against conditions which constitute a threat not only to Liberalism but to liberty that the Liberal Party makes it stand.

So much for the Liberal predicament and the steadfast refusal of Liberals to hoist the white flag.

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Are there any prospects that the siege will be lifted? Relief could come from three quarters—from a change in electoral methods, from a change in the pattern of politics, or from a change in the climate of opinion. All deserve examination.

The interest of Sir Winston Churchill in electoral reform is of little practical value so long as his party refuses to support him. It remains, however, one of the most solemn facts of political life. Not once nor twice has the Prime Minister shown his powers of vision. It is not yet to be written off as hopeless that in a flash of realism the Conservatives will recognise that the survival of liberty is bound up with the survival of the Liberal Party; that the price destiny may demand for their own survival is that they shall carry out a belated act of justice and give Liberalism its fair representation in Parliament.

A more earthy argument than that of justice rescues the proposition from the reproach of idealism! In many industrial constituencies, variously estimated at between fifty and one hundred, only a Liberal candidate is ever likely to unseat the socialist—a Liberal, that is to say, who has the courage and the ability to preserve himself from Tory entanglements. This strategic asset is important. The continued resistance to political extremes in Britain may only be secured if the Liberal Party is enabled to win and to hold the support of intelligent radical voters whose preference, in the absence of a Liberal candidate, usually tends to swing left rather than right.

It is interesting to speculate how long it will take this undoubted fact to engage the Conservative mind!

Meanwhile, it should be clear enough that those Liberals and Independents who look to the Labour Party for an act of electoral reform are far removed from the realms of reality. Never has the Labour Party shown any reluctance to bite the hand that nurtured its earlier days. Its electoral policy, moreover, has always been influenced by the conviction that the destruction of organised Liberalism was the surest way to power. Not even a theoretical concern for minority representation has ever softened the logic of socialist ambition.

But what of some dramatic change in the pattern of politics? More likely than the birth of Labour interest in electoral justice, but still very remote, is that some internal upheaval might bring this about. The Labour Party is the strangest of coalitions—and strange most of all because of its astonishing capacity to coalesce at a critical moment. The strongest guarantee that the Labour

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Party will remain intact whatever happens lies in the fact that the opponents of an extreme policy are the old and experienced leaders whose whole life has been dedicated to the Labour movement. No hand of theirs will ever be lifted in destruction against their party. Except for a successful individualist like Sir Hartley Shawcross those most capable of schism are the younger men of the left to whom the future beckons. To them schism is not undesirable but merely unnecessary.

It would be a serious mistake, however, to speculate solely in terms of party leaders, managers or even rank and file. Ultimately, the most precious and unpredictable key of all rests in the hands of the electorate. We have been led to assume by recent experience that the two block votes have come to stay and that nothing can move them.

It is by no means impossible that the voters, apprehending danger, may find their own means of changing the political pattern. The high Liberal potential disclosed in 1950 must not be forgotten. Liberal workers are convinced of the need to strengthen their local organisations, not because any immediate dramatic success is to be expected in the majority of constituencies, but because a great deal less than victory could produce a miracle. The first significant sign of a gain in Liberal strength could set in motion an avalanche of Liberal support.

A growing restiveness under the strain of present experience might well produce a sudden and salutary improvement. For example, it would not be surprising if Conservative business men, especially those whose interests were endangered by nationalization or by restrictions on international trade, were to refuse their financial support for the anti-Liberal activities of the Tory Party. Dear political money would do much to increase Liberal representation in Parliament.

But most probable of all is that the cause of Liberalism and the predicament of the Liberal Party will be relieved by a change in the climate of opinion. Professor Hayek in a recent article calculated that it takes roughly a generation for the ideas of the intelligentsia to percolate through to the lower levels of society. If the victory of socialism in 1945 was initiated by the highbrows of the early 1920's it may be necessary, on this calculation, to wait up to fifteen years for the Liberal counter-revolution to reach its climax. But faith is not sustained by statistics. The all-important encouragement to Liberals is the evidence that Liberal ideas have never lacked influence and that now they are positively

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gaining ground amongst leaders of thought. Institutions which, twenty years ago, were strongholds of socialism have quietly changed guard and are now citadels of evangelical Liberalism!

To Liberals the cause takes precedence over the predicament. Liberals remain steadfast, even stubborn, in their loyalty to the Liberal Party, not because they are unaware of its weaknesses and imperfections, but because they know in their very bones that the institutions of freedom would suffer untold damage if their organisation were allowed to collapse and their independent point of view were no longer represented in public life.

THE LIBERAL ATTITUDE TO CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS

By ARTHUR HOLT, M.P.*

The Liberal Party exists to build a Liberal Commonwealth, in which every citizen shall possess liberty, property and security, and none shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or unemployment. Its chief care is for the rights and opportunities of the individual, and in all spheres it sets freedom first.

THE quotation above is from the preamble to the Liberal Party constitution. Fine words! Noble sentiments! But have they any meaning in relation to the problems of our age? Are they solid rocks on which to build the structures of practical, relevant policies? Or is this another indication of the rather pathetic, sentimental, wishful-thinking atmosphere—so say our opponents—in which a once great and famous party now seeks to drug its senses and ignore the unpleasant realities of the modern world? Its policies as futile as its electoral strategy!

The Socialist Party, subject to a perhaps not insignificant limitation on the meaning of the word "property", would not, I think, disagree with the sentiments expressed in the preamble, and would consider that they would be faithfully implemented by a carrying out of a comprehensive socialist programme—whatever that may turn out to be!

The modern Conservative Party would certainly not demur for a moment but would express their customary pained surprise at the lack of support the Liberal Party gives them in their

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efforts to implement such unexceptionable sentiments, whilst at the same time sponsoring a Bill* in Parliament which conspicuously fails to remove an arbitrary power possessed by one British citizen to prevent another British citizen from earning his living in the occupation of his choice.

Doubtless the sentiments expressed in the preamble are unexceptionable to all who are not authoritarians. The part that makes the whole a distinctively and exclusively Liberal design is the last sentence—"and in all spheres it sets freedom first."

I will try to show how the accent on personal freedom is the distinguishing feature of Liberal policies; how alterations now being suggested to present policies lay even greater emphasis on the urgent need for greater personal independence and initiative—with a readier acceptance of the penalties for failure that go with it; how the attitude of mind which results from the enjoyment of greater personal freedom is considered to be the only effective energiser which will give us British people the power to overcome our difficulties. If, to people of every political persuasion, responsible personal freedom is the ultimate end, to Liberals the gradual extension of personal freedom not its curtailment, is the only means to that end. There is no conflict between means and end for us as there is for communists and to a lesser extent for socialists.

Some reader may immediately protest with some justification that, measured by the standard of concern for personal freedom, some Liberal policies have fallen rather short in recent years. A number of Acts of nationalization were accepted, Acts which took the power and initiative from individuals and placed them both in the hands of the state. At least, so it was thought. It is by no means clear yet that what has not in fact happened is merely a serious reduction of the total power and initiative of anyone, state or individual, to influence the course of events.

All parties in Britain have been temporarily influenced to a greater or lesser extent by socialist thought emanating from Europe in the nineteenth century, but the Liberal Party has never been guilty of advocating, like the Tory Party in the 20's and 30's, the restrictive and protective policies which are the stock-in-trade of socialism.

* This is a reference to the new Transport Act, 1933. During its passage through Parliament, the Liberal Parliamentary Party unsuccessfully pressed the Conservative Government to repeal the arbitrary powers given to the Licensing Authorities under the Road and Rail Traffic Act, 1933, to discriminate against persons wishing to enter the road haulage industry.

There have been indications for some years that the tide of socialism is turning. Surprisingly socialists are deeply perplexed because new structures of society have not induced sudden and beneficial changes in human nature. The resurgence of Liberal economic and social ideas is not, however, exclusively or even mainly turning to the Liberal Party as its political instrument to fight socialism. In matters of trade, industry, finance, and economics where there are the greatest differences between socialists and Liberals, the Conservative Party has appeared to the people as the most effective champion of a freer economy. The Tory Party in this sphere are having some success, whether by luck or good management or the influence of certain recognised Liberals in key positions is beside the point. They have associated themselves in the public mind with "setting the people free". The ultimate success of their avowed policy of removing physical controls and much state interference will be judged by the people not by any academic standards but by whether they think they are better off or not.

Here is a fine dilemma for the Liberals. They cannot believe the Tories will really be thorough enough, or go far enough fast enough. Yet they must hope that the Tories succeed in showing that a freer economy meets the needs of our present situation, otherwise the "free liberal economy" itself will stand condemned in the eyes of the people and they will turn once again to socialism. If the Tories succeed can the Liberals share in their success? If they fail can the Liberals detach themselves from their defeat? These and many other dilemmas face the Liberal Party but it is not my duty here to deal with these matters which relate to electoral strategy and tactics. I only mention this to indicate how even a distinctive Liberal policy can appear to merge temporarily with the policy of another party with considerable electoral embarrassment to the Liberals. No tactics however clever will suffice without a distinctive policy which appears as such to the electorate, and which provides inspiration and purpose to party workers.

I will try to indicate what I conceive that distinctive policy to be in trade, economic and home questions, only touching in passing on foreign policy and such urgent matters as the colour problems in Africa, which I feel particularly to be beyond my powers to deal with in any adequate manner.

Any British Government in power today is concerned with two main problems; to reduce the tension abroad which may lead

to an outbreak of war and to ensure that the country rather more than pays its way in trade—in fact to have a surplus to strengthen sterling and to invest in suitable countries abroad. If it wishes to remain in power it has to achieve this task without reducing the standard of living of the majority of the people, probably it will need to raise it.

The immediate object of the Government must, therefore, be to pursue policies which will encourage the most efficient use of our available resources in men and materials, and to ensure that those who do so use them obtain their appropriate reward in order to stimulate them to further effort. Socialists believe that this requires detailed plans for production centrally controlled and directed, including the physical allotment of available resources to particular industries, and the complete control by nationalization of the main services and industries. Nothing in the history of the last eight years has shown that such methods provide either the correct analysis of demand, the flexibility or anticipations to meet changing need, or a driving force adequate to overcome natural obstacles.

A highly competitive free market economy operating without restrictive devices against imports has proved in the past that it can achieve this object. The methods learnt in the last fifty years by which we can achieve a more satisfactory balance of bargaining power between the seller of labour and the buyer, and the greater understanding of the part to be played by the Government in the control of monetary and taxation policy, provide some if not all the answers to legitimate objections raised by socialists to a Liberal economy.

Our policies on freeing trade, strengthening the powers against monopolies, reviewing certain parts of the 1947 Agriculture Act together with the taxation of land values, permitting a reasonable increase in the rent of rent restricted property, are all designed to enable a free market economy to do its job effectively and to remove influences which would otherwise distort and impair its efficient working.

What justification can there be in present circumstances for keeping in being a system of tariffs which, in some cases, protects industries which can and do meet the foreigner successfully in competition abroad? Do such firms as Courtaulds, for instance, require protection to survive? Yet, there is a protective duty of 9d. a lb. on all imported rayon staple fibre, now an important raw

material of the cotton textile trade. It represents one-seventh of the total raw material used by the spinning trade. Is it reasonable to ask the cotton trade to increase its exports under such handicaps as this? Does the engineering trade require tariffs up to 33½% to defend itself against competitors that it has been meeting so successfully in world markets? All these tariffs do is to put up the costs of other industries—and of the engineering industry itself—which require certain specialist machinery from abroad for their production processes. The report of Sir Henry Wilson Smith's committee on the subject of import duties on machinery will be awaited with interest. But need we have a committee to examine every tariff before it is removed? In the last twelve months Parliament has passed several regulations removing tariffs on certain imports, some permanently, others for 3, 6, or 12 months only. There have been 5 of these regulations in all, the most notable being the one removing the tariff on imported steel last September for a period of 12 months. Let us have more of this type of regulation!

If we are unjustified in protecting industries which do not require protection for their survival, how much less are we justified in our present dire circumstances in retaining tariffs to protect industries which are unable to stand on their own feet against world competition. Surely in such industries the nation's limited resources are not being used to the best advantage. A removal of the protective duty would either compel greater efficiency or force the resources they misuse into channels where they would be better used. We cannot afford to carry passengers in industry.

It may be argued that as six-sevenths of U.K. imports are not subject to protective duties, the total removal of duties on the other one-seventh would make no significant contribution to the solution of our problems. In 1952 protective duties on U.K. imports amounted to £84 million, which is hardly an insignificant addition to the costs of British industry. In any case, our balance of trade problem is marginal, and we can hardly afford to neglect any marginal improvement. But Liberals anticipate much greater indirect advantages to be obtained from a constructive free trade policy. There would be a healthier, unprivileged atmosphere in many parts of British industry, which together with those better relations between employer and employee brought about by that closer partnership long advocated by Liberals, would appear to be the pre-requisite for

any permanent solution of our economic difficulties. Too many expedients have been tried and found wanting. We must go to the root of our problem. Let us have fair play in British industry and no favours.

What is sauce for the industrial goose must surely be sauce for the farm gander! So, at least, argue many Liberals. Our policy towards agriculture is being revised. What form it will ultimately take I cannot say, but it appears that it will entail some revision of the 1947 Agriculture Act in the direction of a free price mechanism, a curtailment or removal of the Government's powers to supervise and evict farmers, and some re-instatement of the rights and duties of a landlord. However this develops, Liberals consider that such a policy will not suffice without the introduction of the taxation of land values to ensure the most beneficial use of the land. One thing is certain, the present state of affairs in British agriculture cannot long continue. The policies of both the socialists and the conservatives, in spite of continuous exhortations and pleas to farmers, seem bound inexorably to lead to higher and higher prices and no substantial increase in production. Eggs have recently been freed from price control and a guaranteed support price of 3s. 6d. a dozen has been agreed by the Government. The Ministry of Food will not reveal the price it has recently agreed to pay for Danish eggs but it is believed to be about 2s. a dozen! If this price is correct it is considerably below the average price which the Ministry paid for imported eggs in the year April-March 1952-3 which was 3s. 6½d. a dozen. The average price paid to home producers in that period was 4s. 7d. a dozen. If the British producer had only been paid the imported price, his gross receipts over the year would have been reduced by £20.2 million. This amounts, in effect, to an annual subsidy to the British producer of £20.2 million.

The prices* of the other U.K. farm products are to a greater or lesser degree out of line with world prices. During this same period, prices received by British Farmers for wheat (millable), barley, oats, and sugar were below the average prices for comparable imported products. Had they been paid the imported prices our farmers would have received a further gross £9.6 million. On the other hand, prices of home-produced beef, mutton and lamb, bacon, and eggs were higher than the average

* Further details of differences in home and import prices were given by the Minister of Food in answer to a Parliamentary question on 23rd January, 1953.

prices of comparable imported products. Had U.K. farmers been paid on the basis of the prices of the imported products they would have received a gross £84.3 million less than they did. But it should be noted that before the war there was always a preference for fresh home beef and lamb as against imported frozen, and the home product fetched up to 50% higher price than the imported. Whether this would obtain today in a free market it is impossible to say. To make confusion worse confounded in this extraordinarily illogical pricing system, in the year 1952 the U.K. charged import duties of £7½ million on imported food which it subsequently subsidised to the consumer! Quite clearly some fairly drastic treatment of this "planned chaos" is required.

Although I have argued in previous paragraphs for unilateral reductions of our own tariffs as bringing improved ability to ourselves to compete in world markets, and thereby assist in creating a favourable balance of trade, I would be the last to suggest that we cease taking active steps to induce others, particularly the U.S.A. to do likewise. It is no doubt good tactics to be loud in our protests about the Chief Joseph Dam incident but we should not be too depressed about it. The facts of the matter are that the tendency over a number of years has been for the American tariff barrier to be lowered and the average level is now considerably below what it was before the Hawley-Smoot tariff of 1930. Though there are doubtless many "Senator Simpsons" in America, there is also the powerful Detroit Board of Commerce representing 6,000 industrialists which published a remarkable statement advocating freer trade last winter. The full text is well worthy of study. It would warm the heart of any free trader and makes one regret that similar statements are not yet forthcoming from British Chambers of Commerce. It comes down firmly in favour of a simplification of customs procedure, describes the Buy American Act as "illogical and indefensible", and advocates the gradual reduction of tariffs "leading to the eventual elimination of all tariff barriers in the United States." Finally some influential members of the Republican Party may still be protectionist minded, but there is little evidence that the same applies to that section of the party which put President Eisenhower in power, or to the President himself—rather the contrary.

Conservative and socialist advocates of imperial preference place little confidence in the development of freer trade policies

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in the U.S.A., and press for what they call the development of empire preference. How this is supposed to help the U.K. is difficult to understand because what largely seems to have come out of imperial preference so far is a system of preferential tariffs by means of which the U.K. let Commonwealth goods in free of duty, and the Commonwealth put up tariffs against U.K. exports. (In 1952 the duties charged on Commonwealth imports into the U.K. only amounted in total to £60,000.) In any case, such a policy is out of the question because the Commonwealth countries have already rejected it at the London Commonwealth Conference as not being in their interest. It is, perhaps, worth while in passing to note the pattern of our export and import trade in 1952, and I have shown in the table below the percentages to and from different areas. In the present circumstances to raise discriminatory tariffs in favour of Commonwealth countries and directed against other friendly countries with whom we do half our trade would be deeply resented by them and would put further difficulties in the way of our exporters.

<i>Imports to U.K. from</i>	<i>Sterling Area</i>		<i>Non-Sterling Area</i>	
	<i>Commonwealth</i>	<i>Non-Commonwealth</i>	<i>Area excl. dollar</i>	<i>Dollar</i>
	47%	4%	38%	11%
<i>U.K. Exports to</i>	47%		39%	14%

Finally, may I give one notable example of Liberal intervention in support of policies for freer trade. Because of our small numbers, opportunities for effective intervention do not often come our way, but in September 1952 at Strasbourg such an opportunity presented itself to Lord Layton, and he was well supported by other continental Liberals, notably Professor Ohlin, leader of the Swedish Liberal Party. The occasion was in a debate on a motion, of which the Conservative Mr. Robert Boothby was a joint author, which advocated the introduction of a preferential system of tariffs between the British Commonwealth on the one hand and continental Europe and its dependences on the other. Professor Ohlin said the plan would lead inevitably to discrimination against the United States and to a general rise in tariff rates to cover the proposed preferences.

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Lord Layton moved an amendment which was successfully carried modifying the effect of extending Commonwealth preferences and which turned what would have become "a high tariff club into a low tariff club."

As complementary to the policies I have been discussing it naturally follows that we are advocates of sound money, curbing inflation by means of the well-tried orthodox monetary weapons, removing as quickly as possible all purchase tax on the one hand and subsidies on the other, and a reduction in direct taxation to prevent the disappearance of the small family business. There is one qualification with regard to subsidies. Liberals are not opposed to certain welfare subsidies—such as the subsidy on children's milk, and some limited subsidy on housing. We should, however, ensure particularly in the latter case that more attention was paid to need. Such subsidies can form part of the "welfare net" below which no one should be allowed to fall, but there appears no good reason to us why the state should subsidise the well-to-do!

Other Liberal policies connected with home affairs fit naturally into a pattern which focuses attention to the individual not the state. Improved educational facilities for child, student, and adult, manager, foreman, and operative have a high priority in the Liberal social programme. Ignorance is peculiarly an enemy of Liberalism. Whilst, however, it is one thing to give free educational facilities to children who earn no wages, it is quite another thing to give expensive educational facilities free of charge to wage-earning adults, and I consider a close watch should always be kept on the relative amounts to be paid by the adult wage-earner and the state towards the cost of all forms of adult education. The adult educational services are likely to be made far better use of if the adult himself feels he is making a direct and substantial contribution towards their cost. It encourages a sense of responsibility.

In local government matters the tendencies towards the centralization of authority resulting from the policies of successive Tory and socialist Governments is to be deplored. There can be no appreciable reversal of these tendencies until there is an increase in the amount of money raised by the local authorities and a decrease in the grant received from the central government, which grant now averages 50% of the total income of the local authorities. One practical way of increasing the total

amount of money raised locally, which Liberals advocate, is to amend the 1929 de-rating Act and transfer an increasing proportion of the local rates from buildings to site values. In matters of structure we support the three-tier system. Following on decentralization, local government perhaps even more than national government would be likely to benefit from measures of electoral reform. I see no reason why an experiment should not be made over a trial period.

But it is perhaps most of all in Africa that typically Liberal contributions to the solution of her pressing problems are likely in the future to play a decisive part. Unfortunately, though I have sailed right round the African continent and spent a delightful week-end leave in Cape Town, I have no first hand knowledge of Africa. The Liberal answers to its many complicated problems must be left to another pen. But as I listen to Liberals and liberal-minded people who have had a life-time's experience of Africa as it has been groping its way out of tribal simplicity, ignorance, and disease towards its own form of western civilisation, I am left in no doubt of the urgent necessity for a reversal of some present trends and the more general application of the oft-expressed Liberal principles of non-discrimination and of the equality of all people before the law irrespective of class, colour, race or creed. The Liberal Party in Britain will play its part where appropriate in the solution of African problems, but it is inevitable that the major battles for Liberal ideas in African affairs will have to be fought by Liberals who work and live there. Determined enemies of our ideas have thrown down the gauntlet in South Africa and Liberals in this country are delighted and encouraged that it has now been taken up by their friends out there by the formation at the beginning of May, just after the South African elections, of a South African Liberal Party. South Africa is a typical instance of how the true voice of Liberalism is eventually unheard if its expression is left in the unsafe keeping of other political parties. The lesson has not passed unnoticed by the British Liberal Party.

CONSUMERS' COUNCILS IN THE NATIONALIZED INDUSTRIES

By P. SARGANT FLORENCE and H. MADDICK*

I

TWO pamphlets,[†] recently published, raise yet again the problems of accountability and of consumer protection in the nationalized industries. That the problem attracts so much attention is indicative of its complexity; springing in part from the novelty of the problems, in part from the loose thinking of those who advocated public ownership and of those (not always the same persons) who drafted the legislation for public ownership.[‡] The novelty of the situation, and the importance of adjusting the framework of consumer control while the metal is still hot, justifies immediate consideration of the problem; and the loose thinking points to the need for a more systematic formulation of the function and appropriate structure of consumer councils.

Certain distinctions must first be drawn. The most obvious is that of the level at which the problem arises and to which it is to be referred; individual, local, regional, or national. Partly cutting across this distinction, partly connected with it, is the distinction between the functions to be exercised on behalf of consumers: judicial or quasi-judicial; legislative or, to coin a new but useful term, pre-legislative. These distinct functions should be clearly envisaged, for they suggest appropriate adjustments that are requisite in the consumers organization exercising them. The structure should be fit for its purpose.

Under present arrangements consumers' representative bodies at all levels are engaged on both types of function,—performed with much the same procedure. At the lowest level—the district committee—the individual grievance is frequently time consuming. But in addition the committee is often concerned with the more general problem affecting the local community—

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† (i) Acton Society Trust—*Relations with the Public*, (1953). (ii) Fabian Research Series—*Consumers' Councils*, by Mary Stewart (1953).

‡ See Walker and Maddick: *Responsibility for Transport*. (Political Quarterly, Vol. XXIII No. 3.)

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e.g. the *order* of electrification within a rural area; the provision of showroom service in the remote district.

At the next level, a regional or district complaint is often raised over the same problem by a number of individuals or by a district or community—such as the discontinuance of railway services or the unhappy position of garages within the commercial electricity tariffs. Some of these cases could be solved by the regional Consumers' Councils as at present constituted, others seem hardly within their capacity.

Thirdly, there is the problem which, although arising regionally, raises questions of policy affecting one industry throughout the country. At the present time this may be dealt with in several regions at the same time, and if its problem is technical, often ineffectively in each. And finally, there is the problem affecting more than one of the nationalized industries. What mechanism exists for consulting the public interest at this level? Ministers and their departments must obviously at one stage or another consider national problems and problems common to several industries; but they are unduly reticent about their deliberations and their decisions. The way in which these decisions are conveyed to Parliament and the interested public is often unsatisfactory.*

The Acton Society Trust pamphlet includes in its *scope* public relations and consumer research, and these activities in communication are as important in building up the confidence of the public in a nationalized industry as engendering pride among the employees in the undertaking and in the service it gives. But they are essentially devices of progressive executive management and are no more part of the deliberate process of consumers helping to solve high level problems than are the devices for efficient staff-relations or technical research.

These high level problems become increasingly new policies: new prices, new tariffs, changes in services. They require, for their enactment, knowledgeable and full deliberation, and careful legislative procedure. The consumers' councils will not make the final decision but may well take the initiative at the earlier stages of the discussion. Their function is at least *pre-legislative*, and their procedure should be moulded accordingly. It is not a question of one or two experts speedily remedying a supposed individual and local grievance by *interpreting* an existing agree-

* See chapter on "Ministerial Control and Parliamentary Responsibility", by Ernest Davies, M.P., *Problems of Nationalized Industries*, ed. by W. A. Robson (London, 1952).

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ment or accepted principle, but of representatives of various and possibly clashing interests hammering at a *new*, perhaps nation-wide agreement or policy and gradually coming to a decision. In short, the level at which the problem is to be considered and the procedure for solving it must depend upon whether the problem is strictly local, even personal, or involves wider communities, and whether it is a matter of new policy or of interpretation.

II

The consumer and the worker in the nationalized industries are no longer facing the private profiteer. But trade unions still exert pressure, and apparently increasing pressure, after industries are nationalized. This fact added to the lack of competition warrants an equivalent pressure from consumers, at least when buying from or using a nationalized industry that is a monopoly.

Now trade union pressure has for long been recognized as both quasi-judicial (or interpretative), and legislative in function; each function requiring a different approach. It may be useful for the consumer to take a leaf out of the worker's book of rules.

In a deservedly famous passage in their *Industrial Democracy** the Webbs point in trade union machinery to "one fundamental distinction which is all important . . . The distinction between the making of a new bargain and the interpreting of the terms of an existing one".

The new bargain of the trade union world may be a general change in wages, in working conditions, or in procedure affecting workers. In the consumers' world new "bargains" may be a general change in prices, in conditions of consumption, or in procedures affecting consumers, and we can extend to consumers what the Webbs wrote of labour, that "there arises a practically incessant series of disputes as to the application of the agreement to particular cases". Grievances and complaints of passengers, shippers and users of fuel and power occur inevitably, like those of workers; consumers, like workers, are liable to dispute the application of agreements or the treatment of the ancient and modern "rights" thought to be implied. On the factory floor disputed interpretations of rules, agreements, or policies are now usually taken to local officials (the shop steward, branch secretary, foreman, labour manager) and failing

* Edition 1902, pp. 183-4.

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concurrence are referred to a regular disputes procedure, rising, on failure to concur, to ever higher levels. The procedure often involves umpires or arbitration, and keeps the hearing as local and as much a matter of experts as possible. But the original enactment of an agreement or policy takes place at national or regional level and requires collective deliberation by representatives of the parties.

Should not the same distinction be made in the procedure for meeting the interests of consumers? After grievances, complaints, and disputes on the interpretation of policy and supposed infraction of consumers' rights have failed in the stage of reference to supervising officials, they might, in the first instance, be referred to the chairman of the relevant region for negotiation with officials of the Board: while participation in the framing of policy, which may have wide repercussions, is a matter for a central deliberative body, representative in personnel and expertly advised.

In short, the interests of the consumers, like those of the workers, calls for wide participation in the essentially pre-legislative process of framing general policies and rules, and for as simple a machinery as possible for discharging its quasi-judicial function of interpreting these policies and rules in particular cases. In using the same machinery to solve each problem, are not the councils too cumbrous in the latter case and often insufficiently equipped in the former? Not all subjects before the committee can be classified in this clear-cut way, but were the different functions recognised, a saving in committee members' time and also a rise in their efficiency should result.

The confusion between the pre-legislative and quasi-judicial functions of consumers' organizations are evident at the very outset from their various titles. As Mrs. Stewart points out (p. 13), "for coal there are consumers' councils, for transport consultative committees, for gas and electricity consultative councils". "Consultative" certainly suggests the pre-legislative rather than the judicial process. Yet it is not unknown for even Central Consultative Committees to have *individual* grievances referred to them. Real legislative duties and achievements of the consumers' organizations include altering a price-structure—for instance in gas and electricity (Stewart, p. 5), "differential tariffs", "cost for connection to new consumers", "amendments to a recently introduced minimum revenue scheme". Such changes and amendments, of price or other policy, though they

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may arise locally, involve general principles and may require to be extended nationally. The consumers have helped, in short, in at least the initial stages of a general policy. For this purpose the amateur status of most members of the consumers' council is appropriate; but it is not necessary that there should be a proliferation of local bodies throughout the country. On the contrary, since much of this re-examination of the regulations, general laws, and rules requires systematic research by a trained research staff, and duplication of staff is costly, the fewer councils and conciliar staffs, the better.

The pamphlets under review tell us that the gas and electricity councils, like the transport councils, have dealt with a considerable number of individual complaints. In so far as these complaints arise over interpretation of working and other rules, and do not propose the framing of new or amended rules, they require, we suggest, expert individual attention at local level—the main job, that of investigating grievances (and often settling them) can be done by chairmen. A further economy of committee man-hours could be effected, as Mrs. Stewart suggests, by combining councils for the several fuel industries into one council, and to gas and electricity and coal we would add transport. It is essential however for all consumer councils to have a chairman and a secretary independent of the Boards. A conflict of loyalties may otherwise well occur. The chairman in sitting on the Board should enter fully into their discussions; but how far is he then bound, by the confidential nature of what is there revealed, from passing his impressions to the consumers' council of which he is chairman and frequently a dominant chairman at that? He may well have discovered a defect in the plans or administration but be unable to persuade the Board to concern themselves with it. Is he then completely at liberty to take this to the consumers' council, or is he not constrained by the atmosphere of the board room? It is certain that if he did take questions of this nature to his council, the Board would soon cease to discuss any but the most innocuous matters whilst he was present. In contrast to the present arrangement, then, the chairman should *not* be a member of national or regional Boards and the secretary should *not* be a paid member of the Boards' staff. Both should be paid for full-time work with some clerical staff to keep in touch with various sources of opinions in their region, and the chairman would only attend Board meetings by invitation.

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The structure of district committees, each covering a number of neighbouring local authorities should perhaps continue, with the chairmen of these committees serving on the regional committee *ex officio*. These committees perform the necessary function of enabling the consumer to make contact with a truly local representative and for district managers to learn something of the public's viewpoint.*

Many critics have already protested against the confusion of collective legislation and the remedy of "individual" grievances; notably Professor Arthur Lewis. Writing in his admirably forthright style he finds† it "absolutely astonishing" that except in the case of transport the Labour Government has failed to safeguard certain rights "after two centuries of experience of public utility control". These rights he lists as:

- (1) The right of the individual to get the service he requires so long as he is prepared to pay its cost, and to appeal to an independent tribunal to enforce this right against the directors.
- (2) The right of an individual to be protected against undue preference, and to appeal to an independent authority against it.
- (3) The right of the consumers as a whole to be charged not more than cost, to have the efficiency of the undertaking independently investigated, and to have the general level of charges independently established.

Professor Lewis points out "that the first two of these are individual rights, and there is no substitute for a tribunal before which they can be legally argued and enforced. . . . The third right is a collective right of the consumers, and is much more difficult to enforce because it is only effective if the efficiency of the undertaking can be assessed independently. This is difficult." So difficult, indeed, that it is doubtful whether Professor Lewis should assign the safeguarding of this type of consumers' right to the same type of body as the first two types of right. Presumably the first "right" assumes conditions of ample supplies of capital equipment and skilled labour. Even so, the problem then arises of fair costing of the work, and unless a tribunal were served by an expert staff, even this kind of case does not seem readily to be justiciable nor to differ except in degree from cases handled by the Transport Tribunal. Certainly, the existing Transport

* For an elaboration of this see Mary Stewart, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-12, 15-16.
 † *Problems of Nationalized Industry*, ed. Robson, pp. 193-4 (London, 1952).

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Tribunal (Professor Lewis's one honourable exception) has not been very successful in protecting consumers in general against increases in railway fares. The Tribunal is presided over by a lawyer and adopts legal procedure, and has confined itself to the straight, legally comprehensible, issue whether increased costs (mainly due to wage-rate increases) justified increased fares.* Unfortunately, the straight issue here is also unnecessarily strait. It neglects the wider and more important question whether by reorganization (e.g. mechanical haulage, cutting out branch lines) costs, and especially aggregated wage-costs, could not be reduced. Economics, work-study, scientific management, market research is wanted here, not law. In short, Professor Lewis's view of the need of tribunals to safeguard consumers' interests in all nationalized industries suggests a procedure to secure the individual's rights, his protection against undue preference, discrimination, etc., and also a procedure for effective consumers' participation in policy decisions and in testing the efficiency of the public corporation—or to stimulate tests from within its own organization. Both procedures should be independent and not just a part of the public corporation itself; but (and here we part company with Professor Lewis) the two procedures require different machinery and conditions. Securing individual rights requires *ad hoc* summary jurisdiction and some experience, and negotiations with the officials of the Board could be left in the hands of the regional chairman. Effective participation in policy and tests of adequacy of service and efficiency (such as the possibility of lower costs and therefore prices) require wide representation and the help of a research staff of consultants adequate, at least, to test the Board's contentions and to ask discerning questions. The separate need for the second type of function and procedure can be illustrated from the nationalized transport industry. Undoubtedly local consumers will complain of deprivation of rights if railway branch lines that do not pay are discontinued; but for consumers generally this discontinuance will reduce costs and permit a *general* policy of lower fares, or at least of a check to rising fares. The matter certainly cannot be left to councils intent only on securing the rights of the individual *local* consumer.

* Nor do we feel any great confidence in the Road Transport Licensing Authorities being able by forensic procedure to handle the economic and social problems raised in withholding or granting a licence; see G. J. Walker in *Road and Rail*, Chapter 7 (London, 1947).

III

Decisions on general policy, as the Webbs, Professor Lewis, and many others have already said, are more difficult to make than interpretation of existing policy. They are also, perhaps, more important to the welfare of the whole community. The rest of this article will be devoted to the question how far the Consumers' Councils, as at present constituted, are likely to safeguard and promote the consumers' interest not by expeditiously handling individual place-by-place grievances, but by participating in the more general decisions on the price level and structure, and on the quality of goods and services.

Participation of Consumers' Councils in some general decisions has already occurred. But lack of research staff, or lack even of a staff that knew what ought to be researched into, and what evidence to call for, is likely at present to make participation rather ineffective.

Thus the consumers' Central Transport Consultative Committee accepted in March 1952 the British Transport Tribunal's "conclusion upon the revenue aspect" (from raising fares),* having expressed their doubts as to the advisability of this step in the previous December.† Is it any more likely that a Gas Consumers' Council, faced with a proposed rise in prices, can put forward a convincing case for meeting increasing costs by compensating economies?

For the whole community as distinct from the consumer with specialised interests, it must be the broad policy decision, both the plans and the decisions to implement them, that cause the greatest concern; but the community lacks informed guardians capable of critically approving or suggesting alternatives to the Board's official proposals. These proposals, in themselves, may be admirable, but not the only possibility. Practicable alternatives may have been discarded because of prejudice or the momentum of the Board's existing activities, though as capable of successful conclusion as the proposal then being followed, and, perhaps, even more acceptable *to the consumers*. Policy decisions are rarely between the right and the wrong but between alternative possibilities and the community at large should have some say in the choice to be made, in the policy formation stage.

If this is agreed, then it must be admitted that Consumers' Councils, as at present constituted, are inadequate for the

* Cmd. 8,513, para. 7.

† H.C. 79, 1951-2, para. 58.

purpose; that the parliamentary guardians of the consumers interest are often ill-informed depending, as they must do, upon the Board's annual reports which frequently leave out important questions* and which are often less of an honest confession of the ups and downs of the industry, than a window-dressing operation. As for the minister and his department, it has been suggested that they have not the "technical knowledge necessary to judge the British Transport Commission . . . or to stand up against it on any matter other than some outstanding popular issue."† The glaring error is likely to be detected easily enough, but then is it likely to be made?

There has been advocacy of the Parliamentary Select Committee, served by a skilled staff in the same way as is the Estimates Committee—but the objection to this, as to continual parliamentary questions on the administration of individual industries, seem to be overwhelming. There can be no way of preventing such an enquiry from cramping individual initiative and increasing the official records, leading to the consultation of every interest at every occasion in that vain search for the perfectability of every policy and each decision. It would be appalling to find a nationalized industry that *never* made a mistake! What may be a desirable aim in a government department is certainly a handicap in an industrial organization. In addition, by the time Parliament is reached, debates on the industry become involved in party political sniping at the responsible minister, a process that does not add greatly to the clarification of pressing problems.‡

Another proposal often mooted for the consumers' benefit is that of a septennial royal commission, and here a comparison is drawn with the enquiries into the B.B.C. The comparison, however, is misleading. The B.B.C.'s technical decisions are small in scale and hardly affect the national economy; its policy decisions regarding programmes have a greater flexibility than investment programmes of nationalized industries and can be easily reversed. Furthermore, an *ad hoc* commission seems *prima facie* to be a less effective than an expert body constantly in touch with the problems and decisions, constantly available to give informed criticism of these actions which affect the consumer

* Neither the B.T.C. in its 1951 report nor the Coal Board in its report prior to 1949 made any reference to the acute shortage of certain types of manpower. See pp. 14ff. of the Acton Society Trust pamphlet, *Relations with the Public*.

† D. N. Chester, *Three Banks Review*, December, 1952, p. 38.

‡ Discussing the backbench pressure for an enquiry into the Coal Board, *The Economist* wrote: "It is ironic that a Conservative minister should thus find his reputation and possibly his job, depending on the success of a nationalized industry" (2, 5, 1953, p. 291).

individually or in groups, as well as the nation as a whole.

It has also been suggested that "an efficiency unit in which would be the employed first-class industrial consultants" would perhaps provide these requirements.* This unit should have more required of it than "the investigation of snags of a serious character",† and should not be only the instrument of a Board requiring advice nor of a minister with a problem. Such a unit should be harnessed to a body which represents the consumer as far as possible, has a contact with the actual conditions prevailing and which could link expert opinion with that of the informed amateur experienced and interested in the problems of the industry in relation to the consumer and to society.

To achieve this, we suggest the setting up of a Central Consumers' Council to concern itself with all the nationalized industries. A small number of members, five to seven, must be full-time, and the Council must have a research unit adequate for its purpose. This national council would have, as its counterpart in each of the regions, one Consumers' Council to cover *all* the nationalized undertakings, which would be concerned with policies primarily regional or on which some expression of regional opinion would aid the national council. The regional body consisting of the chairmen of the district committees and representatives of major interests within the area, would be represented on the Central Council by its chairman. To this national body, other members up to, say, twenty might be co-opted to represent particular interests‡ not otherwise represented.

The full-time members should be responsible primarily over the whole field but each, also, would be selected for his expertness in a particular topic—such as finance, production, sales, raw materials, administration;|| and each might have to make a special study of a particular industry—gas, coal, electricity, land transport, aviation and so on. The research staff should consist of efficiency experts, statisticians, experts in the broad considerations involved and in the problems of the particular corporations. This permanent staff would have to be supplied

* Rt. Hon. Herbert Morrison, M.P., H. Houldsworth and others, *Efficiency in the Nationalized Industry*, p. ii (Allen and Unwin, 1952).

† *Ibid.*, p. ii.

‡ The present composition of the Central Transport Consultative Committee is an example of this bringing together of interests.

|| A somewhat similar proposal is made by S. J. L. Hardie (first Chairman of the Iron and Steel Corporation) in the *Nationalized Industries*, 1952, p. 11, but his "authority is to supervise the other nationalized industries to ensure that they function properly" and does not consider the consumer especially.

mented in some of the specialised problems by drawing on consultants from industry and commerce, from the universities, and from the public service. The responsibility of the full-time members with the research staff at their back would be to adduce facts and develop arguments supporting or criticising the Boards' attitudes and policies *vis-à-vis* the consumer and also to provide material for purposeful discussion by the whole council, whose part-time members would bring to it wide practical experience based upon different occupations and interests, in different areas. Then and only then would the consumers' representatives be able to stand up to the Board.

This Central Consumers' Council would be empowered to investigate, as they saw fit, all matters referred to it by the ministers, by the Boards, by the Regional Consumers' Councils, or by any interested consumer or body of consumers, or to carry out any investigation which they considered desirable. Their enquiries and subsequent reports might cover one industry or any number of industries where the subject was a matter of common interest, for instance staff training; or was a matter of concern to all, such as methods of traction related to fuel economy, or to long-term finance. On any one of these subjects Parliament and the public needs a co-ordinated report and not a report concerned only with the problems of one industry.

On the wider problems of the nationalized industries—the problems fundamental to the Board's pricing and policy decisions—the Central Committee would probably have to adopt the methods used by the Select Committee on Estimates in handling complex problems in organizations of some size—splitting up into sub-committees, each of which would handle a particular topic, reporting back. The reports of the Council should be published, together with the supporting material, and minority reports, if any, should be included.

The minister, Parliament, and the public would, in this way, have some cause to feel that the problems of the nationalized industries, individually and collectively, were under unbiased review, and that in trying to decide on the merits of a case (which are often not political) they had access to other opinions, alternative policies, and that criticisms of the Boards' policies and decisions had been put and searchingly followed up.*

* You cannot, of course make the horse drink. "In the seven-hour debate on the [proposals for] the decentralisation of the Railways and the denationalisation of Road Haulage, only one direct reference to the previous year's annual report was made" (Acton Society Trust, *op. cit.* p. 17).

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These objects can only be assured by the provision of an independent Council provided with the means to carry out investigations in order that the public and its representative may not feel themselves helpless in the face of the Boards' expertise.

This Council would be more suitable than quasi-judicial tribunals, such as the Transport Tribunal, to examine the case for an increase in charges. The decision between the Council's viewpoint and the Board's viewpoint should be made by the minister as additional considerations may arise, concerned with political and social policy, strategic issues and so on, rather than with questions of efficiency.

Where costs are affected by considerations of social policy, as, for example, an isolated community whose railway line is to be shut down because of losses, or the refusal to extend Oxford gas works on its present site in view of the injury to amenities, a statement of the potential social gain and the financial loss needs to be set side by side. The decision, as in the case of defence requirements overruling the covering of costs, can only be made by the minister responsible to Parliament, but it is desirable that a statement by such a body as this should precede any discussion in the House.

Such a council would provide a check on the efficiency of the various industries and would have the advantage of being able to compare problems which are common to all the industries because of their sheer size. In addition it would come to an assessment of efficiency, not in terms of utopian standards of perfection, such as the civil service strives for, but in terms of the business attitude (many of the Council members would be business men) summed up by the Chairman of the British Electricity Authority, Lord Citrine: "We will accept a percentage of mistakes. We will not tell you what that percentage is—We will not guarantee that we will excuse a particular mistake, but we do not expect perfection".*

Was it naïve or merely politically expedient for the Minister of Transport recently to say "no inquiry was necessary to establish that monopoly control of rail and long distance road-haulage was detrimental to the public interest"?† A central Consultative Consumers' Council, as is suggested here, could go a long way to establishing facts and then leave the judgment to

* H.C. 332, Select Committee on the Nationalized Industries, 29th October, 1952, p. xxii.

† *Hansard*, 28th April, 1953, col. 1976. Such an answer can satisfy few save the dogmatist and the ardent party supporter.

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be made *when the facts are known*. At the present time, the community or its representatives in these matters, are left to accept the recommendations of the only experts, the Board's, because they are unable to contravert them. The machinery at present available for consumers' participation in policy must be admitted to be little more than an elaborate but ineffectual device. Possibly it is worse than having nothing because today it is easy for the Board to say "this is approved by the Consumers' Council", or for the minister to lean on the Council's report, or the Board to use the Council as a further public relations device.* Either the public is deluded into thinking that its Council has the means to carry out a proper examination or else it loses confidence even in those few cases where a critical assessment is possible and, in fact, has been made. It is vital to the nation's economy that effective machinery should be created to investigate impartially the policy and efficiency of the nationalized industries. The machinery suggested here should have both the qualities of efficiency and impartiality.

What use might be made of its findings is another matter. That they would be significant is beyond doubt for, in the absence of competition between products, there would be the stimulus of a competition between ideas—the ideas of the consumers and the ideas of the Board. The public sector of industry is so basic and important to the rest of the economy that neither its management nor the public, its owners, can afford to be complacent. It "demands continuous vigilant scrutiny",† both from within and without and nothing should be taken for granted nor regarded as the last word. It is for this reason above all others that we suggest this institutional mechanism of one Consumers' Central Consultative Council—properly manned, efficiently served, adequately clothed with authority, and serving as a focus for similarly unified Consumers' Councils at the district and at the regional level. Thus armed, the community could, if it wished, make decisions with knowledge of facts and alternatives.

* L. Hordern, *Problems of Nationalised Industries*, ed. Robson, p. 180, 1952.

† Lord Latham in *Efficiency in the Nationalised Industries*, p. 31.

THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION ON ISRAEL

By THE HON. EDWIN SAMUEL, C.M.G.

IT is five years since the state of Israel was born. Meanwhile its population has been doubled, almost entirely through mass immigration. It is perhaps now time to review the nature of this immigration to assess its impact on the economic, social, and political life of Israel and on its relations with its Arab neighbour states.

The Nature of Immigration

Eric Mills, the Palestine Government Commissioner for Immigration, once said that immigration into Palestine was like a double-acting pump: it needed both a push and a pull—a push from Europe plus a pull from Palestine. Each alone was insufficient. Immigration into Palestine (now Israel) has been far more influenced by the push pump of Europe than by the pull pump of Palestine. The development of Palestine is primarily the product of Jewish disaster in Europe: hence, till today, the centre of gravity of Israel remains outside its frontiers. Here is a list of the various immigration waves into Palestine and Israel in the last seventy years, showing the predominant influences at work in each case:

Wave	Period	Push	Pull
First	1882 onwards	Kishineff massacres of 1882	
Second	1905-1914	{ Collapse of 1905 revolution in Russia Post-war conditions	Zionism
Third	1919-1921		
Fourth	1924-1926	Confiscatory taxation in Poland	Balfour Declaration of 1917
Fifth	1933-1938	Hitler	
Sixth	1944-1948	D.P. Camps; Arab-Israel War	

Internationally, these seventy years fall into four periods. During the first, up to 1918, Palestine was under Ottoman rule. Jewish immigration was officially prohibited but there was considerable illegal immigration, some of it tolerated by authority.

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The second and third periods covered the thirty years of British mandatory rule in Palestine, when Jewish immigration was officially permitted. During the earlier period—from 1918 to 1938—immigration was limited solely by the economic absorptive capacity of the country. During the latter period—from 1939 till 1948—there was an overall political limitation as well.

The theory of economic absorptive capacity is based on a fallacy and hence broke down. While it is true that the rate of immigration is stimulated by capital investment and is reduced by a falling off in investment, the theory does not take into consideration the snow-ball effect produced by mass immigration. Sudden immigration on a large scale creates an immediate demand for housing, food, consumer goods, additional transport services, and trade. Capital flows in to fill these needs and a further demand for immigration is established. Hence immigration into Palestine between 1920 and 1938 was characterized by alternate booms and slumps, as follows:

Boom	Slump
1920-1922	1922-1925
1925-1926	1926-1927
1933-1936	1936-1938 (and Arab Rebellion)

The Arab rebellion—Arab resistance to the Nazi-induced mass Jewish immigration of 1933-36—was suppressed by British forces with the greatest difficulty. One of the achievements of the Arab rebellion was the British White Paper of 1939 that imposed an overall political limitation (and eventual stoppage) of Jewish immigration, combined with a restriction of the areas in Palestine where Jewish settlement was permitted. This was done to protect Arab rights; but, in the event, it resulted in a Jewish rebellion once World War II was over and the political truce that reigned during the war had come to an end. The Arabs whose rights were to be protected were swept away from most of Palestine, and the State of Israel came into existence far earlier than many of its Jewish leaders expected or even wished. It is now clear that the balance of the forces involved was seriously miscalculated by all three of the parties to the dispute—British, Arabs, and Jews. And the violent rocking of the boat occasioned by these two rebellions continues till today.

The fourth period of Jewish immigration into Palestine—from 1948 till 1951—begins with the establishment of the Jewish state. In their hatred of the 1939 Bevin White Paper policy of

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restricted immigration, the new Government of Israel immediately abolished *all* restrictions on immigration, even the normal prohibitions on the admission of diseased persons and criminals. (These restrictions were later reimposed). Even today, with the reappearance of unemployment in Israel, the trade union movement—in most countries the ardent supporters of the closed door—in Israel maintains the policy of the open door with equal ardour. This is the triumph of nationalism over class interests and is, incidentally, the reason why communism has such little attraction for Israelis in their first flush of nationhood.

But the mass immigration of 1948-1951 into Israel—which doubled its population—has many causes beyond an Israeli dislike of Ernest Bevin. Here we can see both the push pump and the pull pump at work. As far as the push pump is concerned, there were:

- (a) The need to clear the displaced persons' camps of Jews who had nowhere else to go.
- (b) The determination to bring out as many as possible of the Jewish survivors from eastern Europe before the iron curtain descended for good.
- (c) The decision to evacuate as many Jews as possible from the Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa before the rising tide of Arab hostility to Israel, and to Zionism (so easily extended to Jews in general) overwhelmed them.

As far as the pull pump was concerned, there were:

- (a) The need for the big battalions to protect Israel against a possible renewal of the Arab war—the so-called “second round”.
- (b) The need to restore Israel's food supply following the flight of the Arab peasantry, and the Arab embargo on food imports into Israel from neighbouring territories.
- (c) The availability of deserted Arab land and housing for large numbers of new Jewish immigrants.
- (d) The sentimental—almost Messianic—attraction of the new state for many believing Jews in the Diaspora.

As in previous boom periods, these forces caused the snow-balling of immigration on a scale far vaster than ever before. And from 1951 onwards it produced a severe slump in Israel with all the usual concomitant difficulties.

The figures of Jewish immigration over the four periods are as follows:

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Period	Dates	Total Immigration
First	1882-1918	60,000
Second	1919-1938	340,000
Third	1939-1947	120,000
Fourth	1948-1951	750,000

Israel is now recovering from the slump that set in in 1952 and awaits the next boom. But, meanwhile, it has learnt the hard way how necessary it is to have some form of planned immigration in order to reduce the violent economic, political, and social oscillations caused by too rapid an increase of population—the rocking of the boat.

The Economic Impact of Immigration

The most obvious economic effect in Israel today of over-immigration is perhaps the shortage of food. This is due to a combination of the following causes, not all connected with immigration:

- (a) The doubling of the population without immediately doubling food production plus food imports.
- (b) The flight of the Arab peasantry who supplied much of the food for the Jewish population.
- (c) The Arab boycott on food imports into Israel from the Middle East.
- (d) The disinclination of many Jewish immigrants to go on the land. (Jews are essentially an urban and mercantile people. Historically this is due in part to laws against land holding by Jews in many countries; in part to the higher returns from trade than those obtainable from agriculture and even manufacture; and lastly to the greater liquidity of funds which Jews preferred in face of possible forced emigration at any moment.) In 1948, when the Mandate came to an end, only 20 per cent. of the Jewish population lived in the rural areas, and the percentage who actually lived by farming was even lower. These proportions have not increased materially in the past five years.
- (e) The time-lag in getting land under cultivation in the 390 new villages that nevertheless were founded since 1948.
- (f) The shortage of foreign exchange to enable adequate food stuffs to be imported into Israel from abroad.

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These factors have collectively necessitated as severe a rationing of foodstuffs in Israel as in war-time England. This rationing imposed on a much less disciplined population has been accompanied by the usual black market. (It has now been somewhat relaxed. It does not seem to have had a bad effect on the health of the population.)

Another obvious economic effect of over-immigration is the shortage of housing in Israel. The traditional steps in the colonisation of Palestine were from tents to wooden huts to concrete or brick or stone houses. Some of the deserted Arab villages were destroyed during and after the Arab-Israel war to prevent an Arab return. Most of the mud huts or stone shacks that remain are too primitive for even the most primitive Jewish immigrant. Hence most of the new immigrants of 1948-1951 were accommodated in tented reception camps, later in tented work camps. They suffered much under canvas during the cold winters and the rains: but nearly all the tents have now been replaced by wooden huts. In the newly established villages, many of the wooden huts have now already been replaced by permanent housing.

There is no wood for building or iron indigenous to Israel. Glass and sanitary ware are now manufactured locally: but much has still to be imported. Israel's chronic shortage of foreign exchange imposes a severe limitation on such imports and hence on building licences. Investment in expensive housing for immigrants is, in the opinion of Professor Mikesell, the American economist and adviser to Israel, an unproductive investment of so large a part of Israel's scanty capital resources.

In the towns, much vacant Arab housing was immediately occupied by Jewish immigrants and the poorer Jewish families after the Arabs had fled. Whole Arab quarters were taken over in Jerusalem, Haifa, Tiberias, and Safad as well as whole Arab towns, such as Acre, Ramleh, Lydda, Majdal, and Beersheba. Compensation for this expropriated housing is still unpaid and will some day impose a further heavy burden on Israel.

There has been much private building in the towns of Israel, but there is still a severe shortage of housing and, as the rents of old buildings cannot be legally raised, large premiums are illegally extorted from all new tenants. With the decline in immigration since 1951, the position is now somewhat easier.

A third economic effect of over-immigration has been felt in

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the state budget. Several other commitments have had to be met, as follows:

(a) The annual development budget, partly in response to the impact of immigration, with its demand for public housing, food and clothing for immigrants on arrival, increased expenditure on medical care, schools, transportation services, etc. Part of this burden, it is true, has been assumed by the Jewish Agency from funds collected abroad. (The rest of the development budget is needed for the opening up of the Negev in Southern Israel and the exploitation of Israel's economic resources in general.)

(b) The annual defence budget, the size of which was not disclosed on security grounds for the first few years of the new state. This includes much of Israel's expenditure on military supplies, the rest being found from the regular budget. It will remain a heavy burden on the state of Israel as long as the Arab blockade continues. (The defence budget is, of course, not directly connected with Israel's immigration policy.)

(c) The diverse and over-ambitious projects undertaken by the government of Israel in the first flush of victory and independence. These have resulted in a constant increase in the size of the civil service. Owing to ministerial autonomy (as contrasted with centralised mandatory control) it was impossible to reduce the government pay-bill in time to prevent defaulting on salaries this last winter. At the same time, in order to raise further funds, a forced loan has recently been imposed on all property owners in addition to the forced loan of ten per cent. of all bank balances imposed in 1952.

A fourth economic effect of over-immigration has been on the foreign trade balances. Palestine, with its heavy imports of capital goods, always had an adverse trade balance, but in Israel the disproportion has grown worse. The present ratio is nine to one. The reasons are as follows:

High Imports

(a) The Arab boycott on imports into Israel which forces Israel to buy in countries which do not need Israel's exports.

(b) The increase in Israel's population and the need for large additional quantities of food and building materials.

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(c) The increased demand for capital goods for the development of Israel's agriculture and industry.

(d) The heavy imports of equipment for the armed services (the cost of which was borne in mandatory days by the *British* taxpayer).

Low Exports

Palestine's major exports were oranges and potash.

(a) Half Israel's orange groves were Arab-owned, and most perished from lack of attention after their owners fled and all able-bodied Jews were preoccupied with the war of liberation.

(b) The north end of the Dead Sea is now in Arab hands and the Palestine potash factory there has been destroyed. The factory at the south end has only now been linked to the main road system at Beersheba. Fear of the nationalization of the company made it more difficult to raise the capital needed for its restarting.

(c) Few of Israel's manufactured goods can be sold easily abroad owing to the high wages and the low rate of productivity of much of Israel's immigrant labour (many of whom are army reservists and constantly taken away on training courses). There are frequent interruptions in the supply of power and raw materials. Worn-out equipment cannot be replaced owing to lack of foreign exchange. There is, however, a spirit of enterprise; and much has been achieved through trade and barter agreements with foreign countries.

A fifth economic effect of over-immigration has been the chronic shortage of foreign exchange. In mandatory days, the adverse trade balance was covered by three types of invisible exports:—

(a) Jewish charitable and other funds collected abroad and spent in Palestine.

(b) Expenditure by the British Treasury on the British military forces maintained in Palestine—often on a very large scale—for internal or external defence.

(c) Expenditure by the Christian missions on their many establishments in Palestine. Most of those in Jerusalem and all those in Bethlehem are now in Jordan territory.

(d) Expenditure by the many tourists who visited Palestine. But the closure of all Israel's land frontiers by the Arab blockade; the fear of new hostilities; the lack of food and

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accommodation; and foreign exchange complications have all combined to reduce the volume of tourist traffic.

(e) Capital investment in Palestine, largely Jewish.

On the other hand, there are now the following additional burdens on Israel's foreign exchange.

(a) Israel was unceremoniously pushed out of the sterling area just before the end of the Mandate.

(b) The purchase of food, clothing, and housing for 750,000 new immigrants.

(c) Israel now maintains an extensive system of diplomatic and consular missions abroad.

(d) Many more Israel-born students go abroad now to complete their training in order to make up for the low proportion of professional men in the new immigration from the Middle East. Israel's own training facilities at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Haifa Technical College have long ago been swamped.

The total foreign currency expenditure is now over 250,000,000 dollars a year. The severe shortage of foreign exchange has been made good by a series of unprecedented operations:

(a) Short term loans during the war of liberation to buy military equipment at any price.

(b) Two long-term loans totalling 135,000,000 dollars in 1950 from the American Export-Import Bank.

(c) Two grants by the United States Government amounting to some 60,000,000 dollars a year, ostensibly for development projects but diverted in part to cover pressing needs for food and consumer goods.

(d) Jewish fund-raising in the United States and elsewhere—year after year—as gifts (the United Jewish Appeal, etc.) and loans (the bond issue) on a gigantic scale.

(e) And now the recent German reparations agreement which will supply some 70,000,000 dollars a year in free goods for ten years (and serves to reinforce Israel's belief in miracles!).

In spite of all this, there is still a chronic shortage of foreign exchange, which results in a severe restriction of import licences, in a shortage of food, building materials and raw materials; in the recall of many students abroad; in a decline in the

international value of the Israel pound and its devaluation in 1951 and, again, in 1953.

The sixth economic effect of over-immigration has been the chronic shortage of capital. The cost of settling tens of thousands of immigrant families each year in agriculture and industry is enormous. After the war of liberation, many Jews abroad wanted to invest in Israel; but their conditions were often unacceptable and the Socialist Party then controlling the Israel government coalition were unfriendly towards private investment. But, with the increasing influence of the right wing parties in Israel, an investment centre was established and guarantees given to approved companies that their profits and capital could be extricated over a period of years. As a result, numerous mixed foreign and Israel companies have been established, the Israel shareholders guaranteeing the buildings and the labour, the foreign shareholders guaranteeing the equipment, experts, and raw materials. But the difficulties in paying for raw materials, and the Arab boycott of foreign firms investing in Israel, have forced one or two enterprises to close down.

The last economic effect of over-immigration that I shall touch on is inflation. With a decline in the international value of the Israel pound owing to Israel's financial difficulties with an unbalanced state budget and, in earlier years, the excessive printing of paper money; with black market operations in Israel and abroad that further depressed the value of the Israel pound; with too many immigrants chasing too few goods—inflation was inevitable. In order to check the usual spiral of wages and prices, heavier taxation was imposed to mop up surplus purchasing money and bank credits were restricted. The result has been that now the shops are full of goods and few people have money with which to buy them.

Nevertheless, in spite of all these formidable economic difficulties, Israel has not collapsed as its Arab neighbours confidently predicted. The war of liberation and over-immigration have badly strained its economy. It has made almost every possible economic mistake until its best friends sometimes think that, instead of being good business men and bad soldiers, the reverse is true. The American Jewish community and the United States Government seemed determined to see Israel through. Its own determination and resilience are further guarantees of its survival.

The Social Impact of Immigration

The successive waves of immigration into Israel have not yet been fully integrated. By and large, there were successive waves of Russian, Polish, and German Jews and, since 1948, of Balkan and Middle East Jews. In the United States, the German Jews came first and looked down on the Russian Jews who came later. In Israel, the Russian Jews looked down on the Poles; the Russians and Poles on the Germans; and all the European Jews looked down on the Middle Eastern Arabic-speaking Jews. They relate with glee that the Yemenite Jews lit fires on the floor of the aeroplanes that brought them to Israel, the first time that they had seen wheeled vehicles, let alone aeroplanes. And how can one induct Yemenites into the complexities of health insurance and ration books when they have previously not seen boots, or even water taps?

Then there is a profound cross-cleavage between Jews of all countries who are ritually observant and those that are not. There are constant disputes, ending sometimes in violence, over the driving of motor vehicles on the Sabbath, over the cooking of Sabbath meals in army kitchens, over the conscription of women for military service, over separate school system for "orthodox" children, over the religious education of immigrants, over the importation or fattening and sale of non-kosher meat. More than one cabinet crisis has occurred over such matters.

The ultimate resort of those who fail to integrate themselves in the community is emigration *from* Israel. But few people will admit, when they leave, that they are going for good. They leave to study, for health, for business, for a holiday, to see a sick relative—but they fail to return. That the weaker brethren should leave strengthens the community (did not Joshua say the same before the battle?). And the numbers are still inconsiderable. It is a phenomenon—not highly publicized—common to all immigrant countries, including the United States and the Dominions.

There are, however, four powerful integrating influences at work:

- (a) The Hebrew language, which many newcomers know from their childhood and nearly all others learn after arrival.
- (b) The elementary school system, which brings together the Israel-born child and the immigrant children from all

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countries (luckily there is no "colour" bar among Jews). As the schools improve in quality, so will their value as a melting pot for subsequent generations.

(c) The youth movements, at secondary school level.

(d) The armed services in which all young immigrants do their two and a half years on arrival. The social integration achieved thereby is incalculable. Not only is there a common language; but much mutual tolerance and the rapid adoption of western standards of hygiene, for example, by Middle East immigrants.

The Jewish communal villages have done much to integrate immigrants from different countries. But living in a communal village demands a high degree of selflessness and sophistication which few Middle Eastern immigrants possess. They go if at all, into individualist villages. Nor has the *kibbutz* been willing to abandon its principles of equality by bringing in as hired labour the large numbers of new immigrants proposed by the government. There is thus a split between many of the labour leaders on one side who started life in the *kibbutzim* thirty or forty years ago and helped to establish their form and content, and the new immigrant who is told that he must accept the *kibbutz* as it now is or go elsewhere.

The Internal Political Impact of Immigration

The incomplete integration of the immigrants is shown by the multiplicity of political parties in Israel. There is the usual rainbow of parties from communist to left wing and right wing socialist, to conservative and ultra-nationalist. But this pattern of the parties who want to go slower and those who want to go faster is complicated by the existence of four parties based on various degrees of religious observance (as in Holland) and also by the existence of at least three parties based on countries of origin (German Jews, Yemenite Jews, and Spanish-speaking Jews) as well as separate parties for Arabs.

The multiplicity of parties makes political life in Israel very ponderous and somewhat unstable. But it serves to emphasise Jewish traditional belief in rule by the totality as opposed to rule by the bare majority. With 2,000 years of no police power to enforce Jewish communal decisions, Jews had perforce to go on arguing until the fifty-one per cent. needed for a bare majority reached 60 and 70 and 80 and even 90 per cent. and thereby

THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION ON ISRAEL

prevented a split in the community. Such is still the position in the *kibbutzim* today.

In the sphere of the civil service, there is also evidence that Israel is a country of immigration. No less than seven different sources have supplied the new service: (a) the Jewish Agency; (b) its former underground services; (c) the political parties; (d) the old mandatory civil services; (e) the dollar a year economists; (f) the young entry of those born in Israel seeking a civil service career; and (g) the new immigrants, some of whom were professional men and have attended an *Ulpan* on arrival in Israel—the residential college for the intensive study of Hebrew—as unique in its way as the *Folkhochschule* in Denmark; others who temporarily supply the rank and file of the lowly-paid services such as the police and the post office until they can find something better.

The External Political Impact of Immigration

The major problem facing Israel-Arab relations is the Arab refugee problem. In the last analysis, the 1948-52 period was a cataclysmic exchange of populations. Three quarters of a million Arabs left and three quarters of a million Jews came in. This resembled on a small scale the explosive birth of India and Pakistan with far less bloodshed but a similar aftermath of bitterness and suspicion.

The exact reasons for the Arab exodus will be disputed for ever. But three main causes can be distinguished—first, the desire to get out of the way of battling armies, coupled with a belief in Arab victory and an early return to their homes. Secondly, a dislike of living, even temporarily, under Jewish rule; and thirdly, a real fear of physical extermination, after the annihilation of the Arab village of Deir Yassin by Jewish terrorists before the end of the Mandate, with this deliberate intention.

Many Arab villages were blown up by the Israel army at the end of the war of liberation in order to discourage the return of the Arab refugees. (Although much of the accommodation was very primitive, the housing situation was materially worsened when hundreds of thousands of immigrants arrived in the next three years.) Nevertheless, many Arab refugees do try to return illegally and are forcibly expelled. Others become armed marauders and pillage outlying Jewish farms. This does

not occur on the Lebanese or Syrian or Egyptian frontiers but almost entirely on the long frontier with Jordan, ill defined and closely populated on both sides. The Jordan government seems occasionally to be unwilling and in general unable to prevent these incursions, and there are constant frontier clashes and reprisal raids with heavy casualties on both sides.

An even more serious external political effect of Jewish mass immigration is Arab fear that population pressure from within will force Israel to try to expand its frontiers at the expense primarily of Jordan. There is admittedly some irridentism in Israel favouring early "liberation" of the former Palestinian highlands around Nablus and Hebron, and of the Old City of Jerusalem. But if Israel is not forced by the Arab League into a "second round", it is unlikely to challenge the U.K.-U.S.A.-France guarantee of the existing frontiers between Israel and Jordan.

In any case, there seem to be inadequate economic reasons for an expansionist policy in Israel. There is still ample Arab land (not yet paid for) to be brought back into cultivation and further developed. And there is the new interest in the arid Negev in the south, capable—with irrigation—of supporting a considerably increased population. Israel's motto is "Go south, young man, go south!"—and not east. The Negev is rich in minerals, some of which are already being exploited. And most Israelis believe that God could not be so unkind as to lavish oil on the Arab states and leave none for His Chosen People. No oil has yet been discovered in Israel in commercial quantities but the belief in miracles dies hard.

THE POLITICS OF LORD ACTON

By DONALD G. MACRAE*

THE perspective of time is not that of space. As we retreat from men and events in history some among them do not diminish but loom the more as the vista lengthens. Today the image of John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton occupies a larger area of our vision than ever in his lifetime or in the years before 1945. He has been given the status of a prophet, and his name is ranged with Tocqueville and Burckhardt among the ranks of those who despaired of the revolution of 89 and its legacy. These two handsome volumes testify to his present stature; they also aid in the task of doing him justice.† And if justice reveals a Tocqueville more complex and amiable, though not less great than his reputation, so it reveals a smaller but less minatory Lord Acton.

The present repute of Acton is centred on three elements. He is thought of as one who underwrites and illustrates what Tocqueville had to say on political action since 1789. Men, wrote the great Frenchman, "had sought to be free in order to make themselves equal; but in proportion as equality was more established by the aid of freedom, freedom itself was thereby rendered more difficult of attainment." Liberty is the greatest good, but by a fatal paradox, it is self-destructive and in rousing the passion for equality, produces its most serious enemy. The state of the world is therefore to be deplored and the future to be feared. Our present social and political ills all flow from this situation and Acton foretold them.

One may agree that the present is always full of woe, and the horizons black with storm, and yet not accept this diagnosis. In so far as Acton himself accepted it he did so with a reluctance appropriate to the historian and apostle of liberty. Nor, indeed, did he despair of either liberty or equality so completely as his self-avowed disciples have done. Acton is too complex for their simplicity, too intelligent to be merely reactionary.

No doubt some kinds of liberty are possible without equality

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† G. E. Fasnacht: *Acton's Political Philosophy: An Analysis*. Foreword by Sir Harold Butler. (Hollis and Carter. 205 pp. 21s.) *Lord Acton: Essays on Church and State*. Edited and introduced by Douglas Woodruff. (Hollis and Carter. 518 pp. 30s.)

and an equality of a kind can exist under either political despotism or a uniform tyranny of manners. Either of these last is justly to be feared, but this fear is no basis for a political system and Acton was well aware of this. His thought on such matters is fragmentary and sometimes contradictory, but this is true of all his thought. He was too scrupulous to decide lightly, and indeed it is difficult to see that any realistic decision was possible in his period. Yet the case is in principle quite simple: discriminations have to be made between freedoms and between equalities. There is no force inherent in history that determines that one must be sacrificed to the other.

The second element of Acton's contemporary reputation is his position as historian. Never, it is said, were such standards brought to scholarship, or so rigorous a moral judgment turned, with the scowl of the hanging judge, on the illustrious dead. "The Reign of Sin is more universal, the influence of unconscious error is less, than historians tell us. . . . Seek no artistic unity in character. . . . The final judgment depends on the worst action."

It is all very forbidding, but Acton could accept a fairly obvious forgery—see *Essays on Church and State*, pp. 353-73 and pp. 473-4—and these rhadamanthine counsels were delivered to Bishop Creighton and replied to by a letter whose irony Acton could not penetrate. He had, indeed, no lightness in him, or he could hardly have set up the historians so confidently as deputies to the divine judgment.

The third component of interest in him is the consequence of his religion. Acton was a Catholic; not a comfortable nor an apologetic Catholic, but yet a constantly practising believer whose adherence survived even the assertion of papal infallibility. Catholicism is intellectually fashionable, and, in England at least, intellectually weak. (Yet Lecky, for instance, would better suit most of those who use Acton to make political propaganda today. *Democracy and Liberty* is a better text-book for conservatism than anything Acton ever wrote, but Lecky was a rationalist in the high nineteenth-century style. Consequently he is not quoted.) Furthermore, Acton's life in the Church touches issues not yet dead. Mr. Woodruff's introductory essay on the Catholic journals of the last century with which Acton was connected and the rivalries of clerics and laymen, of the ultramontane and the English Gallican (if I may be forgiven the phrase), gains vitality in that the problems survive and are still

unsolved. The non-Catholic, however, may find these matters, which also greatly concern Bishop Mathew in *Acton: The Formative Years*, less absorbing.

Beyond Acton's value to reactionary political theory, his status as historian, and his religion, lie other matters. These two books enable us to approach these more closely and to return thence to the central themes of politics. Acton was born in Naples in 1834 and died in Bavaria in 1902. There is something appropriate in these facts, for Acton was ever a stranger, an outsider, not only to English society, but to every European society. He had not even the consolations and hopes however, illusory, of the exile or refugee. Despite the Actons' long history in Shropshire, he looked in with equal strangeness and familiarity on the life of the old Catholic nobility of England, the Court of Naples under the Bourbons, the petty courts of a divided Germany, and the political salons of the Second Empire. He knew all that was to be known of these various milieux, but between them and the historian was the glass wall of his alienation from any soil, all the more real because of his invincible seriousness, his ineradicable habit of thought. Such a man could find himself neither in an area of English society traditionally dedicated to stupidity, nor yet among the rulers of central Germany whose courts combined imbecility and complacency with an unfailing bad taste which extended to their furthest outposts in the English and Greek monarchies of the time. As a result Acton never did find himself, and his quest unfulfilled has been one of the lures taking Mr. Fasnacht into his scholarly study of Acton's political philosophy.

But had Acton a philosophy? Mr. Fasnacht lists six obstacles to Acton interpretation: one can summarise these by saying that for a historian to be simultaneously Christian and Liberal, erudite and sincere, leaving only miscellaneous papers and essays in print plus some fifty thousand pages of manuscript notes, is complicated enough. If, in addition one knows that he deliberately contradicted himself, accepted a certain plurality of truth, and that nobody has yet sifted all the evidence, one can understand Mr. Fasnacht's difficulties and could pardon despair. If, like the present writer, one doubts if Acton *had* a philosophy, if this emperor of the mind in fact wore very few clothes, one can forgive Mr. Fasnacht his many repetitions and the rather grey atmosphere of much of his text. It was necessary to find out what there really is of Lord Acton: the job has been done

admirably. Acton, at home nowhere, never successfully fused his Germanic view of historiography, his Catholicism, and his liberalism. Macaulay, whom it is fashionable to despise because he was consciously involved in and aware of British politics, remarked in a letter that he felt "a sort of presentiment, a kind of admonition of the Deity, which assures me that the final cause of my existence—the end for which I was sent into this vale of tears—was to make game of certain Germans". But to Acton, as to themselves, German savants were serious objects. They knew everything, they had discovered the true science of history, and in their example was the only way of salvation. Preparing himself for such peers Acton read voraciously, accumulated an enormous library, and left the plan of the Cambridge Modern History as his sole completed achievement. Barren dullness could have no greater triumph, and, instead of being made game of, German historiography has conquered our universities and it is only with difficulty that a new régime, concerned with general ideas, today establishes itself.

Now Acton himself was far from content with mere pedantry. He was deeply concerned with general ideas, and strove to give them birth. Everywhere the habits he had acquired at the feet of Döllinger prevented him: the desire to know every tree individually postponed too long the examination of the wood. Moreover the wood itself, the history of liberty, stretched to the world's end.

In addition in a Protestant country, liberty and Catholicism will always be thought of, however rightly or wrongly, as antithetic. Catholic though he was, Acton felt the antithesis—perhaps most acutely because he believed in both. "Historically and logically, theologically also, those who affirm a necessary antagonism between the Republic and the Church are," Mr. Belloc tells us, "in error." Before Aquinas there was John of Salisbury to illustrate the Whig element in Catholic thought and it was Tocqueville himself who claimed that the Church, treating all alike, tends to egalitarianism. Equality is admittedly not liberty, and *De Regimine Principum* is no libertarian tract, nevertheless one may admit that there is in logic at least no complete and necessary divorce between the revolution and the Church.

On the other hand, with however large a charity we recall that the rich as well as the poor have souls to be saved—Mr. Eliot and Mr. Waugh, indeed, seem to suggest that they have the only *interesting* souls—the role of the Catholic Church in the

last century and a half has been that of the ally of power, tyranny, and the oppression of the just demands of the poor. Of course there have been and are many and great exceptions within the Church and things are, it may be, changing. The charge still holds: the Church has found its friends with the allies of poverty, and, as Acton himself put it, "There is no liberty where there is hunger. . . ."*

No mere solution in words satisfied Acton, and as a result a fissure ran through his thought. It is this that explains his draconian condemnation of the past politics of the papacy. It is this, also, which explains his refusal to follow Döllinger out of the Church on the infallibility issue. Such a division of the soul is tragedy.

Yet if Catholicism was central to Acton's emotional life, his liberalism was as central to his thought as Gladstone was central to his friendship. I am not going to attempt to define and distinguish Whiggery, liberalism, and democracy. Between all three is an iron link of historical logic, and only a nostalgia for the past insists on a division and the assertion of, say Whiggery, as virtue against the excesses of liberalism or democracy. Horace Walpole defined his Whiggishness by hanging Magna Carta on one side of his bed and on the other "the Warrant for King Charles's execution, on which I have written Major Charta . . ." This is extreme enough, but so is Acton's definition: "morality applied to politics."

The truth about Acton's liberalism is that it belonged to a tradition which is being falsified by both ignorance and malice. Writers from beyond the Rhine—a frontier not of geography alone, but of the spirit—have understood liberalism not in the developing and generous life which draws from Hooker something of the best strength of medievalism, and which has its roots in the English revolutions of the seventeenth century, in the enlightenment of the eighteenth, and above all in the experience of 1776 and 1789. This set of principles constantly modified by experience could have little meaning in societies where experience was despotism, militarism, and bureaucracy. Central European scholars whose writings are everywhere influential have therefore set against this tradition which includes Burke and Harold Laski a dogma of *laissez faire* economics and minimal politics which may have merit in itself, but which is false to the

* This is a broad generalization, and as such is true not only of the Church of Rome but of all but a few Protestant sects.

meaning of a word established by three centuries of history. Others, without the excuse of ignorance, have accepted this false account of liberalism in order the better to deny a social policy which they fear may lead to the dissolution of existing privilege.

Acton in fact stands in a line which runs through Green and Mill. Mr. Fasnacht sees the similarities in the positions of Hobhouse, A. D. Lindsay, and Acton, and in this he is surely correct. Unfortunately, as is too often both Acton's and Mr. Fasnacht's custom, he does not illustrate and enlarge his point. (Perhaps Mr. Fasnacht would reply that his whole book is the illustration.) Nevertheless the conclusion is unavoidable that Acton, a minor thinker for all the power and penetration of which he was at times capable, ended his days among those who mark in Britain the transition from liberalism to the peculiar brand of socialism typical of these islands. The liberal is not the only strand in British socialism, but it is one of the most important and it is a strand which keeps British socialism—very clearly in Acton's case—in touch with the natural law tradition.

Acton approached this situation tentatively. "Socialism . . . the worst enemy freedom ever had to encounter . . . some form of Socialism is clearly Christian." Both these assertions occur in the same paragraph. As Mr. Fasnacht puts it, it is "against totalitarian socialism that Acton's strictures are directed, and . . . it is to liberal socialism that his views ultimately incline". Indeed, properly understood, Acton is an ancestor of the Labour front bench. At a longer reach one might say the same of the greater figure of Tocqueville to whom morality, religion, order, liberty and equality "sont toutes des choses *saintes* . . . parce que la grandeur et le bonheur de l'homme dans ce monde ne peuvent résulter que de la réunion de toutes ces choses à la fois."

But Tocqueville understood certain things which Acton failed to comprehend. He knew the force of class in history, and Acton, though an early student of Marx, never grasped this clue. Both misconceived the relation of the economic substructure to the social order and underestimated its importance. Mr. Fasnacht attempts to demonstrate that Acton did not neglect the economic factor in history but all he proves is an appreciation of financial influences which is superficial enough. In this whole area Acton is vastly inferior to, say, Macaulay, and scarcely reaches the rather low level of many of his German contemporaries. Perhaps less serious for a historian is his failure justly to discriminate

between the merits of the various economists he assiduously studied.

But if Acton failed to appreciate the lesson that Marx had to teach he did correctly appraise a force which Marx despised. Even in this volume of early essays which Mr. Woodruff has edited his understanding of nationalism stands out, though his classical treatment of the theme is presumably delayed to a later volume of this new edition of Acton's works. It is in his understanding of nationalism and in the appreciation of its dangers, not out of mere conservative love for the *ancien régime* but of the understanding of its implication and its virtues, that Acton touches his height as political thinker and outstrips his age.

The present essays and reviews do not, however, make lively reading. On the whole Acton wrote badly, and though he did much to raise the level of the Catholic journals of his time, that level was so low that much less than his force and knowledge would have been sufficient to work an improvement and a lesser man might well have done a better job. Someone has told us of the Italian criminal who, having to choose between Guiccardini and the galleys, chose the historian and repented of the choice. A diet of the first twenty years of, say, *The Dublin Review* produces a similar nostalgia for degrading labour. Acton laudably chose to remedy this, but, some good achieved, gave up. These essays of the sixties were worth resurrection, but they are—some exceptions apart—no adequate index of his quality. They too often bear the dull imprint of their origins.

What that quality is I have tried to indicate here, and to suggest that it is different in kind and less in degree than is usually believed. Yet if Acton is a minor thinker and scarcely a prophet he is still important enough to deserve serious consideration, while the failure of his life and thought to unify their disparate components teaches us the better to appraise these jarring factors, all of which exist beyond Acton in the world of men and politics today. He does not only document his period, but tells us something of our own as well, and in this limited sense at least he even has a claim to the prophetic robe.

Postscript: Since this article was written in mid-August, 1952, writings about Lord Acton have multiplied. Among these is a book by an American scholar, Miss Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Lord Acton: A Study in Conscience and Politics* (Routledge, 260 pp., price 21s. This is an attempt to write an intellectual biography

of Acton and it usefully corrects many of the errors of fact into which Bishop Mathew had fallen. It flows smoothly and is probably a more generally accessible introduction to Acton's ideas than is Mr. Fasnacht's volume. But although easier of approach, Miss Himmelfarb's volume contains far less real insight than is shown by Mr. Fasnacht. Like so many contemporary American writers, she fails to understand what British politics are about and what their continuity has been. Her account of Acton's liberalism and his relations to socialism, is therefore disappointing. What is more, she makes Acton more consistent in his thought and in the development of his thought than he actually was. The asperities of the earlier study, and even its contradictions and repetitions, bore the impress of the living Acton. Mr. Fasnacht is awkward because what he has to say is important, but what he has to say is made more comprehensible by Miss Himmelfarb's easy narrative.

Unlike many recent scholarly works from the United States, this book is very free of jargon, although it is a little odd to find Gibbon stigmatized as "brash", and I am completely puzzled as to what Miss Himmelfarb means by "historicism". She seems to believe that Acton is a prophet, but the order of his prophecy emerges even less clearly here than in earlier considerations of him. Nevertheless, this is a useful book.

THE RISE OF CONGRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

By JULIUS LEWIN*

THE campaign of passive resistance against unjust laws surprised everyone in 1952 by its success. Before it began no one, not even its organisers, would have predicted with confidence that it would attract such tremendous interest and support. This fact itself shows once again how white people tend to underrate the volume and depth of feeling that moves non-whites, and how they also underrate the steady purpose and persistence that lie behind their rather weak political organisation.

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The illusion that white supremacy in South Africa is destined to prevail for ever and a day is fostered in many ways. One of the worst is the attitude to non-white organisations of the daily newspapers which provide the great majority of white people with their sole source of political information. The Press never reports the speeches or activities of non-white leaders in any adequate fashion, and least of all when these have a constructive and statesmanlike tone. Any wild remarks or noisy disturbance are sure of emphatic headlines. But no paper in South Africa, whether among the English dailies supporting the United Party or the Afrikaans dailies supporting the Nationalists, ever gives its readers intelligible accounts of the growth of the movement that reached its first climax in 1952, or any rational assessment of its strength and weakness.

Yet the movement that culminated last year in the defiance campaign was neither new nor sudden. Both the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress have carried on their work for many years. Since the records of their growth and emergence into maturity are scanty, it may be useful to set down an outline of their past.

The African National Congress was started as far back as January 1912 by four African lawyers who had returned to the Union after studying abroad. The founders were Dr. P. ka I. Seme (who was connected with the royal house in Swaziland, and who died in 1951), Alfred Mangena, G. D. Montsioa, and R. W. Msimang. Dr. Seme was apparently the prime mover in the matter and he is regarded as "the father of Congress" although its first president was the Rev. J. L. Dube, late principal and founder of the Ohlange Training Institution in Natal. The aim was to unite the various Bantu-speaking tribes into "an African nation" to achieve political progress. The educated Africans had been hurt and disappointed by the colour bar inserted in 1909 in the constitution of the new Union of South Africa, a bar that to this day excludes them on racial grounds from ever becoming Members of Parliament.

In the year after the Congress had been born, the Union Parliament, as if to stimulate the infant movement, laid upon all Africans the first of many heavy legal disabilities. The Land Act of 1913 prohibited Africans from acquiring land outside certain very limited areas. Parliament thus presented Congress with a grievance as deep and wide in its incidence as any that could have been imagined. To this day the ardent desire for

more land rankles in the African mind, remaining one of the basic causes of popular resentment against white rule. To protest against the Land Act a deputation of African leaders went to London in 1914. As Dominion status was a conception that emerged only at the end of the first world war, there was at that time perhaps some ground for hoping that Britain could and would influence the native policy of the Union. The deputation included Dr. Dube, Dr. W. B. Rubusana (who had been elected a member of the first Cape Provincial Council, the only African ever to attain this distinction), and Sol. T. Plaatje, the writer. War broke out while the deputation was in Britain and interrupted its mission. After the war, however, a second deputation was sent with the same object. (It may be noted in passing that at that time, in 1919, another deputation also sought relief from Britain. It consisted of leading Afrikaner nationalists in quest of a republic independent of the Crown.) Already the shape of things to come was visible: Africans were ready to appeal to opinion abroad against the government of their own country. Many years later, after a second world war, Africans came to look on world opinion as a source of strength in their struggle for those human rights declared by the United Nations to be desirable for all people.

In 1924 Hertzog became prime minister with the first Nationalist government. Thereafter Africans were supplied with plenty of fuel to keep alive the smouldering fires of discontent. For the next dozen years Hertzog pursued his avowed aim of putting an end to the Cape liberal tradition which had allowed certain rights, including the common franchise, to Africans. After 1933 Smuts and his party joined Hertzog and, with this fusion of parties, it became clear that the Nationalists' goal was in sight. The year before it was reached, with the passage of the legislation of 1936, the African National Congress itself attained a new level of organisation and influence. Its conference, held as usual in Bloemfontein, in 1935, was significantly attended by some Coloured and Indian political figures. Their presence was not unwelcome to the new generation of African leaders, men with a better education and a stronger sense of political purpose than the early Congress leaders. But opinion was now seriously divided between two schools of thought. The older one, believing that half a loaf is always better than no bread, was ready to bargain with the government in the hope that a "moderate" attitude of compromise would save some kind of rights for the

future from the wreckage of past hopes. Those who held this view were faced with sharp criticism from the opposite school of thought which, rejecting compromise as cowardice, advocated non-collaboration with any official plan of reform and proposed to boycott any new political institutions established under it for the alleged benefit of Africans. Indian and Cape Coloured spokesmen especially were heard taking this line, new to Africans, with much force of argument and with fierce invective against those "good boys" or timid spirits who could still contemplate negotiation with Hertzog and ultimately acceptance of his major proposals. The uncompromising view did not carry the day, but it made a lasting impression and began to split the ranks of Congress.

Under the new law the Native Representative Council operated for ten years from 1937. During that period, the obvious African leaders were nearly all elected to it by popular vote, and by their side were leading tribal chiefs nominated to seats on the Council by the Government. Patiently, year after year, the Council, under the chairmanship of the permanent Secretary for Native Affairs, heard speeches and passed resolutions calling for necessary reforms in every sphere of native policy and administration. Its discussions reached a level of debate in many respects more creditable than that normal in the House of Assembly, as observers could testify. But all the eloquent words and reasonable proposals were wasted on the deaf ears of the authorities. It is difficult to recall a single important reform introduced as a result of the good advice annually tendered by this "advisory" body. No wonder that a grim sense of frustration gripped its members by 1946 when the war-time promises still remained unfulfilled. Their moderate programme of particular reforms then yielded place to a general demand that the government abandon racial discrimination in principle and begin to grant those basic human rights of which the charter of the United Nations had spoken so firmly. The immediate occasion for this highly significant change was the great strike of black miners on the Rand in August 1946 when the Council happened to be in session. Councillors were angered by the hostile attitude displayed by everyone in authority from Smuts, the prime minister, downwards, to the demands of the miners, and by the flat refusal even to open negotiations with them.

Smuts did, however, sense the change in the minds of the African leaders now united in their attitude to white authority.

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Late in 1947 he met some of the councillors. He offered to extend the scope of, and even grant certain limited powers to, the Native Representative Council and other subordinate councils. But this cautious and complicated plan of reform, lacking in imagination and obscure in detail, promised too little and it came too late.

In a statesmanlike analysis of the *impasse*, the main body of councillors rejected his rather nebulous proposals. "In our view", said the Council in its reply, "what is required is a policy which will give the African people a sense of security in the land of their birth, a policy which is flexible and can be readily adapted to changing conditions and varying circumstances—in short a policy which recognises that Africans are citizens of this country and not things apart.

"... General Smuts's proposals do not go to the root of the matter in dispute between the Council and the government. The main submission of the Council has been, and continues to be, that the conditions of modern African life demand a re-orientation of the whole of our native policy and not a mere tinkering with the framework of our existing native policy.

"It seems necessary to repeat the principal defects of our present native policy:

"(a) It does not safeguard the legitimate rights of the African people in any aspect of their life.

"(b) It holds out no hope to them of a possible change for the better in the foreseeable future.

"(c) It is not calculated to integrate the African people into the general life of the country. On the contrary, it is based on the principles of permanent separatism, which engenders a spirit of hostility and racial bitterness between black and white, and as against that of mutual co-operation in the interest of both sections of the country as a whole.

"(d) It is undermining the confidence of the African people in the government of the country and is making increasingly impossible that collaboration between the government, on the one hand, and the African people, on the other, without which no schemes intended for them can succeed." (*Rand Daily Mail*, 14 October and 4 November 1947.)

Even at this stage, however, the Council did not demand anything like equal citizenship or full equality with Europeans. It was still content to reiterate its main earlier proposal: the extension to the northern provinces of the limited communal

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system of political representation prevailing in the Cape province. But on this vital aspect of change Smuts was silent. The Council's arguments were addressed to men with deaf ears, men already pre-occupied with the exigencies of the coming general election.

A few months later Smuts lost the election to the Nationalists. After another quarrel with the Council, the new government did not allow it to meet again and finally abolished it, Dr. Moroka and Professor Matthews having already responded to the Congress pressure by resigning from it.

The Nationalists lost no time in proceeding with a different policy not only towards Africans, but towards all non-Europeans. It did not take long for Dr. Malan to begin to pass into law the policy he had preached in opposition. This policy of *apartheid* has been expounded and analysed to such an extent that it is not necessary to describe it here. It may, however, be recorded that it is Indians and Coloured people who have borne the main brunt of the attack. First came the Act prohibiting marriage between white and non-white. It was followed by the Act making it a serious crime for white and any non-white to have sexual intercourse. Then the Group Areas Act made probable the uprooting of non-white traders and residents in urban and peri-urban areas where many of them and their fathers had worked and lived for generations. In a word, Indians and Coloured people were to be degraded to the status that Africans had long suffered.

No more effective method could have been designed to bring together in political unity the three main communities that the government insisted were separate racial entities, each with a distinct social life and cultural tradition of its own. True, the large Cape Coloured population remained largely unaffected by the spirit that began to animate Africans and Indians. As a community the Coloured people had long been leaderless. Its middle class men are nearly all teachers dependent on posts in government service and lacking the independence of the business and professional men who lead the other racial groups.

The South African Indians were, however, more than ready to make common cause with the Africans. This they had demonstrated early in 1949 when Durban was disgraced by one of the very worst race riots in the modern history of the world. The Zulus of the city and its environs had suddenly run amok and killed and wounded hundreds of innocent Indians and looted their shops and houses while the white authorities, slow to grasp

the situation, failed for some time to curb the pogrom. With barely concealed satisfaction, the Nationalists hailed this terrible tragedy as proof positive of their favourite theory of inevitable racial antagonism between different groups. What they, in common with nearly all white people, failed to appreciate, was the instant and remarkable magnanimity and political wisdom displayed by Indians after that dreadful outburst against them. Plucking resentment and hatred from their hearts, the Indian leaders without delay held out the hand of inter-racial fellowship and the African leaders grasped it without hesitation. So far from moving further apart to sulk in enmity or to yield to despair, both groups renewed and redoubled their efforts to make common cause against their common enemy, an oppressive government whose policies led to race riots.

The Indians had every reason to realise the necessity for supporting the Africans. Their political status and economic opportunities had also gone from bad to worse. First Hertzog in 1939, then Smuts in 1943 and again in 1946 had got Parliament to tighten the screws that supported the barriers to their natural progress. Trading rights and residential sites that had been held for over half a century were attacked in a series of steady blows, both in Natal and in the Transvaal.

A better organised and efficiently managed body, the South African Indian Congress had, since its inception in 1926, weathered the internal storms similar to, and sometimes worse than, those that had impeded the growth of the African National Congress. The respectable Indian merchants represented a type of mind that was always anxious to moderate its claims in the face of a hostile government. Isolated and without allies in the Union, Indians were unable to evoke even the limited degree of sympathy often shown to Africans in subjection. Nor are the Indians numerous enough, or economically strong enough, to influence the government by their own unaided pressure. In partnership with the African National Congress, however, they can materially help to produce a very different situation. For Indians bring to a joint movement a riper experience of affairs, a superior capacity for organisation, and a more sophisticated outlook generally—the very elements required to make a movement of resistance into a force no government can safely ignore.

The Indians also brought something else of incomparable effect. They brought a knowledge of the technique and value of passive resistance. It was in South Africa before Union that

Mahatma Gandhi was first inspired to employ this new political weapon. Gandhi spent twenty years in Natal and the Transvaal where he first encountered the realities of racial oppression. It was here that he devised and practised the technique of non-violent non-co-operation. The first generation of South African Indians had been invited and welcomed to the country. Their children remained to suffer disabilities—legal, political, economic and social—that were severe fifty years ago, even if they seem mild by comparison with those put upon all Indians since then. Against these and other hardships, Gandhi had organised protests. He strove by every means in his power to persuade the authorities to rectify obvious grievances. Patiently he had negotiated with Smuts and honourably he had sought to compromise on his people's claims. But having no franchise, the Indians lacked the normal instrument for political bargaining. Having no representation in the legislature, they lacked the normal means to express their opinions or to protect their interests, let alone to make the white electorate aware of their burning sense of the injustices they suffered.

In these circumstances the novel idea of passive resistance against unjust laws came as an inspiration. Its full significance has since been the subject of much study by many scholars. Here it is enough to recall that in the Union's early years, *satyagraha* achieved results when nothing else did. The Indian Relief Act of 1914 lifted from Indians their worst disabilities, and Gandhi sailed away from South Africa to conquer fresh and larger fields.

Those who understand the lessons of history might have foreseen that the time would come when Indians in South Africa would revive the spirit and technique of *satyagraha*. Indeed, in 1939 Jan H. Hofmeyr, remonstrating with Smuts's party against the anti-Indian law it framed in that year, warned it that Indians might be provoked to passive resistance. Before long, Dr. Y. M. Dadoo, the leader of the uncompromising radical wing in the South African Indian Congress, was actually advocating the use of passive resistance. However, he and his adherents remained a minority for years while the so-called "moderates" sought, by appeals to reason or to law courts, to secure some modification of fresh legislation. Their efforts were of little avail. As with the Africans, successive governments seemed determined to teach Indians the folly and futility of relying on reason. By the time the second world war had ended, the Indian Congress had

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elected Dr. Dadoo its leader. In 1946 the newest anti-Indian laws were resisted in Natal by non-violent non-co-operation. Nearly two thousand Indians and a few white people, led by the Rev. Michael Scott, were put in prison.

Meanwhile, events in the great world beyond South Africa were moving in a new direction. Thanks to the leadership of the greater Indian National Congress and the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi, India became a free state. Taking the charter of the United Nations at its full value, India soon embarrassed one of its authors, Smuts, by raising in its forum and in the hearing of the whole world, the question of the treatment of Indians in the Union. At one session after another the subject was debated to the disadvantage of South Africa. By 1952 the larger question of *apartheid* as a policy was itself under discussion and set for further inquiry.

Indians and Africans in the Union were encouraged by the sympathy that their cause evoked abroad and by the dismay that the effects of world publicity produced on the dominant race at home. The second world war had been fought to overthrow the greatest racial tyranny in human history. One of its major effects was to produce a new awareness all the world over, and not least in South Africa, of the evils of racialism. This bred in those most affected by the blight a new determination to resist it in every shape and form. Moreover, racial discrimination was condemned repeatedly and in various ways by the United Nations. It became wholly unacceptable, however it might be disguised, to men conscious of a new freedom awaiting those who demanded it with their old dignity supported by new contemporary forces.

Partly under the pressure of these forces, dependent status had been ended in half-a-dozen or more Asian and Arab countries. Even in the colonial dependencies that remained, nearly all in Africa, political rights had been noticeably extended during the war and post-war period. Alone among the states of the world, South Africa had in this same period chosen to curtail old rights and to impose new wrongs on the majority of her people.

It was in this changing climate of world opinion that the Congress movement of the non-whites in the Union at last came of age. The pursuit by the Malan government of its vicious policies soon applied any sharper spur that may have been necessary. To make matters worse, European opinion had failed to support Jan Hofmeyr in his efforts to make a mild liberalism an effective political force. Indeed, the United Party never showed

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real opposition to the Nationalists. Accordingly, an alternative policy to *apartheid* was never seriously put before the electorate. The tension of race relations grew steadily worse. In this situation one of the early casualties was the group of white liberals who had ever since Union tended, in one way or another, to act as the spokesman of African opinion. Under the Native Representation Act of 1936, seven seats were provided in Parliament for this type of white liberal. In its early years this form of representation had worked well enough, thanks largely to the fact that Europeans of unusual ability and character—notably Rheinallt Jones, Edgar Brookes, Donald Molteno, and Margaret Ballinger—came forward to fill those seats. Of these only Mrs. Ballinger remained in Parliament by 1953. The deep change that took place in the minds of Africans had become visible in their attitude to this representation of black interests by white spokesmen. By 1950, if not before, Africans had lost all confidence in white liberal leadership and in the restrained and moderate policies which it presented in the face of the formidable challenge of the Nationalists.

Alone among the white members of Parliament elected by Africans, Sam Kahn, an avowed communist, retained the warm support of an overwhelming majority of his constituents until not they but the government deprived him in May 1952 of the seat he had won. This support was, however, not due to his communist outlook but to his unflinching advocacy of equal rights, regardless of race, for all in South Africa, and his courageous denunciation of racialism in every form. It should be emphasised that Africans looked on him as their champion, not on communism as their cause. So much was common knowledge in the Cape, and it was confirmed by the evidence put before the parliamentary select committee whose revealing report (S.C.6 of 1952), by the majority Nationalist vote, recommended Mr. Kahn's expulsion from the House of Assembly. Even the English daily papers, by no means tolerant of anything savouring of communism, could scarce forbear to cheer Mr. Kahn's performance during his three years (1949-1952) in Parliament.

There was indeed no good reason why Africans should any longer be content with white spokesmen. They had always held a difficult and peculiar position in which they found themselves facing an unsympathetic European audience as often as a critical African audience. Unless, like Mr. Kahn, they abandoned all attempts to convert white opinion by a process of persuasion,

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subtle change inevitably occurred in their function. They began to expound and explain, if not defend, most aspects of white policy to Africans rather than to express African opinion to Europeans.

The Indians had in 1946 rejected a similar form of communal parliamentary representation by Europeans enacted for them by Smuts, but withdrawn by Dr. Malan as soon as he took office. There were soon growing indications that Africans and Indians alike had come to regard with nothing but contempt the futile efforts made on their behalf by white liberals.

The term liberal has, of course, a variety of connotations. To the Nationalists it is a word of abuse only a little weaker than "communist". Even in the ranks of the United Party, mild liberals are unwelcome and their exertions nullified by vigilant party managers. From the white electorate, therefore, there has not come the slightest encouragement to Africans and Indians to moderate their demands, to persist in patient courses, or to restrain themselves and ask for only half a loaf when pressed by their hungry followers. It has, on the contrary, been made clear that there is no real hope of *political* progress, however gradual, for non-Europeans.

It is this background that renders so ludicrous the sudden quest for "moderate leaders" among non-Europeans that men like Mr. Strauss and others contemplated in 1952 after the defiance campaign had grown to a size where it could no longer be ignored. This quest failed at its outset. It failed because there *are* no moderate African or Indian leaders—if a leader is to be defined as one who has followers and is ready to "be consulted" or to negotiate with the government or opposition on a basis different from that adopted by the two Congresses jointly. Mr. Strauss never even got as far as actually beginning a quest, being satisfied simply to announce that, if returned to office, he would consult (unnamed) moderate non-European leaders. The only effect of this line of thought was to deepen the suspicions of the Congress movement that the official opposition would, like the government itself, do all it could to undermine the authority of the elected Congress leaders and to weaken the position they had attained after long and difficult efforts to organise their followers. How blind to such realities white politicians remained was shown in Port Elizabeth at the time of the tragic race riots late in 1952. The search for moderates was pursued in the very city where Dr. J. Z. Njongwe had displayed greater powers of organisation and evoked wider personal loyalty than probably any other Congress

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leader had done to date. The resistance campaign in the eastern Cape province obtained as much support as it did in all the rest of the country taken together. This is to be explained by two main factors. First, the Bantu people there are more homogeneous in tribal tradition and less divided than elsewhere. They are also better educated and more Christianised after longer contact with western civilisation. Resistance in this area was marked by notable religious fervour—it was often preceded by prayer—and it was supported by African clergy and by African trade unions. Secondly, the people in these parts had lost more than others since 1936 through the operation of the land and franchise laws that deprived them and their children of old-established rights.

Nor to this day do white politicians realise that the first effect of undermining Congress would be to strengthen those less responsible and less reasonable groups in African life that have begun to preach enmity against all white people as such and to toy with the idea of terrorism as a technique for securing political change. In a real sense Congress is to-day the only alternative to terrorism, the only hand restraining Africans from demanding black supremacy as the alternative to white supremacy, the only influential voice seriously asking for inter-racial co-operation.

In the light of this record, what is surprising is not that Congress has hitherto failed to formulate a detailed blueprint for progress in South Africa, or to declare itself without any ambiguity on certain concrete issues. What is surprising is that Congress has continued to take a statesmanlike attitude on all the large questions that present themselves for decision.

Non-white people do not want to rid South Africa of white people. At present only a very small minority of members of the African National Congress dream of replacing white domination with black domination. The whole bulk and weight of Congress has hitherto always imagined the future of South Africa in terms of inter-racial co-operation on a basis of equality. The joint declaration adopted in July 1951 when the defiance campaign was planned, is sufficient proof of this fact:

All people, irrespective of the national groups which they may belong to and regardless of the colour of their skin, who have made South Africa their home and who believe in the principles of democracy, are South Africans. All South Africans are entitled to live a full and free life on the basis of the fullest equality. . . .

The struggle which the national organisations of the non-European

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people are conducting is not directed against any race or national group. It is against the unjust laws which keep in perpetual subjection and misery vast sections of the population. It is for the transformation of conditions which will restore human dignity, equality, and freedom to every South African.

The significance of this policy with its prospect of inter-racial peace has been carefully obscured from recognition by any but a small element among the Europeans. The daily press of both white sections continues to pretend that Congress is essentially an anti-white movement. In fact, however, the force of the law has here reinforced the wisdom of Congress. It has since 1927 been a serious criminal offence for anyone to promote hostility between the white and non-white races, and any racial indictment of white people by black speakers is liable to be punished by the courts. On the other hand, it has never been and has not yet been declared a crime to demand equal rights for all races. This fact is hardly understood by ordinary people. Even a Johannesburg magistrate could say in 1952:

It is common knowledge that one of the aims of communism is to break down race barriers and strive for equal rights for all sections of the people, and to do so without any discrimination of race, colour, or creed. It is well known that all the democracies of the world consider that communism is menacing peace and order, turning the world upside down and making stable and decent life impossible (*The Star*, Johannesburg, 15 July 1952).

In the mind of this magistrate, who is supposed to interpret the law of the land, the militant liberal demand for equal rights, regardless of race, is confused and equated with communism. But even under the immensely wide and vague terms of the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950, those who advocate racial equality are not punishable if unlawful action towards that end is not taken. Although twenty leaders of the resistance campaign were convicted by the Transvaal Supreme Court under the Act in November 1952, their guilt was held to lie in their organisation of resistance, not in their advocacy of equality.

By any normally acceptable definition of "communism", the leaders of the campaign, with a few avowed exceptions, are not and have never been communists. It is necessary to emphasise this fact because continual attempts are made to smear the non-European resistance movement as nothing but "communism". Since the personalities, records, and outlook of the Congress leaders are known to only a small number of Europeans, these attempts are liable to succeed to some degree. Yet proper inquiry shows that the charge is false.

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The Communist Party of South Africa was dissolved by its own act in June 1950, anticipating by a month the final passage through Parliament of the Act declaring it an unlawful body. Since the Act was passed, the promotion of any type of "communist" thought or activity has been a serious crime punishable by imprisonment. There are therefore no longer any avowed, but only former, communists. Merely to call a man a communist is defamatory, unless he has in fact been officially listed as such by "the liquidator" appointed for the purpose under the Act. It is, however, reasonable to ask whether the resistance leaders are communists in any ordinary meaning of the term. To answer the question, it is relevant to recall certain facts unfamiliar even to most informed people. While it was active, the Communist Party of South Africa, at least since about 1937, had always insisted on inter-racial equality and co-operation. With the possible exception of a few branches of certain Christian churches, the Party was indeed the only organisation in South Africa which practised as well as preached racial equality to the fullest extent. Moreover, the party always tried to restrain African nationalism, recognising that its political value was limited in a plural society where Africans formed only two-thirds of the total population. As late as the end of 1949, the leadership and tendencies of the African National Congress gave the Communist Party much cause for sharp criticism. In a considered analysis of the political situation (published in the party's own journal *Freedom*, December 1949), the party attacked the Congress and its leaders for their "bourgeois" desire to think in terms of liberal capitalism instead of communism. The analysis attributed the weakness and failure of Congress to this fault.

None the less, it must not be suggested that the Communist Party had no influence on non-Europeans. The Communist Party did contribute to African political education in one important respect. It set the pace for the African National Congress in the decade from 1937 to 1946. Its aggressive demands, its forthright propaganda, and its ably conducted weekly newspaper *The Guardian* (banned by the Malan government in 1952) accelerated the rate at which Africans learnt that gradual and piecemeal reforms were unlikely to come or to make substantial changes in African status if and when they did come. The Communist Party influenced Africans—usually indirectly—to distrust liberal effort on their behalf and to demand in their own right full racial equality in every sphere of South African life.

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There is to-day not the slightest reason to believe that African leaders have changed their "bourgeois" outlook. The laws they have singled out for attack and resistance are those which hinder freedom of movement and organisation, freedom to live and to trade and to own property in any area, and freedom to participate in the common political life of the country on equal terms with Europeans. These aims are indeed shared in theory and sometimes supported in practice by a number of impeccable liberals who have absolutely no sympathy with real communism.

From white communists Africans also learnt important lessons in political organisation and in the value of personal and disinterested devotion to a cause, lessons which other Europeans have seldom been close enough to teach them. Above all, however, African eyes were opened to current political realities, and this led to the demand for equal rights and opportunities, regardless of race or colour, in every sphere of activity, and to total opposition to *apartheid*. This was the attitude adopted by the Native Representative Council after 1946. But neither at that time, nor at any other, did a single communist sit on the Council. Indeed, communists who sought election to it were always heavily defeated.

If communists had ever dominated the Congress, the fact would have been obvious enough to sophisticated eyes. But it is not a monopoly of communists to aim at securing in South Africa a society free from colour bars and from all forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. Nor are militant and uncompromising methods of protest and resistance against the present system their monopoly. What precise form such methods should take—whether passive resistance, stoppage of work, or boycott—seems to remain to some extent a matter of internal controversy in the ranks of the African National Congress. No doubt the South African Indian Congress, with its longer experience and more mature leaders, set the pace in 1951 in the joint campaign that was undertaken. However that may be, nothing is gained, at home or abroad, by accepting the view, attractive enough to white South Africans, that Congress aims and activities can be dismissed as the work of "communists". Whether these activities are maintained or not, whether the avowed aims of Congress are achieved in the life time of this generation or not, one thing is certain. No laws, however harsh, and no government, however tyrannical, will succeed in putting an end to protest and resistance against flagrant injustice by men and women of all races. Ever

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since the early nineteenth century, prevailing policies in South Africa have always been challenged by some people in South Africa. That tradition will not die out. It may take a long time but the dominant race is destined to discover that there are some things in life that lie too deep for law. The recognition and acceptance of a common humanity regardless of race is among the certainties of the future.

January 1953.

Note:—Since this article was written, the Malan Government, supported by the United party, has passed fresh legislation making passive resistance against any laws itself a serious crime. At the subsequent general election the Government was returned with an increased majority.

CHANGING COMPOSITION OF THE SUPREME SOVIET

By THOMAS H. RIGBY*

IN the considerable post-war literature on the Soviet Union comparatively little attention has been devoted to the soviets. This article seeks to fill part of this gap by presenting the results of an investigation into the membership of the Supreme Soviet. The most accessible source on this question is the reports of the Credentials Commissions of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, which provide much useful data, including classifications of the deputies in respect to age, sex, education, class, and party membership. However, these reports offer only very general and sketchy information as to the occupation of deputies, nor do they say anything about the degree of continuity of representation.

This latter deficiency was comparatively easy to fill, as full lists of the deputies elected are published in the Soviet Press,

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and I had merely to compare the lists of deputies returned in the three elections so far held to the Supreme Soviet—in 1937, 1946, and 1950.* The results of this comparison, as shown in Table I, reveal a very high level of turnover.†

Table I

CONTINUITY OF REPRESENTATION

	Deputies elected to the same constituency			
	1937 and 1946 only	1946 and 1950 only	1937 and 1950 only	All three elections
Soviet of the Union . . .	18	152	2	19
Soviet of Nationalities . . .	22	135	1	23

A high turnover of membership is a frequently noted feature of Soviet "representative" institutions, and is by no means peculiar to the Supreme Soviet. At the same time, it should be pointed out that while only about one-third of the deputies returned in 1950 had previously sat in the Supreme Soviet, this was still over four times the proportion of the 1946 deputies who had been elected before, and even allowing for the much longer period which elapsed before the 1946 elections—a period including the war and the final stages of the mass-purges—this may indicate a policy favouring greater stability of membership.

When the reports of the Credentials Commissions are analysed, it becomes clear that not only new deputies, but a new type of deputy has emerged in the years since 1937.‡

There has, firstly, been a strong trend away from the youthfulness of the first Supreme Soviet.

* The task was somewhat complicated by the considerable instability of Soviet constituencies. Between 1937 and 1950 the number of constituencies for the Soviet of the Union increased from 569 to 678, and for the Soviet of Nationalities from 574 to 638. This was due mainly to the westward expansion of Soviet territories, but also reflected shifts of population within the 1939 boundaries and changes in the constitutional status of various national groups. However, the majority of constituencies for both houses remained unchanged. Where only a change of name or a minor alteration of a constituency's boundaries was involved, I have treated it as the same constituency.

† In addition to those who were returned for the same constituency more than once, there was a much smaller number of deputies re-elected to different seats. There were 51 such deputies in the 1950 Soviet of Nationalities, as against the 158 who had previously held the same seat.

‡ Tables II and III and the figures on the party membership, sex, and education of deputies are based on these reports. See *Zasedaniya verkhovnogo soveta S.S.S.R.—stenograficheskii otchet—Pervaya sessia, 1938*, pp. 32–6, 66–9; *Pervaya sessia, 1946*, pp. 26–32, 38–42; *Pervaya sessia, 1950*, pp. 60–4, 97–101.

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Table II

AGE OF DEPUTIES

	Soviet of the Union			1937 Per cent.	1946 Per cent.	1950 Per cent.
Up to 40	.	.	.	68	42	25
Over 40	.	.	.	32	58	75
	Soviet of Nationalities			1937 Per cent.	1946 Per cent.	1950 Per cent.
Up to 40	.	.	.	78	50	38
Over 40	.	.	.	22	50	62

The trend towards greater maturity has been accompanied by a marked rise in the educational level of deputies. Only 19 per cent. of persons elected to the Soviet of the Union in 1937 were described as having a higher education, whereas in 1950 half of the Soviet of the Union members were so described.

Meanwhile, the predominance of men deputies has persisted, although it has tended to be reduced. The percentage of women members of the Soviet of the Union rose from 13.5 in 1937 to 20 in 1950. In the Soviet of Nationalities, there was a slight increase in the proportion of women deputies over the same period, but it was 1.5 per cent. lower in 1950 than in 1946.

By contrast, the majority enjoyed by party members has become more marked with each successive election. Non-party deputies constituted 19 per cent. of the Soviet of the Union elected in 1937, but only 14.5 per cent. in 1950. The corresponding figures for the Soviet of Nationalities are 29 per cent. and 19 per cent. respectively.

Soviet discussions of the class composition of Soviet society recognize three categories—the working class, peasantry, and intelligentsia, of which the last is characterized not as a class, but as a "class stratum" whose members have their origin in the working class or peasantry.* The term "intelligentsia", as employed by Soviet writers, stands for a heterogeneous group comprising not only people employed in the fields of education and the arts, but also managerial and administrative personnel, doctors and nurses, technicians and office workers.†

* See Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Eng. Ed., Moscow, 1945, pp. 559–60, 638–40; also *Izvestia*, 29 December, 1945, 12 April, 1946, and 21 February, 1952.

† See Seleznyev, "About the new Soviet intelligentsia," *Partiinoye Stroitel'stvo* No. 13, 1939, pp. 39–40; Yaroslavsky, *O rol'i intelligentsii v S.S.S.R.*, Moscow, 1939; Towster, *Political Power in the U.S.S.R.: 1917–1947*, p. 326. The resolution of the XVIII Congress of the Soviet Communist Party on the amendments to the party rules stated: "The Soviet intelligentsia consists of yesterday's workers and peasants, who have been promoted to commanding posts." *The Land of Socialism To-day and To-morrow*, Moscow, 1939, p. 447.

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The Credentials Commissions' reports employ these categories, giving the following figures for deputies belonging to the two classes and the "class stratum".

Table III

OFFICIAL CLASS ANALYSIS OF DEPUTIES

<i>Soviet of the Union</i>						1937	1946	1950
						Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Workers	.	.	.	.	.	45	42	35
Peasants	.	.	.	.	.	24	22	18
Intelligentsia	.	.	.	.	.	31	36	47

<i>Soviet of Nationalities</i>						1937	1946	1950
						Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Workers	.	.	.	.	.	38	34	28
Peasants	.	.	.	.	.	35	30	23
Intelligentsia	.	.	.	.	.	27	36	49

It will be noted that the growth of the intelligentsia's representation has been greatly accelerated since the second world war, especially in the Soviet of the Union, where its increase in the nine-year period 1937-46 was 5 per cent., but was as much as 11 per cent. in the four-year period 1946-50. Between 1937 and 1950 the intelligentsia nearly doubled its strength in the Soviet of Nationalities, and now provides almost half the membership of both houses.

Even without going beyond the Credentials Commissions' reports, however, it is clear that the actual weighting against the workers and peasants is much greater than these figures would suggest, for other remarks in the reports show that many persons are being classified as workers or peasants here who in other contexts would be included among the intelligentsia. Thus, of the 198 "peasants" elected to the Soviet of Nationalities in 1946, 75 held administrative posts, mostly as Party or Soviet officials, and 44 were chairmen of collective farms. In the same year 80 per cent. of the "workers" elected were full-time officials or administrators in one field or another. Table III is of interest in indicating a trend in favour of the intelligentsia which, as I shall attempt to show, independent investigation confirms. It is untrustworthy, however, as far as its actual percentages for workers, peasants, and intelligentsia are concerned.

In order to discover the fields in which deputies worked, and the levels at which they were employed, I have worked through

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Pravda and *Izvestia* for the period of the election campaigns. This yielded a considerable amount of information about many candidates, and the occupations of most of the remainder were mentioned in the report of their registration. From these sources I have obtained precise data on the occupation of most of the deputies elected in 1937 and 1950, but of only about two-thirds of those elected in 1946.* All but a small number of deputies fall into one or other of the five categories of Table IV.†

Table IV

OCCUPATION OF DEPUTIES

	<i>Soviet of the Union</i>		<i>Soviet of Nationalities</i>	
	1937	1950	1937	1950
Party and Soviet officials	272	324	235	268
Military and naval personnel	53	24	37	11
Primary industry	87	103	136	123
Secondary industry	82	96	76	84
Professional	41	86	37	101

The greatly increased representation of the professional group is the most striking feature of these figures. At the same time Army and Navy representation was drastically reduced. When allowance is made for the increase of seats in 1950, the other categories appear to have just held their own, except for the somewhat reduced representation of primary industry in the 1950 Soviet of Nationalities. However, interesting changes reveal themselves when an analysis is made of representation within these categories. Taking the Party and Soviet Officials, the balance changed considerably in favour of the Party.

* For the Soviet of the Union 94 per cent. of the 1937 and 96.5 per cent. of the 1950 deputies; for the Soviet of Nationalities 97 per cent. in both cases. An analysis of the available 1946 figures suggests that in most cases where a considerable contrast exists between the representation of any particular group in 1937 and 1950, it most probably held an intermediate position in 1946.

† In this table the category "primary industry" comprises those working in collective and state farms, machine and tractor stations, and fishing and forestry organizations, while under "secondary" industry are included those employed in manufacturing, transport, mining and oil-winning. The "professional" category embraces teaching, the arts, journalism, medicine, and scientific research. The deputies unaccounted for in Table IV—in no case totalling more than three dozen—are officials of trade unions, the Young Communist League, and other "public organizations," students at higher party schools, explorers, civilian aviators, and sea-captains.

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Table V

PARTY AND SOVIET OFFICIALS

<i>Soviet of the Union</i>	<i>Party</i>		<i>Soviet</i>	
	1937	1950	1937	1950
All-Union level	18	18	33	7
Intermediate level*	71	130	93	120
Local level*	21	32	36	17
Totals	110	180	162	144

<i>Soviet of Nationalities</i>	<i>Party</i>		<i>Soviet</i>	
	1937	1950	1937	1950
All-Union level	11	8	8	5
Intermediate level*	43	73	81	108
Local level*	39	47	53	27
Totals	93	128	142	140

It will be noted that at the same time as the ratio of Soviet to Party Officials fell, the representation of the different levels of the Soviet apparatus underwent a marked change, to the detriment of those employed at the All-Union† and local levels. In the Soviet of Nationalities there were 29 officials of district Soviets in 1937, but only 10 in 1950. The intermediate and local level officials were mostly the top people in their area, first secretaries of Party committees, chairmen of the executive committees of Soviets. The Soviet officials included a number of police, i.e. officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and (in 1950) the Ministry of State Security. In the Soviet of Nationalities these numbered 15 in 1937 and 16 in 1950, while in the Soviet of the Union their number fell from 39 in 1937 to 18 in 1950.

We have seen that of the deputies officially classified as "workers", only a small proportion were actually engaged in

* Intermediate level: Union and autonomous republic, territory and region. Local level: City, district, village, primary party organization.

† Members of the politbureau, orgbureau and secretariat of the central committee of the party have been classified in Table V as party officials, whatever Soviet posts they may have held concurrently. The 33 All-Union Soviet officials in the 1937 Soviet of the Union included 11 ministers and 15 vice-ministers. While the majority of ministers held seats in the 1946 Supreme Soviet, there were virtually none elected in 1950; top Soviet officials returned to the Soviet of the Union in that year comprised the five vice-chairmen of the Council of Ministers who were not politbureau members—Yefremov, Tevosian, Malyshev, Pervukhin, and Saburov, vice-minister of the Armed Forces Marshal Koniev and vice-minister of the Aviation Industry S. S. Shishkin. In the Soviet of Nationalities there was only one minister in 1950—Marshal Vasilevsky, Minister of the Army, and two vice-ministers—Mamulov of Internal Affairs and Khoshtaria of Agriculture.

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production, and that persons employed in secondary industry accounted for only between a sixth and a seventh of the membership of the Supreme Soviet. An analysis of this residue of "workers in production" produces the following figures:

Table VI

DEPUTIES FROM SECONDARY INDUSTRY

	<i>Soviet of the Union</i>		<i>Soviet of Nationalities</i>	
	1937	1950	1937	1950
Managerial level	31	28	19	21
Technical and scientific specialists	—	7	2	8
Foreman level	22	21	21	12
Workman level	29	37	34	43

This table shows that in 1950 the workmen deputies improved their position slightly both in relation to the total number of deputies and in relation to the other deputies from secondary industry, although it was the technical and scientific specialists who made the most spectacular gains. Nevertheless, even then the workmen deputies represented a mere 6 or 7 per cent. of the total membership of the Supreme Soviet. All workmen deputies were Stakhanovites.

More striking facts emerge from an analysis of the deputies employed in primary industry.

Table VII

DEPUTIES FROM PRIMARY INDUSTRY

	<i>Soviet of the Union</i>		<i>Soviet of Nationalities</i>	
	1937	1950	1937	1950
Managerial level	28	72	32	97
Technical and scientific specialists	1	21	3	10
Foreman level	25	11	48	12
Workman level	33	3	53	4

This complete metamorphosis in the representation of rural workers is one of the most significant changes occurring in the membership of the Supreme Soviet between 1937 and 1950. Twenty-eight rank and file collective farmers sat in the 1937 Soviet of Nationalities. In 1950 there were none. Meanwhile the representation of collective farm chairmen rose from 28 to 91.*

* In theory collective farm chairmen are elected by general meetings of the kolkhoz members; in practice they are no less subject to appointment and removal by state and party officials than directors of factories or machine and tractor stations. See *Partiinaya Zhizn*, No. 12, 1947, p. 63, and *Pravda* leading articles, 6 June, 1952 and 3 July, 1952.

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We now possess the requisite data to make a class analysis of the deputies more consistent with the usual Soviet definitions of working class, peasantry, and intelligentsia than that given in Table III above on the basis of the reports of the Credentials Commissions. Our intelligentsia, accordingly, comprises officials of the Party, Soviets, trade unions, Young Communist League and other "Public organizations", executives and technical and scientific specialists in industry and agriculture, military, naval and air-force officers, and those defined as "professionals" in Table IV. The working class is made up of persons employed as foremen* or workmen in manufacturing, transport, mining and oil-winning, and the peasantry of those of foreman and workman status working in state and collective farms, machine and tractor stations, fishing co-operatives and forestry enterprises. In the absence of information as to their class origin, military and naval other ranks† are divided equally between the working class and peasantry.

Table VIII

CORRECTED CLASS ANALYSIS OF DEPUTIES

	Soviet of the Union		Soviet of Nationalities	
	1937 Per cent.	1950 Per cent.	1937 Per cent.	1950 Per cent.
Working class	10.1	9.2	10.6	9
Peasantry	11.4	2.5	18.7	2.6
Intelligentsia	78.5	88.3	70.7	88.4

The increasing use in the Soviet Union of titles and decorations as status indices and rewards for service to the state is reflected in the growing number of deputies with decorations.

Table IX

DEPUTIES BEARING DECORATIONS‡

	1937 Per cent.	1946 Per cent.	1950 Per cent.
Soviet of the Union	42.5	78	91
Soviet of Nationalities . . .	?	68	93

* The classification of foremen as workers is, however, not free from anomaly. In Soviet administrative law foremen are regarded as part of the plant administration. (See S. S. Studenikin, *Sovetskoe Administrativnoe Pravo*, Moscow, 1950, p. 104.) Since 1940 their authority has been greatly increased, to include, for instance, the right to take on and dismiss workers subject to the approval of the chief of the shop, to review output norms, and to impose disciplinary penalties on workers. They are the "fully-empowered leaders" in their sectors of production.

† The maximum number identified as military and naval other ranks is 8—in the 1937 Soviet of the Union. In 1946 the number was considerably more than this in both houses.

‡ Based on the reports of the Credentials Commissions.

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How are these facts about the direction of changes in the membership of the Supreme Soviet to be interpreted? Do they reflect trends in public preference? They can only be said to reflect such trends if it can be shown that the election procedure makes possible the exercise of some public choice. However, as is well known, only one candidate stands for election in each constituency. On the other hand, it is often suggested that there is public participation in the procedure by which this single candidate is selected. Various organizations in the constituency make their nominations, it is said, and representatives of these organizations subsequently meet together to discuss the several nominees with the object of fixing on one they can all support. Such pre-election consultations do in fact take place, scores of them being reported in *Pravda* in the course of each election campaign. However, to examine these reports carefully is to convince oneself that the consultations contribute nothing whatever to the selection of candidates. In many cases their task is simple, for the same person has been nominated by all the nominating organizations. In the majority of cases, however, there have indeed been several persons nominated, but there is not a word in the reports of the consultations to suggest any discussion of the relative merits of the various nominees, and the consultation invariably gives its unanimous approval to *all* those nominated, and requests them all to stand as candidates. Only one nominee in each constituency subsequently agrees to be registered as a candidate, however, the other nominees standing unopposed in other constituencies. These other nominees are, in fact, drawn from a small number of top leaders—consisting mainly of members of the now defunct Politbureau—who are nominated in scores of constituencies (in Stalin's case in hundreds). The interesting point here is that when these leaders announce for which constituencies they agree to stand, thereby declining registration as candidates in the other constituencies where they have been nominated, each constituency is left with one nominee, never more than one, and never without one.* It is easy to see how this neat result could be achieved by

* This generalization appears to apply to all three elections, but only in the case of the 1950 elections have I tested it against all cases where more than one nomination for a particular seat is reported. I have found only one such case where it did not apply. Stalin was the sole nominee in two constituencies—the Smolny area of Leningrad and his usual constituency in Moscow. Thus, when he announced his intention to stand for the latter, Smolny was left without a candidate. Later the substitution of a secondary school-teacher was briefly reported. A temporary element of uncertainty was no doubt permitted in this single case with the object of arousing popular interest as to which of the U.S.S.R.'s two greatest cities would have the honour of counting Stalin amongst its representatives.

some central authority determining the complete list of candidates before nominations were publicly called for, and allocating the nominations to be organized in each constituency. It is hard to believe that the announcement by a few leaders of where they intended to stand would not leave several constituencies without a candidate or with more than one if there existed any spontaneous public activity in the nomination of candidates.

One must conclude, then, that the observed trends in the membership of the Supreme Soviet are not the product of changes in public preferences. May these trends be interpreted in any other way that will enable them to be used as indices of important changes in the Soviet Union? They may conceivably reflect changes in the weight and influence within the regime of different organizations, social forces, or groups of leaders. However, in the absence of any knowledge about the actual process whereby the deputies are chosen, such a connection could never be proved. Moreover, those changes in Supreme Soviet membership that might be invoked as evidence of such shifts of power or influence may in most cases be simply and plausibly explained in other terms.*

A possible approach to interpretation is provided by the continually repeated references to the Supreme Soviet deputies as the "best sons and daughters" of the Soviet people. Since the members of the Supreme Soviet, taken collectively, are held to represent all that is best in Soviet society, should we not expect changes in the relative status of various groups to be reflected in the size of their representation in the Supreme Soviet? If so, we have seen in the figures above evidence of considerable changes having taken place in the social status system of the U.S.S.R. since 1937.

* For example, the selection of more N.K.V.D. officials as deputies in the purge conditions of the 1937 elections than in 1946 and 1950 is not surprising any more than is the drastic reduction of military deputies in the period of the great peace campaign. In the same way, the strong representation of collective farm chairmen in 1950 may be a temporary phenomenon reflecting the highly publicized current policy of amalgamating the smaller collective farms and appointing trained agricultural specialists as chairmen. Nor does the increasing concentration of Supreme Soviet membership within the "intelligentsia" represent independent evidence of the emergence of a new "ruling class" in the Soviet Union, unless "ruling class" is so defined as to be equivalent merely to the sum of all privileged groups and individuals.

SURVEY

RECENT FRENCH BOOKS

WITH the publication of the volumes VII, 2 and VII, 3: *Le XVIII^e Siècle* by Edmond Préclin and Victor-L. Tapié, and vol. IX, 1: *L'Epoque contemporaine: Restaurations et Révolutions (1815-1871)* by Jacques Droz, Lucien Genet, Jean Vidalenc, all three volumes published by Presses Universitaires, the great series *Clio* is concluded. It is a remarkable achievement. It constitutes an indispensable tool for all those who are in need of quick information on the multitude of problems from history's early beginnings to the end of the first world war.

The latest three volumes show all the advantages and disadvantages of the earlier books: they give a precise account of political history with many of its ramifications. The economic and administrative framework of an epoch is sketched against the background of religious and cultural developments. *Le XVIII^e Siècle* is divided into two volumes; the first deals with France and the world; the second gives a survey of the international forces of the 18th century. No doubt the text suffers not rarely from overcondensation; it is impossible to give an idea of Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* in twenty lines or of Blackstone's *Commentaries of the Laws of England* in five. The student will, however, profit from the attached notes which contain extremely useful bibliographical material. The authors have read widely and with critical discrimination.

Vol. IX, 1 appears less mature. Though it is impossible to review here the book in detail, it is evidently less reliable than its predecessor. On p. 56, for instance, the authors mention Karl Vorlaender's monograph of Marx as the work of a communist; yet Vorlaender was a harmless Social-Democrat; they have obviously never read the volume. On p. 103 Hillebrand's important history of France is attributed to K. Hildebrand. On p. 308 Veuillot's edition of Donoso Cortes should have been mentioned as well as Broglie's and Montalembert's studies of the great Spaniard. However, taken as a whole, the volume gives valuable indications with regard to research done on the period between the years 1815-1871, though it appears that the authors have drawn too heavily on occasional papers in French learned journals. Instead of this one might have preferred more first-hand commentary on those works they quote. One might also raise other queries: for example, the authors mention Duvergier de Hauranne's great history of parliamentary government of France; they say nothing about his other works and the considerable influence he had. I found nothing on Madame Swetchine who was such an important centre of religious life in France before and after 1848. All this gives the volume a certain arbitrary character.

One of the greatest eighteenth-century figures finds detailed treatment from many points of view in *La Pensée politique et constitutionnelle de Montesquieu. Bicentenaire de L'Esprit des Lois. 1748-1948*, published last year by Recueil Sirey. Various authors have contributed to this volume. True, not all essays are on the same level, but some are outstanding. For example: M. Jean Bréthe de la Gressaye's study of *L'histoire de L'esprit des Lois* and in particular M. Puget's essay *Montesquieu et L'Angleterre*. M. Puget gives a

penetrating and original synthesis of previous studies. He sketches first the socio-political situation of the England which Montesquieu visited in 1729. He does not overlook those things which escaped Montesquieu's immense powers of observation; he then shows the influence British political thought had exercised on the French mind, before Montesquieu visited our shores. "En recherchant", writes M. Puget, "les influences anglaises qui se sont infiltrées dans *L'Esprit des Lois*, nous nous sommes surtout employés . . . énumérer des écrivains et mesurer leur action. Pour Montesquieu l'Angleterre a été d'une autre manière et plus fortement encore inspiratrice: elle l'a marqué par contact direct, elle lui a présenté l'agencement de ses institutions, elle lui a permis de voir les libertés dont jouissaient les habitants de son territoire. Par là elle a modifié les convictions premières du philosophe et orienté son ouvrage dans un sens assez différent de celui que probablement il avait prévu d'abord. En outre elle a servi à des fins qu'il voulait atteindre, et elle a été souvent soit un prétexte soit en quelque sorte un truchement; elle lui a donné occasion de discourir sur les sujets qu'il avait à cœur; elle lui a procuré la facilité ou l'artifice de formuler, en traitant d'elle, des maximes qui, mises en avant autrement que sous le couvert de l'étranger, auraient pu exposer, de ce côté-ci de la Manche, à des dangers dont, ami du calme et soucieux de lui-même, il ressentait la crainte." These admirable lines illustrate M. Puget's penetrating study. He concludes with a short survey of the influence the *Esprit des Lois* exerted on Montesquieu's contemporaries and on the following generations. Another essay of this volume is devoted to a comparison between Bodin and Montesquieu which has puzzled so many scholars: *De Bodin à Montesquieu* by M. Gardot. While this contribution contains many valuable suggestions, it is lacking a firm systematic grip. The student, interested in Bodin, can now again consult M. Pierre Mesnard's *L'Essor de la Philosophie politique au XVI^e Siècle*, a volume for many years out of print and which has been republished (Librairie J. Vrin) in a second edition, enlarged by a useful bibliographical supplement. Mesnard's book has nearly superseded everything written on political ideas of the sixteenth century. Its third chapter gives a brilliant account of Bodin's sociology of politics. What Montesquieu achieved for his century, Bodin did for his time. Both thinkers have written a *summa politica* which has given a new impetus to European political thought. Yet it is one thing to interpret the teachings of our great masters, another and more difficult task is to show the influence they exerted. In this respect mythical interpretations are very often more powerful than the original intention of a great author. "Derselbe Text erlaubt unendliche Auslegungen", as Nietzsche once wrote. However, M. Mesnard has deservedly been chosen as editor of Bodin's works of which the first volume has already been published: Jean Bodin: *Œuvres philosophiques*. Tome I. Introduction. *Le Discours au Sénat et au peuple de Toulouse*. *Le Tableau du Droit universel*. *La Méthode de L'histoire*, Presses Universitaires 1952. Some of the rarest works by Bodin are now easily accessible. M. Mesnard's introduction, though pertinent, is a little short. It does not quite come up to the standard of his other book. Yet he gives a vivid and learned account of our present biographical knowledge of Bodin: this great and fascinating figure of the sixteenth century, Rabelais' and Montaigne's equal. We can now look forward to an adequate edition of Bodin's works for which we have been waiting all too long.

J. P. MAYER

BOOK REVIEWS

THE RUSSIAN MENACE TO EUROPE. By KARL MARX and FRIEDRICH ENGELS. A Collection of articles, etc., selected and edited by PAUL BLACKSTOCK and BERT F. HOSELITZ. (*Allen and Unwin*. 288 pp. 20s.)

RUSSIA PAST AND PRESENT. By ANATOLE G. MAZOUR. (*Macmillan*. 784 pp. 40s.)

THE MONGOL EMPIRE, ITS RISE AND LEGACY. By MICHAEL PAWDIN. Translated by EDEN and CEDAR PAUL. (*Allen and Unwin*. 581 pp. 35s.)

THE Editors of *The Russian Menace to Europe* open their collection of articles by Marx and Engels with the latter's brilliant and sometimes prophetic analysis, written in 1890, of the foreign policy of Russian Czarism. They introduce it as the description of a policy which is specifically Russian, rather than Czarist, true of Russia at all times, whether in the 8th, the 18th, or the 20th century. "The main theme of this article," they write, "is that the chief objectives and strategy of Russian foreign policy have a permanent character, that such methods as bribery, deceit, the exploiting of disunity (often artificially incited or maintained) are traditional features of that policy, and that the changes in Russian foreign policy are only superficial tactical alterations which correspond to the shifting power complexes among Russia's partners or adversaries at different times." As Marx wrote, "the policy of Russia is changeless . . . its methods, its tactics, its manoeuvres may change, but the polar star of its policy—world domination—is a fixed star. In our times only a civilised government ruling over barbarian masses can hatch out such a plan and execute it." Engels added that its aim in Europe was "to declare null and void the historical development of the last thousand years . . . to cut off one third of Germany and all of Hungary, to change Vienna and Budapest into Slavic cities." Stalin, it is argued, was in direct line of succession from Ivan I, Ivan III, Peter I, Catherine II, carrying still further the remarkably successful expansionist drive of nineteenth-century Russia. From its impregnable fortress such an urge to world domination could be safely directed without fear from even the most victorious of foreign invaders. The timeless conspiracy could go on, using any ideology that suited its purpose—its Byzantine or its Mongolian inheritance, the principle of legitimacy or of liberalism, the protection of orthodoxy or the promotion of communism. And often the conspiracy has been directed by alien tyrants welding Eurasian land spaces and the races inhabiting them into an entity and a weapon less Russian than the product of their predatory wills, an argument hardly consonant with specifically Russian responsibility.

To conflict with this picture is Sir Bernard Pares: "The Great Russian people were hammered out of peaceful, silent pacific elements by constant and cruel blows from enemies on all sides, which implanted into the least intelligent of Russians an instinct of national defence and of the value of a national dictatorship. Russia lived in a state of constant war. . . . This necessitated equally constant and regular measures of defence. Everywhere the frontier line was planted with military colonists." Dr. Mazour claims also that "the motivating background of Russia's foreign policy is predominantly the need for security, whether against medieval Pechenegs and Tartars,

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seventeenth-century Poles, eighteenth-century Swedes, nineteenth-century Turks, or twentieth-century Teutons. Each century in Russian history has been marked by bitter struggles, leaving behind a military tradition and a thick layer of fear and precaution. Although one can find instances of imperialistic ventures, such as the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-05, the dominating motive is one and the same—a quest for strategic improvement allowing military and economic security. . . . The ghosts of yesterday's invaders cast dark shadows upon the affairs of modern Russia."

Neither of these contrasting accounts is altogether true but there is important truth in both. Much of the story as related by Dr. Mazour does not bear out his conclusion. Modern Russia's expansion bears no less, if no more, the imprint of imperialism than of a defensive strategy. Unless domination itself is to be regarded as a precaution against attack, there is as much truth in the analysis of Marx and Engels. But the mistake lies in attempting to treat Russia in isolation. International anarchy begets these methods. A power vacuum at the frontier may well make expansion a measure necessary to security. The courses pursued by Russia do not seem to have differed from those of other powers. There is at least nothing more aggressive in past Russian expansion than can be shown by the activities of a Charles XII, a Napoleon, a Bismarck, or a Hitler. Moreover, at least an element in the diatribes of Marx and Engels suggests that they are directed in fact more at a particular example of autocracy in action than at Russia as Russia. "Only a civilised government ruling over barbarian masses", wrote the former, can do these things in the grand manner of complete unscrupulousness. Is there not some degree of answer to the indictment in that phrase itself? And may not a sense of security from foreign aggression, if it can ever be induced, direct the attention of the rulers of Russia, as of other lands, to internal development—all the more because of its exceptionally vast possibilities in her case—and away from imperialist adventure? Is not that one of the most important of contemporary needs? Imperialist adventure, it should no doubt be added, may also be discouraged by the assurance provided by the strength and unity of the outside world that it cannot be profitable.

But if these things are to be done, the perspective which sufficed when the world meant Europe has to be enlarged to cover the planet, and this means a wider if not a longer span of history than contented our fathers. History must abandon its parochialism. Nothing could be a better encouragement to this emancipation than Michael Prawdin's *The Mongol Empire, its Rise and Legacy*, admirably translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. This palpitating story of imperialist adventure from Ghenghis Khan to Tamurlaine sheds a necessary and invaluable light on the history of China and of Russia; more, by recounting both the achievement by ruthless conquest of world domination and the disintegration that followed, it throws into relief the ugly realities of power politics which modern man forgets at his peril.

Dr. Mazour's book is an intelligent and interesting account of Russian civilisation, its music, literature and art, and the characteristics of its development, rather than a chronological history. All the more is it a pity that his style is often so turgid: "By virtue of geographic location and unhappy possession of oil resources Iran is being drawn against its will into the whirlpool of world events that forbode tumultuous days ahead."

H. R. G. GREAVES.

BOOK REVIEWS

WINSTON CHURCHILL. *THE ERA AND THE MAN.* By VIRGINIA COWLES. (Hamilton. 378 pp. 18s.)

THIS is a surprisingly good book. Biographies of contemporary living politicians are almost always negligible and usually contemptible, falling into two classes. The first is a large class of potboiler, written by literary or journalistic hacks. The second is the much smaller class of biography written by more intelligent writers, but vitiated by the partisanship of the hero worshipper or the political opponent. But even if one is neither a potboiler producer nor a partisan, there are great difficulties inherent in the subject if he is a living and active politician, and when, as with Churchill, he is in the front rank and himself a man of passion and prejudice, the pitfalls for the biographer are very many and uncomfortably deep. Miss Virginia Cowles is to be congratulated on her achievement. She has not merely the negative, but important, merit of having avoided pitfalls. She has boldly gone out to paint a vivid portrait of Winston Churchill, to interpret his character and explain his career, and she has produced something positive and with, one feels, a fair measure of truth and reality. Her success is due to her intelligence and to the honesty of purpose with which she uses it. Unlike the B.B.C., its artists and producers, she has realized that it is a fatal mistake to over-emphasize the emphatic and overdramatize the dramatic, that it is ludicrous for the actor to choke with emotion in order to make the listener realize that there is pathos in the line: "I am a man more sinned against than sinning." There is so much drama and movement in Churchill's life that she wisely allows the story to tell itself, and, told without fuss or frills, it is eminently readable. She is an admirer, but does not ignore or conceal the faults and failures of her hero. The result is the portrait of a real human being, not of a dummy figure, and her book is also a contribution to political history.

In history and the history of politics Winston Churchill's career and character are well worth serious study. He has better claims to be numbered in that very rare species, "the great man", than most of those popularly included in it. I define a great man as one who is not made by events, but controls events by mind and will. Great men have something dynamic in their minds and blood which gives them their ability to defy fate and impose their will upon men and things. Their careers are usually a patchwork of failure and success on a gigantic scale. They are usually a scourge to the human race, for, as that greatest of sociologists, Shakespeare, saw, the evil that they do lives after them while the good is interred with their bones. Their fundamental defect is almost always ambition and the fatal fallacy that the end justifies the means. Up to 1939 Churchill's career showed in its patchwork of personal success and repeated failure all the stigmata of greatness unfulfilled. Then Hitler's war gave him a situation exactly fitted to his own peculiar type of "greatness", one in which he could withstand rather than cause evil. He is pre-eminently a soldier statesman with some understanding of and feeling for the great European and British traditions of free and democratic civilization. He was therefore the right man to lead the desperate, apparently forlorn fight against Hitler, and to succeed. He is one of the few of whom perhaps history will say that the good lived after him.

THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY

THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES, 1945-1950. By ROBERT K. CARR. (Cornell University Press, New York.)

SOME months ago I received a letter from an unknown American explaining that I was wrong in attacking the McCarthy Witch-hunt and appealing to American Liberals because in the United States no such thing as a liberal could exist; there were only Americans and traitors. This is the assumption on which for the most part the Un-American Activities Committee of Congress has worked. If you are loyal you have nothing to hide, and must, in addition, be ready to testify against old friends and associates. If you are American, you must be against not only communism but against everything that threatens directly or indirectly the American way of life. A liberal who insists on the liberties guaranteed by the constitution, even at the risk of allowing some communist to escape exposure, is disloyal and "a bad security risk".

Professor Carr has made excellent use of a Rockefeller grant to study the methods, procedure, and effects of the Un-American Activities Committee. His study begins in 1945. He is careful to give credit to all the honest work done by the committee, pointing out, for instance, that the investigation leading to the formation of the Mundt Bill was genuine and reasonable. He explains that Congressional committees have three acknowledged functions: to collect facts preparatory to legislation, to check the enforcement of the law by administration agencies set up by Congress, and, thirdly, to keep public opinion ideologically informed. The third object is the principal cause of abuse. Only too easily it is indistinguishable from publicity for the members of the Committee or from party propaganda. It is frequently an excuse for personal attacks on individuals. While Parnell Thomas was chairman these less reputable motives were often so conspicuous that the committee's proceedings were reduced to a disgraceful farce which did not end when the chairman himself went to jail. Since then there have been better and worse phases, periods when the committee was completely reckless in mentioning the names of unfortunate people—one of whom committed suicide—who may or may not have been involved in any subversive activity.

The Committee received its most decisive repulse in the case of Dr. Condon, Director of the National Bureau of Standards, who survived unscathed because the committee dropped their investigation in face of the overwhelming body of support for Dr. Condon in the press and the scientific world. Until the Hiss case, the most spectacular incident in the life of the committee was its enquiry into the motion picture industry in Hollywood, where it was easily able to show that many communists were at work but quite unable to show that any films had been influenced by communist ideas. Of the many pieces of mass-examination quoted by Professor Carr, none is more comic or revealing than that in which directors as respectable and American as Jack L. Warner and Louis B. Mayer tried to convince Congressmen that to represent the Soviet Union as something less than hell during the war when Russia and America were allies might have been something other than treachery to the United States. Most remarkable of all was the powerful persistence of a well-known screen writer, John Howard Lawson, who beat down the chairman's gavel long enough to put on the record a powerful denunciation of the committee and to prophesy that its enquiry into the motion picture industry was merely a precedent for a similar effort

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to produce a subservient press. His forecast proved accurate six years later when Senator McCarthy summoned Mr. Wechsler of the *New York Post* to Washington.

It is typical of the committee that while looking for communist propaganda in films, it seems not to have been very interested in a letter from a Scotland Yard detective stating that during the war "there were coded German messages going through the moving pictures that were shown all over England, and some of them were made in Hollywood. It would be useful to know more of this strange story that at present seems to rest on the word of Congressman Rankin, one of the most un conspicuous members of the committee.

Professor Carr has produced his evidence with admirable clarity and objectivity, without at any point being afraid to state his conclusion in strong but carefully-measured language. In his preface he points out that the native communist movement of America is "small and weak," but that "there is a strong, latent fascist force in America that awaits only a favourable combination of circumstances to assert its ugly power. In the long run, the internal danger of the fascist revolution in the United States may well prove to be more serious than the danger of communist revolution."

KINGSLEY MARTIN.

THE END OF A REVOLUTION. By F. STERNBERG. (Gollancz. 191 pp. 12s. 6d.)

SOCIOLOGY OF COMMUNISM. By J. MONNEROT. (Allen and Unwin. 339 pp. 30s.)

MARXISM: AN INTERPRETATION. By A. C. MACINTYRE. (S.C.M. Press. 126 pp. 8s. 6d.)

MR. STERNBERG's publisher announces that "The most powerful myth in the modern world is Soviet Russia. It can be exploded. Sternberg explodes it." So far from an explosion, this book will hardly make a ripple. It is written—and translated—in simple terms and has a simple theme, given in the sub-title: "Soviet Russia—from revolution to reaction." Its object is to demonstrate that the Soviet Union is not a socialist but a reactionary state, and thereby to dispel the illusions of that section of the Left which is still bemused by the Soviet myth. It is therefore intended to meet a real need; but its performance falls a good way short of its intention. It is repetitive and prolix: its statistics are necessarily speculative; and its conclusions are sometimes doubtful. It is both over-simplified and at times confused. Its target is the sympathiser, but there is more than one kind of sympathiser. There are those who believe that in some measure the Soviet Union has some connection with socialism; and on those the recitation of the reality may have some effect. But there are also those who are sympathisers, or perhaps rather fellow-travellers, because they are defeatist and have already conceded the victory to communism. It is only on the latter that Mr. Sternberg's argument that the Soviet Union cannot win a war against the United States of America might have some effect—and then only if they live in America.

By contrast M. Monnerot's *Sociology of Communism* is a penetrating study.

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It is not a new book—it was first published in 1949—but it eminently merits translation, which has been well executed, although the subject-matter does not make it easy reading. M. Monnerot has many illuminating observations on the psychology of sympathisers. He puts his finger on the point of greatest weakness. What he calls “the two grossest assumptions” of the communists are the dichotomy and duel between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and the identification of the Communist Party with the proletariat. Marxian socialists find themselves in difficulties because they accept the first of these “gross assumptions” which belongs, if anywhere, to a particular phase of historical development. As M. Monnerot remarks, “Once a man has admitted any sort of causal link between Marxist ideas and communist actions, and once he has surrendered, even against his will and knowledge, to the ideas, he finds himself disarmed and strangely impotent in face of the actions.” There are many other acute observations in this book, although there are also some weaknesses. Democratic socialism is dismissed in a footnote, and classical analogies are overworked. The panegyric on the Imperium Romanum at the end of the book would be an appropriate subject for the exercise of M. Monnerot’s own tools of psychological analysis.

One of M. Monnerot’s main themes is that communism is a secular religion. This is not a novel thesis, but the demonstration is particularly good. He calls the sympathisers “the men of the threshold”: “they stand before the door of the temple. Attracted by the ‘true god’, they have yet not entirely broken with heathenism. There is still something that holds them back; and those ‘within the threshold’ take good care that most of them remain outside, for that is where they can be most useful.” The religion which M. Monnerot chooses for his comparison is not Christianity but Islam, because communism operates both as a secular religion and, at least by intention, as a universal state. This intermingling of the secular and the religious is more akin to Islam than to Christianity.

It is precisely this distinction between the spiritual and the temporal which worries Mr. MacIntyre. He is concerned with the bearing of Marxism on Christianity which, in his view, is related to the problem of faith and works. Not that Mr. MacIntyre is a Marxist: he has some shrewd and pungent criticisms of Marxism, to which he too attributes a religious character. He feels, however, that Marxism presents a challenge to Christianity. As he puts it, “The two most relevant books in the modern world are St. Mark’s Gospel and Marx’s ‘National Economy and Philosophy’; but they must be read together.” He points out that the solution adopted by the Church has been to distinguish between the full realisation of Christian hope at the end of history and a partial realisation of it now in the life of the Church. “But,” he observes, “this solution is discredited, at least to those outside the Church, by the way in which the Church has continually sanctified the political *status quo*.” His solution is “a community committed alike to politics and prayer”. But evidently he means a special kind of politics, for the commitment of the papacy to politics is clearly not what he has in mind. The dilemma remains, both for Christianity and for Mr. MacIntyre. He and M. Monnerot would profit from reading each other’s works.

SAUL ROSE.

BOOK REVIEWS

SOCIALIST THOUGHT. THE FORERUNNERS, 1789-1850. By G. D. H. COLE.
(Macmillan. 346 pp. 25s.)

IT is an extraordinary thing that there is no good book on the history of socialism or on the history of socialist thought, certainly in English, and even the foreign books, so far as I know them, are inadequate. In English Kirkup and Beer are, I suppose, the best, but they are second rate and do not cover the whole ground. There are, of course, some fairly good books dealing with particular socialists or with particular aspects of socialism, but the bibliography at the end of Professor Cole’s book shows how barren the ground is. This state of things is, as I said, extraordinary, because the subject is of the highest importance and of the greatest interest to a large number of people; it would also appear, at first sight, to be a fascinating task for an intelligent thinker to trace the development of socialist thought and socialist action during the last century and a half.

This great task Professor Cole has now undertaken or rather he has undertaken the first half of it—the history of the development of socialist thought. And here is the first volume of his achievement, a book dealing with what he calls the “forerunners” of socialism proper, the thinkers and the thinking which began with Babeuf and the French Revolution and ended in 1850 with the British Christian socialists. No one is better equipped than Professor Cole for this great adventure. His knowledge of socialists, prehistoric, classical, or Alexandrine, and of their theories is encyclopaedic, and he has used this knowledge to good purpose in the volume under review. It is an invaluable work of reference for the student of socialism. Professor Cole is a lucid thinker and a clear writer and he explains briefly and crisply not only what the well-known socialists, like Owen or Proudhon, said, but the theories of comparatively obscure and unimportant “forerunners,” like Cabet, Buchez, and Flora Tristan.

The book has so many merits that it seems churlish to express disappointment. But unless Professor Cole alters his angle of approach to his subject in the next volume, he will fail to write the work which he ought to and could produce. This volume is not a history of thought, but a text-book of thinkers. It is an admirable text-book, but it is written for an examinee rather than for the student in the widest sense, for the man who wants to understand what socialism means, how and why socialist thought developed in this direction and that, and what its relation was at different epochs to the general movement of social psychology and to events. Professor Cole takes each specimen of thinker chronologically from Babeuf to Neale and Hughes and gives for each an admirable summary of their views, but the reader is left with an impression that each is an isolated specimen or species of socialist or pre-socialist thinker. It compares with the book which one hopes for from Professor Cole as a zoological dictionary might compare with *The Origin of Species*. Of course, it might be argued that that is the right way to deal with the forerunners and that Professor Cole will alter his method when he comes in the second volume to deal with socialism and socialists. But in that case it is impossible to understand how he came to include Marx and Engels and the Communist Manifesto among the forerunners of true socialism.

LEONARD WOOLF.

THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY

SWORD AND SWASTIKA: THE WEHRMACHT IN THE THIRD REICH. By TELFORD TAYLOR. (Gollancz. 413 pp. 21s.)

BISMARCK, it is said, was afraid only at the beginnings of his three wars, at the moment when control passed from his hands to those of the generals. The German Officers' Corps was the instrument that made the Empire possible, and it never allowed the civilian leaders to forget it; fifty years after Sedan, it could claim (and make the public believe) that the catastrophe of 1918 was not its fault but the result of betrayal from the rear. No Imperial Chancellor could do without it, and none was ever fully trusted by it. Rigid, nationalist, conservative, and snob-ridden, it was a force within the state which the state could not completely control. The Weimar politicians never wholly understood it or its role in restoring German self-respect after Versailles. How much they knew of von Seeckt's activities is still uncertain, and it is less certain still how much they approved of what they knew. Yet it is perfectly clear that Seeckt was as necessary to Stresemann as Moltke had ever been to Bismarck, very different though his field of action was.

General Taylor introduces his study of the relations between the officers and the Nazis with a short account of the earlier part played by the General Staff. The main burden of his narrative starts with von Schleicher and ends with the fall of Poland; his purpose is to show how the Officers' Corps, though scornful of Hitler's vulgarity and apprehensive of his designs, was gradually sapped and subdued until, after Munich, it became for the first time in modern German history wholly subservient to the civil authority. Writing without affection for the traditional German military mind, he interprets this subservience as a retreat from the best of the tradition.

He partly blames the weakness of Hammerstein and Groener and the ineffective cunning of Schleicher for Hitler's rise to power. Thereafter, the Officers' Corps was in a cleft stick. Should it oppose the upstart adventurer who looked like leading Germany into war before the Wehrmacht was ready? Or should it support the leader who won *Wehrfreiheit* and reoccupied the Rhineland, and whose sureness of touch did not desert him till after Munich? From 1933 till the fall of Beck in October 1938 there were critical voices to be heard, the voices of men who had enough ancient pride and enough caution to doubt the wisdom of the courses followed. But in its essentials the dispute was one of method rather than of ultimate aim; for fundamentally the generals and Hitler wanted the same thing, a Germany free of the trammels of Versailles, restored to what they regarded as her proper place in Europe and the world.

The tragic story which he unfolds, with considerable historical skill, is based largely on his experience as chief of the prosecuting counsel at Nuremberg; he had access to a vast mass of documentary and other evidence which he has assembled with great care and with a commendable lack of emotion. Most of the narrative is factual. It leads up to a section which, though he was right to attempt it, is perhaps a little less satisfying. On the eve of the outbreak of war, he abandons straight narrative for an effort to analyse the outlook of Hitler himself and the General Staff, and is almost bound to come down in favour of the latter. Yet surely if one was right, both were.

General Taylor concludes by asking, and not completely answering, how

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great was the responsibility of the Officers' Corps for what eventually happened. Democratic societies like to think that their armed forces are under the absolute control of the Government. If democracy gives way to an irresponsible dictatorship, at what point does it become the duty of the armed forces (or for that matter of any other branch of the public service) to throw off its discipline and resist? If they rebel and fail, they are blamed for disloyalty; if they do not rebel, they must share in the final responsibility—and it is terribly easy to pass moral judgments of that order on a defeated enemy. General Taylor's judgments are implicit rather than explicit; he is a historian, not a Juvenal whose indignation compels him to write. But sympathy inevitably goes to those who disagreed, and clouds what should surely be the real judgment—the responsibility not of Goering, Rundstedt, or Brauchitsch, but of Fritsch, Beck, and Adam. These men did not fall foul of Hitler because he was undemocratic, but because he was irresponsible; if they were later justified by events, it was chiefly because their assessment of the military possibilities was better than Hitler's own.

The events that finally broke resistance were Munich and the pact with Russia—the first because it seemed to prove Hitler right and Beck wrong, the second as the fulfilment of Schlieffen's famous plan. Fritsch died in Poland, Adam was in impotent retirement, and Beck in disgrace. Stripped of its independent minds, the Officers' Corps was ready to do what it was told and no longer to reason why. When war came, and when defeat followed war, the question of separate responsibility did not arise.

T. E. M. MCKITTERICK.

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SOVIET LEGAL PHILOSOPHY. By V. I. LENIN, P. I. STUCHKA, M. A. REISNER, E. B. PASHUKANIS, J. V. STALIN, A. Y. VYSHINSKY, P. YUDIN, S. A. GOLUNSKII, M. S. STROGOVICH, I. P. TRAININ. Translated by HUGH W. BABB. With an Introduction by JOHN N. HAZARD. (Harvard University Press. xxxvii + 465 pp. 48s.)

THIS volume is the fifth in the Twentieth Century Legal Philosophy Series, published under the auspices of the Association of American Law Schools. It provides a selection of long extracts from the works of the leading Soviet legal theorists. The editorial committee responsible for the series have properly included a few short extracts which belong more to the realm of politics than of law, notably those from the works of Stalin and Yudin, since these are essential to an understanding of the motives which led to the changing views of the lawyers. Professor Hazard, the leading American expert on Soviet law, supplies a useful and factual introduction. The translations by Professor Babb are excellent, and succeed in rendering foreign legal concepts in a manner intelligible to a reader trained in English law. One could have wished, however, that quotations from non-Russian authors had been given from available English editions and not from Russian translations. This would have revealed, for example, that what purports to be a quotation from the *Wealth of Nations* (on p. 56) is Stuchka's own, quite inaccurate paraphrase of what Adam Smith wrote.

Considerations of space have limited the selection of extracts to general theory of law. The fathers of Marxism were not much concerned with law, and their ideas on the subject had to be extracted by the Bolsheviks from sporadic utterances scattered throughout their works. These views can be reduced to three propositions. All law is the expression of the economic basis of society, and in bourgeois society it expresses the exploitation of the majority by the minority. No distinction need be drawn between law and the state since both express and carry into effect the will of the dominant class of bourgeois exploiters. Finally, since both law and the state exist solely for the purpose of preventing class conflict from erupting into violence, both will disappear, or "wither away", when once exploitation, and consequently classes, have been abolished after the triumph of the revolution.

Lenin seems to have shared Marx's contempt for law ("*juristisch also falsch!*") and had very little to say on the subject. He accepted the general proposition that law would wither away with the ultimate abolition of classes. The intervening dictatorship of the proletariat (which he once prophesied must last at least fifty years) he defined as "the legally unlimited dominance of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, resting on violence, and enjoying the sympathy and support of the toiling and exploited masses." These words date from 1917. But even in 1922, with the civil war over and the New Economic Policy launched, he wrote with reference to the new legal codes under discussion emphasising that to promise abolition of terror was mere deception. "As for civil law, we recognise nothing private . . . we should broaden the application of state intervention into private law relationships—apply our revolutionary legal consciousness—rather than Corpus Juris Romani (*sic*) to the relationships of civil law. . . ." He conceded that both law and the state would ultimately wither away, but he relegated this to the remote future when Communism had been achieved. There was a good

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deal of juridical logic in these views of Lenin. Law as a regulating factor in a state can only exist where both the state and the individuals composing it are bearers of rights. It is for this reason that constitutions aim at safeguarding by the separation of powers the independence of the judiciary so that the equilibrium can be maintained when state rights conflict with individual rights. Without such equilibrium there are rules of administration, but there is no law. A slave owner may devise and even observe very good rules for the management of his slaves—but they are not law, because the slaves have no rights. If the rights of the individuals are merged in a dictatorship of the proletariat, it has no place for law, even though it may be a very good and popular dictatorship which is always just in its actions.

However, Lenin's views proved too direct and simple as time went on. For one thing, it is a practical impossibility to run a state without codes and statutes which, whatever the theoretical basis behind them, have to be applied and interpreted and look to all intents and purposes like law. So theories had to be devised to explain what this law was in the Marxist state. Stuchka (the first communist Commissar of Justice) was the first to formulate the view that soviet law expresses the will of the new dominant class, the proletariat, just as law in bourgeois society expresses the will of the bourgeoisie. Reisner applied the psychological theory of law, expounded by Petrazhitzky, to the "revolutionary legal consciousness" of the communists, but his views, now long regarded as heretical, were of little influence. The most educated and influential of soviet jurists was undoubtedly Pashukanis.

Pashukanis grasped that law could not exist without a conflict of rights, and hence reached its highest development under conditions of free commodity exchange, i.e. in bourgeois society. It was therefore destined to disappear in soviet society: with the disappearance of classes and of commodity exchange the law which still survived, and which was essentially bourgeois in character, would be progressively replaced (to use Engels's phrase) by the administration of things. This theory, first propounded under the New Economic Policy, was borne out in the era of planning. For soviet planning, since it did not acknowledge any limitation in favour of individual rights, was by its nature more akin to the administration of things than to law. The logic of Pashukanis's views won him a wide following in legal circles, but incurred severe official displeasure. After repeated officially sponsored attacks in academic circles (in face of which Pashukanis modified some points, but stood his ground), he was eventually branded an "enemy of the people". It was alleged that his views on the withering away of the state (which of course conflicted with Stalin's views on the subject) had been propagated as an act of treason. He disappeared without trace or trial in 1937.

The new official theory of law was laid down in 1938 by Vyshinsky. It has been reiterated since then without variation. The extracts from Golunskii and Strogovich, and from Trainin for example, though more attractive to the lawyer by their educated and moderate tone when contrasted with Vyshinsky's vulgar vituperations, add nothing new. Withering away of the state and consequently of law is now condemned as heresy until the end of capitalism in the world. Soviet law is real law, of a new kind, expressing the will of the ruling class and enforced by the state for the benefit of that class. But the dilemma which cost Pashukanis his liberty, if not his life, is still

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unresolved. "We thus reject," say Golunskii and Strogovich, "the division of law into law in the objective sense and law in the subjective sense" i.e. into public law and individual rights. (Russian, like French, uses the same word for "law" and "right".) But if the individual sphere is thus merged in the public sphere; if the fate of the individual is thus at the will of the state and protected only at the will of the state,—even if that will is said to represent the undivided will of all citizens; what is there then left of that equilibrium between conflicting rights which is of the essence of all law, and without which state rules are not rules of law but of administration?

L. B. SCHAPIRO.

SHORTER NOTICES

SALISBURY, 1830-1903: PORTRAIT OF A STATESMAN. By A. L. KENNEDY. (Murray. 409 pp. 25s.)

THIS book was well worth writing and is well worth reading. Lady Gwendolen Cecil, when she began to write her father's biography, planned it on too large a scale, and it remained unfinished. But the last years of Salisbury's life are vital for an estimate of him as a statesman. Very little has been written about him and his statesmanship. Mr. Kennedy was therefore well advised to attempt a smaller, but complete, portrait of this strange and most Cecilian Cecil. Though we think he overestimates the statesmanship of Salisbury, he has done his work extremely well. It should be read by all who are interested in the history of our own era and in the policies and persons leading to it.

THE YEAR BOOK OF WORLD AFFAIRS, 1953. Published under the auspices of the London Institute of World Affairs. (Stevens. 427 pp. £2 2s.)

DRS. KETTON and Schwarzenberger always get together some exceptionally good papers on contemporary world politics and events in this year book. Two of the most interesting in the 1953 issue deal with the cold war. The first is by Professor H. Seton-Watson and has the title "Five Years of Cold War". Its final section is particularly worthy of study; it raises the question of the position and influence of the *intelligentsia* in the cold war both within and without communist countries. The second, by Dr. F. Honig, is a short, but useful, survey of the cold war as an instrument of policy. Among the other articles perhaps the most valuable is a survey of trusteeship and partnership, both in theory and practice, in the various British African territories.

THE LETTERS OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT. Vols. V and VI. Edited by ELTING E. MORISON. (Harvard and Oxford Press. 1711 pp. 130s.)

THIS monumental edition will be completed in eight volumes. The serious student of American history and politics will find it of the greatest interest. The two volumes under review cover the important years 1905 to 1909, and have the subtitle "The Big Stick". The last two volumes, covering the years 1910 to 1919, will be published later this year.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

WE are publishing in the present issue of THE POLITICAL QUARTERLY a series of articles discussing the future of television. Our reason for doing so is that the Government's intention to introduce commercial television in addition to the service provided by the B.B.C. is a matter of such far reaching importance, and is likely to have such profound consequences in our national life, that it is essential the issues should be thoroughly understood before a final decision is taken this autumn. Until the publication of the White Paper last May,* broadcasting had not previously been a political question in the party sense. It will be most unfortunate if the present Government, by persisting in a course which is opposed by many conservatives, no less than by persons belonging to other parties, should bring broadcasting into the realm of political controversy in order to satisfy the financial expectations of a small, well-organized pressure group.

To see the question in its proper perspective, it is necessary to consider the immense changes which have taken place in the relations between the state and the arts in Britain during recent years. Prior to the creation of the B.B.C., the attitude of the state towards music, drama, literature, sculpture, opera and the other arts, was purely negative. The positive contribution made by public authorities was limited to making and maintaining collections in museums, art galleries, and public libraries. The position today has been transformed. The Arts Council plays an active part in encouraging and developing music, drama, poetry, and the visual arts, with the help of a Treasury grant. Covent Garden opera and ballet are heavily subsidized out of public funds. So, too, are the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells. A National Theatre is already authorized, although its construction must await an easing of the economic situation. Outside London nearly a hundred local repertory theatres have sprung up, almost all aided by grants from local authorities: Since 1948 local authorities have been permitted to spend limited sums on entertainment, and they are promoting or supporting choral societies, concerts, music festivals, puppet shows, opera, pantomime, pageants, ballet, fairs and circuses, musical comedies and many other forms of recreation.

* Broadcasting. Memorandum on the Report of the Broadcasting Committee, 1949. Cmd. 8550/1953. H.M.S.O.

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The support or provision of cultural services is an essential feature of the welfare state, no less important than education or housing. The reasons for this are twofold. In the first place, the present level of taxation makes it necessary for public authorities to assume once again the rôle of patron of the arts which they performed from the Renaissance until the early 19th century; for the wealthy aristocrat and the commercial magnate are no longer left with the means, even if they had the will, to provide a living for the artist. Second and more important, a widespread appreciation of the arts is so fundamental an element in human wellbeing that the welfare state must concern itself with cultivating the standard of taste of the people, and providing them with intellectual and aesthetic sustenance.

Much has been done in recent years to raise the level of public taste and performance. The amount and quality of musical performances, and the standard of programmes, have been immensely improved. Fine and even great acting can more often be seen nowadays on the London stage, at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford, and also in some of the provincial towns where the living theatre is flourishing. British ballet has now achieved an international reputation of the highest order. The higher standard of popular reading is shown not only by the improved level of the public libraries and the greater use made of them, but also by the remarkable demand for the better books published in the Pelican and Penguin series. In this large movement the B.B.C. has played the principal part in cultivating public taste in music, drama, and literature. We also owe an incalculable debt to the corporation for enhancing the political sanity of the nation both in war and in peace by its truthful and temperate news bulletins, and its serious talks on home, commonwealth and foreign affairs.

* * *

We are now told that, in order to provide an element of competition, the government have decided to licence additional television stations outside the B.B.C. service. The precise details have not yet been revealed, but it is clear from a recent statement by the Postmaster-General that commercial television will be permitted. That is to say, stations will be dependent on advertising revenue for their finance. Sponsored television, which means handing over control of the programmes to the advertisers or their agents, will not be allowed.

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The issue which has been presented to the public by the Government, and by the special interests which have brought pressure to bear on them, is a choice between monopoly and competition. The real issue, however, is between public service and profit-making motives in providing television. Under the public service system, the whole purpose of the organization is to provide the best service possible in the prevailing conditions. Commercial television introduces what Dr. Taylor calls an ulterior motive: namely, to attract money from the advertiser who wants to sell his goods. This ulterior motive is bound to be a powerful influence even if sponsoring is avoided. For advertisers will pay more to have their advertisements inserted before, during, or after the popular programmes than in connection with those of more limited appeal. Hence there is certain to be great pressure by advertisers and their agents on the broadcasting stations to place the emphasis on mass appeal. In the end, the stations will have neither the means nor the will to resist such pressure, and standards will come tumbling down.

This has happened wherever commercial broadcasting is allowed; and it will happen in this country. Whatever the nature of the broadcasting stations may turn out to be under the government's plan, they will not be able to withstand pressure from the advertisers to lower standards if they depend on advertising revenue for their support. If the new television licensees are themselves profit-making companies the pressure will be doubled, since their own shareholders will be concerned only with the level of profits and not with the effect on the viewer. Everywhere that commercial radio has been tried it has either degraded public taste or prevented it from rising.

To expect that in such circumstances the B.B.C.'s own policy would be unaffected is to expect the impossible. They would face a continual temptation to outdo the commercial stations in popularity, regardless of lowering their own standards, while their revenue would be inadequate to pay the exorbitant fees which the commercial system tends to produce for the most popular artists. The ablest members of the B.B.C. staff would be attracted by higher salaries to join the commercial stations.

This is not competition but a conflict of motives; and it is the kind of conflict which is bound to arise from a dual system of commercial and public service broadcasting.

* * *

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If the real issue is to introduce an element of competition, the right method would be to proceed on the lines suggested by Lord Simon of Wythenshawe in his article, making the six regional stations autonomous corporations entirely independent of the B.B.C. This proposal was first put forward by Professor Robson in his chapter on the B.B.C. in *Public Enterprise*, published in 1937. It was also advocated by Mr. Brendon Bracken when Minister of Information during the war in a speech at a B.B.C. anniversary luncheon. The Fabian Society research group also put forward proposals to the Beveridge Committee which would have produced four independent corporations responsible for different parts of the sound and television programmes conducted by the B.B.C., and these again would have preserved the public service principle intact while providing an alternative to the present monopoly. Lord Simon's proposals are in our opinion preferable to the Fabian suggestions, but they are based on the same principle of combining the public service principle with several broadcasting organs.

It is doubtful, however, whether the real aim of the Government is to secure competition. Their purpose would seem to be to transform television into a commercial service, at least in part. Nothing less would satisfy the advertising interests which have been barking so hungrily at their heels. Against these interests are balanced the cultural, mental and moral interests of the viewing public, and particularly those of the younger generation on whom the impact of this new medium has descended with such an overwhelming effect.

In case it may be thought that we are in danger of exaggerating the dangers involved, we will quote from a recent letter from Mr. Gerald Cock, who was engaged for 20 years in creative and executive work for the B.B.C. before retiring some years ago. Mr. Cock has been in America for some time, and writing of broadcasting there he says:

I believe that in course of time everyone, and especially the young, grow callous and cease to resent, possibly do not even notice, what is being forced upon them in their homes. They either lose their critical faculties or decide that criticism does them no good anyway. Radio and its advertising associates have become a vested interest of vast proportions. They are becoming a law unto themselves. The F.C.C. seem to have become almost impotent under political and commercial pressures. And there is no one to whom an outraged listener or viewer can turn when it comes to making a serious complaint, since newspapers have to deal with the same advertisers as radio and will not risk unpleasantness. I also believe that deterioration

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is inevitable over a period of time. The abuses of yesterday no longer appear to be abuses the day after tomorrow.

Experience has shown that it is unwise for the British to assume that "it can't happen here". True, McCarthys and Winchells are unlikely to obtain privileged positions in the U.K., but making allowance for differences in national character, I believe that serious abuses will always accompany the commercial system. . . . One of the most disconcerting elements in the situation is the power of the vested interests in broadcasting. They have surrounded themselves with an almost impenetrable "dollar curtain" to blunt and deflect any serious public criticism. One cannot help suspecting too that it influences the white-washing investigations which are made from time to time. But you will agree that preoccupation with sex and violence; ceaseless incitement to extravagance, luxury, and ostentation; the building up of tenth raters into heroes, the destruction of good taste and a decent standard of values, cannot fail to affect the national character. The youngsters are thoroughly confused. Can one blame them?

It will be seen that a great deal is at stake on this matter. It is to be hoped that public opinion will assert itself with sufficient vigour to deter the Government from taking a pernicious step which is desired by only a tiny minority of specially interested persons.

COMMERCIAL TELEVISION: THE ARGUMENT EXAMINED

By THE RIGHT HON. HERBERT MORRISON, C.H., M.P.*

NOTHING essentially party political arises about the controversy on commercial television. It is true that in the House of Commons some spark of political feeling manifests itself from time to time. But the question is one for individual judgment, and if and when the final and substantive issue is submitted to the House of Commons, I think it would be right that the Whips should be taken off. However, public opinion has increasingly expressed itself against commercial television, and it is possible that the Government itself may think again. In which case, the opponents should praise the Government for changing its mind.

As fairly as I can, I will try to summarise the arguments brought forward by the supporters of commercial television, together with my comments.

Commercial Argument No. 1

That the B.B.C. is a monopoly. That a monopoly is bad. That it therefore would be a good thing to subject the B.B.C. to outside commercial competition. (Some extend the argument from television to sound broadcasting—the Lord Chancellor did so—and logically that could follow, as it does in the United States and a number of other countries.)

It is true that when the first Charter was granted by a Conservative Government some years ago, the B.B.C. was established on the basis of a public monopoly, and this policy has been supported up till recently by successive Governments whatever their colour; and by Committees of Enquiry. The term monopoly, however, in this connection is used rather too frequently, and is liable to be misapplied. The monopoly is in the physical means of sound and TV broadcasting, apart from the broadcasting equipment used by certain public services, such as the defence forces and the police, and some taxicab undertakings.

But the B.B.C. has no monopoly of opinion. Indeed, it is specifically forbidden to have editorial opinions of its own. Its news is straight news, without comment. Opinions are expressed

* Lord President of the Council and leader of the House of Commons, 1945–51. Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security, 1940–45. Member of War Cabinet, 1942–45.

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in talks, discussions and debates, but they are the opinions of those who voice them, and not of the B.B.C. Moreover, when controversial talks are given, it is the practice to provide facilities for the expression of other views. It is true that this does not mean—and it could not mean under any system—that any individual wishing to broadcast or televise has the right to do so. It is the duty of the B.B.C. to find the most competent people. Naturally, some people are disappointed, but whether their disappointment is justified or not, disappointments would arise under any system, whether commercially competitive or not. If the advocates of commercial TV convey the impression that the B.B.C. exercises monopolistic influences over opinion, etc., my submission is that the allegation is unsound. In any case, the Government's proposals do little to solve this problem, since the White Paper expressly precludes political or religious broadcasting on commercial systems.

There is, however, another argument about monopoly: this is that people seeking to be employed in visual and sound broadcasting can look only to one employer, namely, the B.B.C.; that this is unfair, for if there were a number of competitive employers, the competitive element applied to fees and salaries would enable the people concerned to earn more money.

This argument in itself does not seem to me sufficiently weighty to overcome the objections to commercial TV or sound broadcasting. It assumes that the B.B.C. is not a good employer. This assumption I am not disposed to accept. There is no doubt room for argument—as with any other employer—that salaries or fees should be higher. Some of the fees in relation to the work done may be regarded as on the modest side, though many of the listeners of moderate means would not accept this view.

By and large, however, I do not think it can be fairly argued that the B.B.C. is a bad employer. It may well be fairly argued that it is not extravagant in the fees it pays, and that it does not go in, for example, for the rather preposterous luxury salaries paid to stars by the film industry.

Is this a bad thing? I think not. Rather do I think it is a good thing. For at the end of the day the public would pay, either in increased licence fees or in a deterioration of the rest of the service. A salary or fee warfare between the B.B.C. and commercial competitors would result in serious financial difficulties for the B.B.C. and possibly for its competitors also, and whilst this would be advantageous to the limited number of people

getting the extra money, it would hardly benefit the listening and viewing public.

Moreover, there are good technical reasons for the physical monopoly of the B.B.C. British broadcasting starts from the unhappy fact that we have a real shortage of suitable frequencies, at any rate at this time, and this in part governed the original decision to place all broadcasting under the B.B.C. A single ownership is the best way in which the limited number of frequencies can be fully used in the public interest. For example, when the Third Programme was instituted, it involved one fewer regional wavelength than would otherwise have been the case.

Commercial Argument No. 2

That commercial television would give the public a wider variety of programmes.

This is a doubtful argument. The number of wavebands is limited, and in so far as some of them were set aside for commercially sponsored TV or sound broadcasting, the possibility of greater variety on B.B.C. services would thereby be limited.

Commercial broadcasting is bound to cramp the style of the B.B.C. in promoting more varied and competitive services of its own. In B.B.C. sound broadcasting there is certainly no dull uniformity. There are three national services (the Home the Light and the Third), all in competition with one another, and the listening public makes its choice.

Moreover, there are the regional broadcasting programmes which not only take account of local circumstances and tastes, but which initiate programmes of their own, often picked up by other regions, or nationally, as, for example, with "Any Questions?", which was started as a local enterprise by the Western Region. The B.B.C. has declared its desire to apply somewhat similar principles in TV. This is largely a question of capital expenditure which has been restricted by successive Governments and the surmounting of certain technical problems.

But nobody can say that the B.B.C. wishes to give one TV programme only: it wishes to give a number, and to introduce such a competitive element as with sound broadcasting. What hope would the sparsely populated areas have of adequate attention from commercial TV, which would only be interested in the big battalions? Indeed, the commercial people may work against regional and local services; they will want to sell a standardised product, and for this they will seek a standardised

public. Moreover, there are technical possibilities, certainly in the field of sound broadcasting, which in the future would enable local stations of limited radius to be established and managed by the B.B.C. or other public authorities.

Commercial Argument No. 3

That apart from the fact that commercial television would be competitive, it would have the strongest incentive to give the public what they want, because its advertising revenue would in a large part be dependent upon the number of viewers attracted.

The considerations arising from this argument are indeed fundamental. It is, of course, a plausible argument for commercial TV, but it is also the strongest argument against it. It would set going that competitive struggle for viewers which obtains in the U.S., and which led to the irreverent treatment of our Coronation Service on American TV, and which was strongly condemned by eminent American newspapers.

The promoters and controllers of commercially sponsored TV would have an interest in disregarding decent standards and promoting programmes of a debased character for the purpose of attracting the maximum audience of all ages. The programmes might well tend to be standardised at a low standard. It is all very well for us to be superior at the expense of American TV and to persuade ourselves that we are a more civilised nation where such things couldn't happen. The fact is that the commercial motive of attracting the highest number of viewers in order to reap the maximum advertising revenue is bound to bring about a grave degeneration in standards. This is why the Government proposes to control the commercialists—which, of course, destroys the argument based on free competition.

The so-called children's programmes in America have brought in elements of bloodshed, crime, and sex, for the children alone are not enough for the advertiser. The severe competition would stimulate a judgment of programmes not upon the basis of what is good, interesting, helpful and amusing. Rather would it cater for the lowest common denominator, the motive again being to attract the maximum number of viewers. The tendency would be for the competition to be of an undesirable rather than a desirable nature. As Mr. Christopher Mayhew says in his recent pamphlet, *Dear Viewer*:

... The programme must appeal to no particular age, no particular taste and no particular intellectual level. It must play down to the lowest common

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factor in us all, treating us as units in a mass, without personality, without individuality. . . . Long experience shows that the perfect formula for a commercial broadcast is variety plus sex plus crime. This is the kind of programme which fewest of us will switch off, even if none of us really enjoys it.

And in the competitive struggle, B.B.C. standards themselves might be endangered. This brings me to:

Commercial Argument No. 4

If the public does not like the commercial programmes, it is not bound to look at them. If it does look at them, it shows that they are meeting a public need. In the end, under competitive conditions, the public will get what it wants.

This argument is another one that really destroys itself. It ignores the considerations I have set out under point number 3. All sorts of devices and stratagems will be used to make the public switch on to commercials, and the objective consideration of what is good in TV programmes will be largely or wholly absent from the minds of those who make the programmes. Frankly, there is here a choice, not between cheap stuff and thrusting highbrow stuff down the throats of the public, but between the responsible and the irresponsible shaping of programmes, between seeking within reasonable limits to improve and develop public knowledge and taste (as the B.B.C. has undoubtedly done with music) and the reverse operation of deliberately promoting crude and objectionable programmes calculated to attract the larger audience.

It is precisely because this vast instrument of broadcasting by vision or sound is so great, so influential, so powerful, that we have to be so careful as to who is in charge of it. The argument that the public in the end will get what they want is not true: they will get what the advertiser wants. And the advertiser will be big business, for the small businessman will not be able to afford the TV time or space. Sponsoring advertisers have interfered with programmes and with broadcasters in other countries, and they would do so here. The man who pays the piper will in the end call the tune. In any case, it will not be the public who will determine the programme or who will decide what the public want. It will be the commercialists, and in so doing, good British standards will be set aside.

Indeed, the Government propose to set up a cumbersome, almost unworkable system of control to obviate dangers which,

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by implication, they admit do not arise with public service broadcasting.

Commercial Argument No. 5

That the commercially sponsored television services will reach the public for nothing. No licence fee will be charged. So why should we stand in the way of the people getting television without charge?

The short answer is that the public will not get it without charge. The advertisers' heavy expenditure on commercial sponsoring will have to be met out of the price paid for his goods and services. In some way or another the public will pay.

Moreover, in so far as commercial TV upsets the finances of the B.B.C., either the B.B.C. will have to cut down the quality of its services or the Government will have to authorise a higher licence fee. So the "money for nothing" argument in this, as in so many other cases, falls to the ground.

On the other hand, if it is necessary for the B.B.C. to have an increased revenue in order to improve the service and give us alternative programmes, then either the Government should cease to take a "rake-off" from the licence fees, or it would be better for us to be willing to pay, say, another pound a year in respect of TV. The existing TV licence fee of £1 is certainly very modest for the advantages we get. Moreover the B.B.C. is said to be treated harshly in the matter of income tax. That should be looked into.

Commercial Argument No. 6

That there is a public demand for commercial television.

Despite the propaganda that has been conducted from certain quarters—some of them interested quarters—there is no extensive public demand for commercial TV. The Gallup Poll registered a strong majority of public opinion against it.

Moreover, there have been expressions of dissent from many representative public personages from various walks of life whose opinions are worthy of respect, and who are certainly not actuated by party political bias. Among them are leaders of the Churches, Vice-Chancellors of Universities and other educationalists, the T.U.C., and men with years of public service behind them such as Lord Halifax and Lord Waverley.

Many of the advertising agencies (though not all) are for it, but it would hardly be right to let views weigh unduly, precisely because they are an interest.

Commercial Argument No. 7

It will encourage trade.

This does not seem to me to be a sound argument. It may divert purchasers from one commodity to another, or from one brand of commodity to another. It may diminish the business of the little man and increase the business of the big man. It is, however, possible that it may increase trade in goods the increased sale of which would prove of no social advantage, but rather the contrary.

Commercial Argument No. 8

A new market for exports will be built (commercial TV, films, etc.)

Judging by the experience of our film industry, this is not very likely, at any rate on an extensive scale. More probably it will be the other way round: we might well be flooded with American TV films.

I think I have set out all, or nearly all, the arguments which are advanced in favour of commercial TV, and I have sought fairly to answer them. Apart, however, from specific arguments either way, I cannot divest myself of a deep conviction that to bring the commercial element into our broadcasting would be to do something which is contrary to the British way of life, which is dangerous to the cultural and even the entertainment standards associated with our country.

Our sound broadcasting and TV are wonderful inventions. They are great amenities, and valuable in disseminating information, education and entertainment. We can, however, have too much of a good thing. I personally feel that TV all day would not be wise. TV and sound broadcasting and the cinema are not adequate substitutes for reading, which is, I am inclined to think, the most valuable single agency of education, particularly self-education, which is of greater value than education which is thrown at us. Too many hours of television would be bad for the children, no less than the grown-ups. It is impossible to do other things while we are looking at TV, and if we had too many hours of it, we might be tempted to divert ourselves from more useful work and occupations, and both children and grown-ups might find themselves neglecting healthy exercise.

And because these great instruments, with all their potentialities for good and evil are so powerful, it is desirable that they should be conducted as a public concern in a public spirit and in the public interest.

MONOPOLY AND BROADCASTING

By LORD BEVERIDGE*

THE Government have announced a policy in favour of commercially sponsored television in addition to anything done by the B.B.C. This policy was described by the Assistant Postmaster General on behalf of the Government last February in the following terms:

The Government adhere to their policy that the B.B.C. monopoly in television shall no longer be allowed to continue. Under certain safeguards and certain conditions an element of competition by television based on advertising revenue shall be permitted.

He added that "as a matter of principle, the Government are opposed to a monopoly in television" but "this does not mean in any way that the B.B.C. are to be interfered with. They will continue to be the sole organisation to draw revenue from licences."

The Government, as will be seen, base their policy on objection in principle to monopoly in broadcasting. There is much to be said against monopoly in broadcasting as in other fields. It was said clearly in the Report of the Broadcasting Committee† of 1949, over which I presided, and in the evidence submitted to the Committee. In the event, however, after considering various ways of formally breaking any monopoly of broadcasting, all but one of the committee of twelve came down against any such attempt, that is to say reported against having more than one broadcasting agency, whether of sound alone, or of sound and sight by television. We proposed at the same time a number of safeguards against the dangers of monopoly—safeguards designed to secure decentralization in practice and to keep channels open for the impact of new ideas. Among our safeguards were the Quinquennial Review of broadcasting described in paragraphs 599-608 of our Report and the Public Representation Service, described in paragraphs 557-564. Both these recommendations were accepted in substance by the one member of our Committee who wrote a Minority Report, that is to say they were unanimous recommendations.

Both of our principal safeguards against monopoly—a Quinquennial Review and a Public Representation Service—

* Chairman of the Broadcasting Committee, 1949; Chairman of Inter-Departmental Committee on Social Insurance and Allied Services, 1941-2.
† Published by H.M. Stationery Office. Cmd. 8116/1951.

have been rejected or watered down by the Government. In place of these proposals of the Committee, they have decided for the one measure that we were all but unanimous in opposing. We rejected any system which would meet the cost of broadcasting either wholly or largely from payment by sponsors wishing to advertise goods or propagate views.

This attitude of the Broadcasting Committee reflects exactly the overwhelming weight of evidence received by the Committee. We gave a list of the important organisations opposing sponsoring or commercial advertising in any form, beginning with the Incorporated Association of Headmasters and the Headmasters' Conference, proceeding through the Labour Party, the Trade Union Congress, the Workers' Educational Association and the Educational Institute of Scotland, to the British Council of Churches and to all Advisory Councils or Committees of the B.B.C. which had expressed any view upon this point. We added that continuance of a ban on commercial broadcasts was advocated even by several of those who had opposed most vigorously the continuance of a broadcasting monopoly, and had made specific proposals for breaking the monopoly in other ways; these included Mr. Geoffrey Crowther and Sir Robert Watson-Watt, and the Welsh Parliamentary Party. As against this, the evidence to us in favour of sponsoring, apart from three individual Members of Parliament, came almost wholly from interested parties. The 'Disinterested Outsiders' who took this side were few and small in importance. The one thing condemned by the overwhelming mass of disinterested evidence given to us three years ago is the thing which the Government now propose to do in regard to television, destined obviously to be the most popular and most pervasive form of broadcasting.

Opposition to sponsored broadcasting does not involve opposition to any use of broadcasting for advertising goods, as any one can learn for himself who takes the trouble to read the Report of the Broadcasting Committee, including its minority notes. One of these minority notes was signed by myself with two other members. It suggested re-consideration of the absolute ban on allowing broadcasting to be used, as it is used in New Zealand, for bringing to the notice of listeners at specified hours goods which they might like to know about as possible consumers. In effect we three saw no reason why broadcasting under public control should not have its specific advertising

periods, as *The Times* has its advertisement columns, as well as its news and editorial columns. Most of our colleagues saw in this proposal of ours the thin end of the wedge of sponsoring and argued against it as not needed; they thought the existing means of advertising goods for sale, in newspapers and on hoardings and so forth, were sufficient by themselves.

Today the practical importance of our minority note lies only in illustrating by contrast the nature of sponsored broadcasting and its incurable evil. Under our minority suggestion the control of all programmes would have remained, as it does in New Zealand, with a public authority interested solely in broadcasting and not dependent on advertising revenue. The policy announced by the Government is to set up alongside of the B.B.C. a television corporation entirely dependent on such revenue.

Television today is the most effective means of communication with the mass of the people that science has placed at our disposal. It is the one medium competing effectively with the cinema in popular appeal. In the right hands it could be used for raising continually the standard of popular entertainment, and for popular education in its widest sense. The Government propose deliberately to put television into the wrong hands for any such purpose. In a television corporation financed wholly by advertising revenue the tune will be called by the advertisers, and the programmes will be designed to get the maximum of popular appeal, irrespective of standards of taste.

The Government propose to throw away deliberately the chance that television gives them of raising the standards of popular entertainment and education. They propose this for no reason that will stand a moment's examination.

The new policy is not needed in order to break a monopoly of broadcasting. If, contrary to the considered conclusion of the Broadcasting Committee, the Government hold that there should be more than one broadcasting authority, to secure competition, they could get this on the lines suggested to us by Mr. Geoffrey Crowther and Sir Robert Watson-Watt, by having two or more corporations competing for a share of licence fees. That would be fair competition. The proposal of the Government is for unfair competition, between an advertisers' corporation with no limit on its resources, and a B.B.C. restricted to whatever proportion of licence fees the Chancellor of the Exchequer is willing to allow.

The new policy is not needed for the reason put forward by

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the Government. It cannot be defended as required to increase facilities for advertising articles of general consumption, food, tobacco, drink, clothes or the like. In a world of rationing, of controls, of taxation and of saving campaigns the Government's concern to encourage expenditure by advertisement in every home is little short of ludicrous.

What strange discussions must have gone on in the inner circles of the Government to lead them to this policy is idle to speculate. They certainly have taken no account of informed serious opinion in the country as a whole. They have still time to abandon the policy. If they cannot make up their minds to do that, they can at least leave the matter, when it comes before the House of Commons to a free vote of the House without the whips. It will be little less than monstrous if they do anything else.

*August 9th, 1953.
Copenhagen.*

TELEVISION AND THE YOUNG VIEWER

By MARY STOCKS*

WHEN a committee under the chairmanship of Lord Beveridge was appointed in 1949 to enquire into the conduct of the B.B.C. and advise on the renewal—or non-renewal—of its charter, it encountered a wholly new problem in the field of radio. It was not merely that the Beveridge Committee was conscious of responsibility to a listening audience more numerous, more radio conscious, and more critical than that which had faced similar enquiries on the occasion of previous charter renewals. It was that a new medium of “entertainment, instruction, and education” had come to stay, that contemporary U.S.A. experience had already shewn this new medium to possess the expansive quality of a picnic fire in a forest of dry brushwood, and that in Great Britain there were signs of an impact on the public no less violent and in the opinion of the committee no less portentous. This new medium was of course television.

Now all the world knows—and that part of it which didn't was recently enlightened by press publicity accorded to the intrusion of a chimpanzee into an American television Coronation sequence—that in the U.S.A. television, like sound radio, is a service rendered to the public by the advertisers of trade commodities. For this service listeners and viewers pay no licence fee, and to the contention that they do in fact pay through the prices of advertised goods, the commercial sponsors reply that expansion of sales resulting from this incomparable new advertising medium so reduces overheads, and thus prices, that the listeners and viewers get their entertainment for nothing and that in addition the national economy receives healthy stimulus. This may or may not be true of the expanding free price economy of the U.S.A. It may or may not be relevant to post-war economic conditions in Great Britain. The matter has recently been under discussion in the correspondence columns of the *Times* and it is the business of contemporary economists to carry it outside the range of argument between interested parties.

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It was, however, a more weighty reason, connected with the quality of broadcast programmes and their impact on the public, which impelled the Beveridge Committee, with the exception of one of its members, to reject commercially sponsored radio, stock and barrel as an alternative, and indeed the only workable alternative that they could envisage, to the continuance of the B.B.C.'s monopoly of sound broadcasting and television. Such was the conclusion resulting from what the *Times* described as "the most exhaustive investigation that has ever been held into a service which has more than once been the subject of thorough official scrutiny".

Alas, as things turned out, it was held in vain. The Labour Government to which it was presented, failed to act upon it in the short time left for a Labour Government to act upon anything. The Conservative Government which inherited it rejected its most vital conclusion. The introduction of commercial television, serving the needs of advertisers and financed by their payments for time on the air, appears now to be government policy. The precise terms under which this new commercial interest shall function are still obscure—so too is the question of whether any such venture can survive the storm of popular opposition which this vaguely outlined project has evoked. However, one result is that all eyes are now on the B.B.C.'s television screen, or rather not so much on the screen as on the intent faces of the silent family group of viewers who surround it, and especially on the younger members of the group. Here is the pioneer generation of newcomers to a world in which television is taken for granted as part of the normal order of the day's doings. Frida Lingstrom, head of the B.B.C.'s children's television programmes, has expressed the thought that is in very many minds today:*

Television is at the moment in its extreme infancy. Those who work in it are making tentative and humble efforts to shape it for the public good. The privilege is great, the responsibility greater, especially where children are concerned and where misdirection may have appalling consequences. The instrument we are using is a marvellously contrived mechanism, the children are living souls. What we do for them or to them is of supreme importance. Cleverness is not enough: technical excellence is not enough. Hard thinking, imagination, and a deep sense of moral consciousness must unite to see that the impetus of this tremendous force is properly directed.

She is certainly right about the responsibility which rests upon those who are operating this new instrument. It is, as she

* See the *B.B.C. Quarterly*, Summer Number, 1953.

says, in its extreme infancy. But unlike most infant industries its infantile technique has encountered a reception so intense that the demands of maturity have been forced upon it. Television masts are sprouting like willow-herb on a bomb site. They are still few and far between in South Kensington and North Oxford; but they are noticeably thick in the suburbs and in the countryside wherever television programmes can reach them. The suggestion that television masts are erected for social show where no television set exists, is sheer nonsense. In the first place television masts are expensive. In the second place their presence attracts visitors to the homes on whose roofs they sprout. In the third place, in so far as television is concerned, the snob value lies rather in not having than in having a set. It is in fact the other way about. There are more sets in operation than masts on show; for within reasonable distance of the transmission an excellent television signal can be obtained with an internal aerial. And wherever a television set is in operation it acts as a magnet to the young.

Is it possible that "surfeiting, the appetite may sicken and so die"? It does not appear to have done so as yet. Perhaps it has scarcely had time. It has certainly not done so in the U.S.A. where it has had more time. From there we hear stories of children reproaching their parents for a loss of caste in school owing to a lack of television facilities at home. We hear of schools extending afternoon school hours in order that children may complete home-work which would otherwise suffer from the counter-attraction of television. We hear, through the pages of *Time* (March 3rd, 1952) of a group of San Francisco mothers who instead of retreating (as most parents are said to do) from the living room during the children's television shows, did the reverse and recorded their impressions. This is what they saw: "Thirteen murders and assorted killings, four sluggings, six kidnappings, five hold-ups, three explosions, three instances of blackmail and extortion, three thefts, two armed robberies, two cases of arson, one lynching, one torture scene and one mis-carriage. One mother clocked a hundred and four gun-shots during a half hour serial; another found sudden death 'shudderingly described' fourteen times in twenty minutes." Their conclusion is thus reproduced by *Time*: "The gun, the gat, the rod, the six-shooter is the prime motivator of most children's television programs. Life . . . is cheaper than a cigarette butt in a gutter. Not one episode, not one character, not one emotion did we see

evoked that the children might emulate to their gain." These results were recorded by the Federal Communications Commission, the official body charged with the granting of licences to commercial radio undertakings and with the control of programme standards. Its controlling powers are in fact nebulous; the business interest to be controlled powerful and reckless. Indeed the relation of the National Association of Broadcasters to the F.C.C. brings to mind the simile of the "tiger chained with cobwebs".

But it must in fairness be admitted that by no means all the children's television shows in the U.S.A. conform to this horrific pattern. The San Francisco mothers clearly had the thick end of the stick. New York mothers might actually have accompanied their young to the television studios of Radio City there to watch their participation in a relatively banal form of entertainment. The young would be marshalled into a brightly illuminated stand in which they themselves would function as part of the show—the cheerful chattering audience for a comic puppet called Claribel—New York's equivalent (but oh! the difference in quality) of our own dear Muffin the Mule. In the intervals of puppetry an experienced radio "uncle" would inspire the children to sing simple choruses in praise of Kellogg's Cornflakes and Colgate's Dental Cream. Now cornflakes are wholesome and the use of dental cream hygienic, and Claribel as an entertainer is nothing if not harmless. And which of our children or grandchildren would not enjoy the experience of being part of a live television show in Radio City? But the fact remains that whatever the quality of the show, these young things are being used as instruments of commercial profit, and the profit motive may lead, as the San Francisco mothers appear to have concluded, into less salubrious channels than Radio City's puppet show. In any case such doings were, by implication, rejected in Great Britain more than a century ago, when even the most philanthropic employers were precluded from exploiting the talents of the very young in the interests of commercial enterprise. But admittedly the temptation to advertisers is very great, for there are certain products on behalf of which children can act as insistent advocates. Breakfast cereals are a good example as Mr. Kellogg very well knows. For even in Great Britain which still denies him access to the air, there are ways of attracting their patronage. For example by the provision of cardboard cut-out pictures on every Kellogg cornflake container: "Collect FALSE

FACES from other Kellogg's CORN FLAKES packets." Naturally one wishes to complete one's collection, so it must be Kellogg's next time and the time after, and mother must be sure to insist on Kellogg's.

Here in Great Britain the television screen is still free from the play of this extraneous motive, and with luck and the effective mobilization of public opinion on the subject it has a fair chance of remaining so. But even with this complication cleared out of the way, television presents some solemn thoughts for parents and teachers. It is generally admitted that things seen are more arresting than things heard or things read. It is true of course that one cannot always be quite sure what a child *does* see. One can quote the authentic incident of the mother who took pot-luck with a twelve-year old boy at a cinema, and was distressed to witness in his company a most unseemly fight between a lascivious millionaire and a reluctant heroine. That was what the parent saw. What the boy saw was the interesting fact that the young woman was driven off (presumably to a fate worse than death) in "one of the new eight cylinder Fords with a left hand drive". But this second-sight does not always work out so reassuringly. The same parent had on another occasion to deal with a terrified child who saw a sea monster with bulbous head and gigantic cyclops eye suddenly emerging from a calm sea and preparing to climb with slow slithy threatening movements into a boat occupied by hapless human beings. What the parent saw was a beneficent diver attempting to dislodge the remains of a wreck from the proximity of a jetty. The purveyor of visual entertainment must be prepared for such differences of perception which undoubtedly constitute an element of risk as well as an occasional safeguard. But there it is.

It is however true that if children see what is actually there to be seen, television as supplied by the B.B.C. to children between return from school and what should, by radio doctor standards be the best time, cannot do them any harm and may with luck do them some good. For the very young there are puppet and cartoon shows varying from the tedious to the inspired. Among the high-lights, Annette Mills's presentation of Muffin the Mute and his fellow players has achieved well-deserved popularity. Muffin would certainly be a "good buy" for an enterprising advertiser in the event of commercial television becoming a reality in Great Britain. He could advertise chocolates, ice creams, toilet requisites, and reproductions of himself.

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This last he has already inadvertently done. For older children the B.B.C. provides more mature and varied fare. There are selected news items, visits to the Zoo, illustrated talks about plants, objects of the sea-shore, manufacturing processes, elementary science, how to construct this, that, and the other. There are Shakespeare plays and dramatised serials: *Treasure Island*, *Treasure Seekers*, *Vice Versa*, *Little Women*, to name only a few. The B.B.C. has recently conducted an interesting piece of research into the effect of its adult serial readings and dramatisations on book sales and library emissions. It would be interesting to follow this up with an enquiry into the effect of its children's television serials on emissions from school and children's libraries. The more we learn about the impact of television on child life, the better.

So all said and done, we haven't much to fear from the television programmes designed by the B.B.C. for children and operated at times presumed to be most suitable for their reception. And educationally, if instruction is suitably sugared with entertainment and no commercial televiser is standing by to steal the audience by the provision of something more arresting, we may have much to gain. But that is not the end of the matter.

Three large questions remain, which cannot be answered in terms of the quality or quantity of programmes provided by the B.B.C. for young listeners at suitable times.

First—the young listeners do not in fact confine their attention to that which is specifically designed for them. Large numbers of parents—one might venture to say the majority—have surprisingly little control over the bed-time habits of their children. Even without television it is difficult enough to get them to bed at hours approved by experts in child health. With television on tap it is well nigh impossible. An attractive 7.30 or eight o'clock programme may precipitate a domestic conflict of wills from which the twentieth-century parent is ill-fitted to emerge with credit. Children do in fact view adult programmes and their determination to do so constitutes an added reason for not going to bed at a reasonable hour. The effect of television on the bed-time habits of the young is another matter which in this connection calls for investigation. But apart from this health aspect, the fact remains that adult television programmes are sometimes horrific and often a-moral, and must indeed remain so if the B.B.C. is to cater for mature adult taste. It is true that the same may be said of the films which the majority of children see week

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by week; but the intensification of the problem by the addition of an even more accessible emotionally disturbing pastime deserves consideration. One cannot enforce an "A" restriction on the television screen.

The second, and perhaps the most frequently expressed doubt concerning the impact of television addiction on the young, lies in the passive nature of television viewing. There they sit, these youngsters, curtains drawn summer or winter, their eyes glued to a small square of light. That this occupation, if the word can be applied to so immobile a pursuit, comes as a boon and a blessing to many mothers, cannot be denied. For a while at any rate the children are being kept quiet and one knows exactly where they are. But would it not be better for them, their morale, their eyes, and their general health, to "dig, hammer, chop and saw", to be out of doors in summer or exercising their own native imaginations in winter? Middle-class parents look back nostalgically to their own youthful enjoyments: the wigwams they made, the streams they dammed, the castles they built in the air and peopled with their own fantasies. How vastly better than this gaping absorption in other people's activities? Yes indeed—but for so many of the young today, as indeed for so many of the young of yesterday, the alternative to television is not constructive occupation stimulated by an educated and comparatively leisured parent, in a spacious home or garden, but aimless ragging in the street or the perusal of "comics". The youth club may be a preferable alternative to television for the minority who can be persuaded to accept a modicum of discipline and the effort of regular attendance. But television is surely a preferable alternative to the out-of-school diversions which have already produced a generation of constant readers for the *Daily Mirror* and *News of the World*. It may be a counsel of despair, but when one is in despair some such counsel is welcome.

And still, behind all these arguments, there remains a third and larger doubt: one which applies not only to the young; one which is torturing certain captious critics who confound the most progressive trends in our world of education. Are we being too much entertained? At any rate nowadays nobody must be bored. If it bores the young to learn the names of rivers and cities or to trace the shapes of countries and continents—well let them make plastacine models of igloos or Swiss chalets; they may pick up a little geography in the process. If the facts of history bore them, dramatise it. If the plays broadcast by the

B.B.C.'s schools broadcasting service fail to hold their interest, then we must think in terms of a schools television service. They will probably learn quite a lot in the course of their journey along this primrose path. But one thing they will not learn; the art of mental concentration on something which does not immediately interest or amuse them. We have yet to experience the civic virtues and economic capacities of a generation which has been reared on the assumption that it must be perpetually entertained.

All these questions then, raise doubts. And doubts connote uncertainty. And uncertainty precludes those of us who reflect upon the present effects and future possibilities of this television impact on the young, from making dogmatic statements about its goodness or its badness; its educational possibilities or its diseducational risks. But on one matter there can or should be no doubt at all. This vastly potent instrument must remain in the hands of those who feel the kind of responsibility which Miss Lingstrom so movingly describes. To entrust it to the hands of those who must inevitably regard the young as instruments of commercial profit, or to subject it to their competition, is surely unthinkable—or would be unthinkable if the Government hadn't thought of it. But the Government must be made to think again.

B.B.C. OR COMMERCIAL RADIO

By STEPHEN TAYLOR, M.D.*

THE Beveridge Committee on Broadcasting, which sat from June 1949 to January 1951, carried out what is probably the most comprehensive and searching enquiry ever made into a public service enterprise. The committee received an encyclopaedic volume of written evidence; it probed its witnesses so thoroughly that some of them described their experience as nearer to the dock than the witness box; its members visited the B.B.C. department by department, and establishment by establishment, reporting in writing after each such visit; finally, a delegation toured broadcasting organisations in Canada and the U.S.A., at the same time sampling their output. The result of all this investigation and the detailed consideration which followed it, gave the Report an authenticity which has been rather lost sight of in the knockabout fight for sponsored television which the advertising interests are now putting up. On the day of publication, I was explaining the conclusions and what lay behind them to a group of journalists. "There's not much of a story in this", they said; "everything you say is just plain common-sense. Why couldn't you have thought up something sensational?"

When I joined the committee, it had been sitting for about nine months, and the preliminary hearings were completed. Detailed cross-examination had not started, and the committee was engaged in formulating a plan for its further studies and investigations.

It would be fair to say that discussion then centred on the whole question of monopoly in theory and in practice. All the theoretical objections to monopoly were very much to the fore, particularly in the mind of our chairman.† So it was clear that we had to explore the B.B.C. to find out how far the theoretical objections were mirrored by experience. Our second quest was for alternative forms of organisation of broadcasting, which would avoid these objections without producing corresponding defects of their own.

At the outset, it became clear that arguments by analogy had

* Member of the Broadcasting Committee, 1951; formerly M.P. for Barnet and Private Secretary to the Lord President of the Council. During the war Surgeon-Lieutenant Commander, R.N.V.R., and later Director of Home Intelligence, Ministry of Information.

† As chairman of the Broadcasting Committee, Lord Beveridge performed a great public service. The acquittal of the B.B.C. was the more significant because of his very critical approach and his searching examination of all witnesses.

little value. Broadcasting is not a variety of press activity, nor is it a branch of the entertainments industry. It can cover some of the same ground, but if its scope is limited to doing in another medium what others are also doing, it is a very imperfect realisation of the potentialities of radio communication.

Broadcasting as we know it, whether in sound or vision, is society's response to the possession of power to transmit a single sound or picture simultaneously and instantaneously into millions of homes. It was the miracle of broadcasting which so impressed politicians and public opinion in the 1920s and 30s that a public service corporation dedicated to the operation of broadcasting for the benefit of mankind seemed the only possible response to so staggering an enlargement of human power.

Today, we take the miracle for granted. We are prepared to consider handing it over to the advertisers, as an agency for competitive warfare among the consumer goods. The case against public service broadcasting must indeed be overwhelming if we are to contemplate such a change. Yet the scrutiny of the Beveridge Committee failed to show any case whatsoever against public service broadcasting, despite a hypercritical approach by the chairman and all the committee members.

The Dangers of Monopoly *

The serious critics of broadcasting monopoly emphasised the potential rather than the actual dangers. When pressed, they had to admit that examples of misuse of power by the B.B.C. were extremely hard to find. The few alleged abuses were examined in the utmost detail by the committee, and in every case the B.B.C. was upheld.

The first hypothetical danger is that an actor or writer may be incapable of performing or getting his work performed on the radio at all if he has ideas which do not coincide with those of the Corporation or its officers. The few examples of alleged black-balling which were produced turned out to be mare's nests.

Sometimes, indeed, it happened that an author or an actor had a dispute with an individual producer or a particular department. From the evidence produced, it was clear there were still openings available inside the Corporation, which could be and indeed were made use of. After a while, time often healed the original breach and the broadcaster was back in his original sphere once more.

Another possibility was the excessive use of tried and popular favourites, to the exclusion of potential talent. From the witnesses, it emerged that the B.B.C. takes immense pains to find new talent from any source. Potential talent is encouraged and used to the best possible advantage. Spontaneous submissions get better treatment from the B.B.C. than from any large-circulation journal or magazine; all scripts are read by two people and doubtful possibles by a third. On the musical side, immense trouble is taken over auditions of unknown artists; the sound and television drama staff are ready to seize upon any remotely possible play by an unknown writer.

By contrast, it appeared that where commercial television was in operation, the stars could command much higher salaries and more constant work as long as they remained at the top of the bill; but there was little encouragement for those on the way up, or those who might have passed their peak but were still capable of useful work. In the fields of serious drama, music, thought or philosophy commercial television offered virtually no market. The commercial broadcaster must at all costs avoid anything which may antagonise any part of his audience; so he has to avoid experiment, novelty, and controversy if it breaks away at all from the familiar and the traditional.

The treatment of minorities by a monopoly was another matter which exercised the committee. Representatives of a number of minority views appeared as witnesses, asking for a greater share of broadcasting time than they already received. Without exception, the committee was driven to the conclusion that the B.B.C. took scrupulous pains to give minorities a fair hearing and even, on occasions, an over-fair hearing.*

The B.B.C. offered no excuse for its predominantly Christian approach to matters of religion; it pointed out that Britain is officially a Christian country, and that most people in principle accept the main burden of the Christian message. At the same time, the rationalists, free-thinkers, and the exponents of pure ethics, all received from the B.B.C. more consideration than they seemed likely to get from any commercial system, though doubtless less than they felt their messages deserved.

Again, by contrast, the treatment of minorities by commercial radio has been pathetic. Any minority which can command the necessarily large sums of money can buy time on the air, provided

* A possible exception was the Unitarians, whose claim to be Christians was hotly disputed by the more orthodox sects.

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it is not likely to upset other powerful advertisers. In practice, this rules out the radio as a medium of forward-looking discussion, of vigorous debate and advanced thinking; as an educative force it is non-existent. The main minority users of commercial radio are comparatively harmless freak religious sects.

Possible Alternatives to Monopoly

Despite the B.B.C.'s survival of the criticism on the grounds of its monopoly, it was felt nevertheless that its potential dangers were so great that every possible alternative must be examined most carefully.

The most ingenious alternative came from Mr. Geoffrey Crowther, whose plan for an A.B.C., a B.B.C., and a C.B.C. has been widely canvassed. He accepted the criticisms of commercial radio as an alternative to a public service, but demanded that there should be some form of competition inside the public service itself. Competition, he pointed out, must be something more than emulation, it must involve a cash reward to the successful and a cash penalty to the failure. He made, therefore, the ingenious proposal that each of his three corporations should get, say, a quarter of the total licence fee, and that the public should vote for the corporation which should receive the extra quarter as a reward for providing the best programmes.

It was immediately pointed out to Mr. Crowther that the extra quarter would undoubtedly be voted by the public to the corporation which provided the best Light Programme, since the B.B.C. Audience Research Organisation has shown conclusively that, in terms of numbers, the Light Programme is invariably the winner. If reward was on a basis of counting heads, the millions who preferred the Home Service or the tens of thousands who preferred the Third Programme would never be catered for. With a truly competitive system and a cash reward, the result would be three Light Programmes.

Mr. Crowther accepted this argument, but countered it by suggesting that each of the three corporations should be compelled by law to run three programmes, to cater for the differing needs of different groups of listeners. At this point he ran into two new difficulties. First, there is the technical limitation on the number of medium wavelengths available inside the European area. The English language must share a very limited number of wavelengths with French, German, Spanish, Dutch, and the

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other European languages, and each European country wants to give its listeners alternative programmes. This rules out any possibility of nine medium-wave stations, broadcasting competitively to the whole of Britain. Mr. Crowther readily accepted the view that programmes available only to single regions could not be considered as nationally competitive.

The second difficulty was that if each corporation was to provide a service of similar quality to that now provided by the B.B.C., licence fees two-and-a-half to three times the present amount would be required. Did the people of Britain feel so strongly about the virtues of competition that they were prepared to pay three times what they paid at present, in order to get it? The Beveridge Committee thought that they did not.

Finally, it was pointed out that a multiplication of programmes would not increase available talent. The B.B.C. takes immense efforts to recruit and maintain talent, but there are human limits to what it can achieve. Broadcasting talent is not inexhaustible, as anyone who listens regularly to radio music-hall performances will realise. It is, to say the least, doubtful whether there is enough talent to maintain nine national programmes at B.B.C. levels. But this is, in a sense, a hypothetical objection, the disproof of which everyone would welcome.

V.H.F.

The only case that can now be argued is to postpone the appearance of the three competing corporations until Very High Frequency broadcasting becomes routine. V.H.F. will provide a sufficiency of wavelengths for a multiplicity of programmes, but to give such programmes a national coverage will involve large capital expenditure on high aerials and powerful transmitters. V.H.F. resembles TV in that it is easily blocked by physical features such as hills; although local V.H.F. broadcasting is cheap enough, national V.H.F. is almost as expensive technically as television.

The advantages to be gained from V.H.F. are a slight increase in quality of sound-broadcast programmes, greater ease in covering small areas where listening is at present difficult for technical reasons, and multiplicity of wavelengths. Against these has to be set the cost of capital expenditure on transmitting stations and on the adaptation or renewal of every radio receiving set throughout the country. In an era of growing television, it seems a doubtful proposition, to say the least. It may well be that sound radio as we know it will never move over to V.H.F.

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Size

Proposals for a break-up of the B.B.C. on a regional basis were examined carefully; indeed recommendations for further regional devolution, local autonomy, and local control by public representatives were made by the committee, and adopted in greater or lesser measure by the Labour Government and by the B.B.C.

But these proposals did nothing to counter the main theoretical objections to monopoly. They reduced the size of the organisation, which is admitted by all to be a good thing, but they did not introduce any financial competitive element.

Commercial Broadcasting

The practical alternative to public service radio is commercial radio, either on its own or combined with a public service system.

The apotheosis of commercial radio is the United States' system. Although this is subject to a number of legislative controls, in practice these amount to nothing at all. If infringements of control are prosecuted by the federal authorities, they are fought with vigour by the defendant commercial firms, and punitive action may be deferred for years as each case works its way up to the Supreme Court. It has become clear that the only effective restraint on commercial radio is the restraint which it imposes in its own self-interest. This amounts to a code of non-offence, such as Hollywood has imposed on itself from time to time. It is, however, less rigorous than Hollywood, since there are no great overseas audiences to be thought of.

The Beveridge Committee concluded that one fundamental objection condemned commercial radio. It introduced into broadcasting an ulterior motive. The commentator, the news reporter, the entertainer, or the religious broadcaster ceases to be doing his job for its own sake. His purpose becomes not primarily to inform the public, to entertain them, to enliven them or to lift up their spirits, but to gather an audience for a sales talk on behalf of soap or cigarettes or cosmetics. Every item broadcast is then ultimately judged by one criterion only; its capacity to attract an audience with the capacity to buy the product concerned.

It is not surprising that the outstanding feature of commercial broadcasting is its monotony. Even Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, the member of the committee who supported commercial radio as an

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alternative to the B.B.C. monopoly, pointed out that of the forty-five sound programmes available in New York "eighty per cent. of the items broadcast, even if different, will be monotonously similar". All peak listening times are occupied by "give-away" programmes, quizz programmes, soap operas, variety, and serial stories.

There is such a multiplicity of programmes available that their effect becomes diluted. Since all are much the same, and virtually none cater for anything but the most superficial taste, there is little serious listening. The deliberate selection of programmes to listen to, as is practised in this country with the *Radio Times*, is quite unknown in America. The radio is a background to life, and an exceedingly poor one at that.

The Demand for Sponsored Radio

One of the surprising discoveries of the Broadcasting Committee was that most advertisers in Britain appeared not to want sponsored radio and television. The demand comes almost entirely from the advertising agencies, and from the manufacturers of a few highly-competitive swiftly-consumed goods, such as soaps, detergents, cosmetics, toilet preparations, and processed foods. The more solid sections of British industry see little chance that sponsored broadcasting would help their sales or their prestige. In so far as they were forced into using the medium by ordinary commercial competition the cost of broadcasting would be passed on to the public in the goods sold.

It is a confusion of thought to believe that competitive commercial radio is wanted by commerce as a whole. Competition has virtues, both theoretical and real, when applied to the production of manufactured articles. It has virtues also where the sale of books, magazines and newspapers is concerned. Such competition is for quality, suitability, and price. But competition for the ear of the public, so that an oblique advertising message may then be poured into it has no virtue whatsoever. It is misuse of a useful economic device.

Conditional Reception

Beside the ulterior motive, there is another fundamental difference between sponsoring and advertising in the press. This may be described as the "conditional" nature of radio advertising. When one buys a newspaper one is not compelled to look at the advertising columns as a condition of reading

the news or the letters. With commercial radio, however, one is compelled to hear or see the advertiser's message inserted between programmes.

When listeners or viewers started switching off between programmes to avoid the "commercials", it became routine to insert advertising messages in the course of the actual performance, whether it was a news reading, a play, or a variety programme. Not content with this device, the advertisers introduced their products into the programme itself; this process is sometimes seen in the cinema, where a firm supplies a film company free with a needed article and the name of the article is clearly visible on the screen. In the film world, this is known as "tie-up".

Objectionable as conditional listening is, conditional viewing is even more unpleasant. The impact of sight is added to that of sound, and the advertiser's raucous agent thrusts himself into one's very drawing-room or parlour, in the same way as the canvassers in the days of depression between the wars.

Commercial TV

One member of the Beveridge Committee, who visited America on the Committee's behalf, had this to say on American television:

The position with television is even worse than in sound because of the high cost of programmes. . . . Comedians perform looking over displays of goods they are expected to boost, and their gags must have special reference to the article paying their fee. Demonstrations in the methods of using publicised articles monopolise programmes, and even news commentators slide from news items into praise of an article or service paying for time with perfect continuity. A drama will be used by an advertiser. He will use every interval and the ending to advance the cause of his wares. So to the annoyance of advertising by sound is added the unpleasantness of advertising by vision.

The commercial television service of the United States stands condemned on two other grounds. First, it has failed to provide quality programmes of any kind other than quizz programmes. This, of course, excludes public spectacles and sporting events, but these are not the creation of radio or television. Secondly, in spite of an immense number of stations, giving no less than seven alternative TV programmes in New York alone, the country as a whole remains uncovered outside the great centres of population. The advertisers are only concerned with television where its impact will be upon a sufficiently wide audience to make it

pay for itself by increased sales. By contrast, the B.B.C. has concentrated on giving a universal public-service coverage to virtually the whole country as a first move, while steadily building up the quality of the single programme available.

It will happen that there are always programmes which fall below top level; the best the B.B.C. can hope to achieve is to please some of the people some of the time. Nevertheless, the standard of outside broadcasting, news reporting, drama, and scientific features achieved by the B.B.C. on television is already outstanding. In world television the B.B.C. was a pioneer, and despite the interruption of the war, that lead has been maintained as far as programme-content is concerned.

Multiplication of television services presents a special problem of its own. Mr. Billy Rose, the American showman and columnist puts the matter thus:

The seven television stations in New York need two-hundred-and-ninety-four new half-hours per week if they are to provide three hours of evening programme, and approximately two hundred of these shows must be of national or at least co-axial cable-wide interest. I soberly submit that there is not now, and never has been, that much top-flight show business at any one time, and that Barnum, Cohen and Ziegfeld, working in shifts, could not have produced that many good shows in a single week if they had the pick of all the entertainment on this bilious green earth.

It has been suggested that lack of funds is preventing the B.B.C. developing television as it should, and that further development can only take place if the resources of the commercial advertisers are tapped. This is nonsense. The licence resources of the B.B.C. from the sale of TV licences have been more than anticipated. The combined TV-listening licence of £2 is absurdly small in relation to the capital cost of a TV receiving set; it is clear that anyone who can afford to hire or buy a television set can afford to pay more than £2 a year for the programmes which it brings. So, if TV needs more money, its proper source is a higher licence-fee, and not a levy on soap-flakes.

A Combined Service

On the basis of reason, logic, and evidence, the proponents of sponsored television have been ousted. Indeed, they know the weakness of their case, for since it became apparent that the evidence was against them, they have changed their ground. Instead of putting sponsored television as an alternative to the

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B.B.C., they suggest that it should operate alongside the B.B.C. to provide an alternative programme.

Fortunately, there is enough experience of combined public-service and commercial radio for us to be able to know what would happen if this were done. In Australia, until 1932 broadcasting was entirely commercial and its quality was deplorable. Then the Australian Broadcasting Commission was brought into being to provide programmes of higher quality. It now has thirty-four stations alongside the one-hundred-and-three commercial stations. The commercial stations provide what is in fact a Light Programme, while the A.B.C. endeavours to meet the need of those who want something on a slightly higher level. Naturally enough, the bulk of the listeners choose the commercial radio and have protested against paying licence fees to support a public service radio system they do not use. As a result, the A.B.C. is now financed directly by the government; so it has lost its independence and become an agency of the Australian government.

In Canada the position is different; commercial programmes are put out by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. In consequence, the Corporation cannot call its time its own; it is chronically short of money and has to sell its peak listening times to commercial programmes as a source of revenue.

There are more ways than one of killing a goose, and as a certain long-term method of getting rid of the B.B.C. and handing over the vast possibilities of money-making which commercial radio presents to the advertising agents, a dual system can be guaranteed to give results.

Radio Advertising

One other proposal must be mentioned briefly. Three members of the Beveridge Committee supported the proposal that the B.B.C. should carry small advertisements, just as a newspaper does in its "smalls" column. It was suggested that certain times of the day should be set aside for this harmless form of advertising.

In the case of television, it was suggested it would be no more unpleasant than the slides shown in the cinemas between programmes. Try as we would, most of us could not see the object in this proposal. It was not asked for by anyone. There are ample advertising media available, and public service broadcasting is not so short of money, nor need it become so

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short of money, as to have to draw on this type of revenue.

Any advertiser worth his salt would at once start trying to give his "small" an entertainment value. A few advertisers might club together to produce a programme in miniature, the better to push their goods. So radio advertising of this kind could become the Achilles heel of British public service broadcasting. The chances are that before long it would lead to full-blown sponsoring.

The Future

The case against commercial radio sponsoring is so overwhelming that it is difficult to see how anyone with even a minimum of imagination, intelligence and integrity can support for one moment the proposal to parcel out the ether for commercial advertisement.

The public service system, as developed in Britain, has achieved more in thirty years than has been achieved by any other medium in a corresponding time. Furthermore, the story is only beginning. The development of television as a medium of education, entertainment and instruction is in its infancy. If we match its enormous technical opportunities with equivalent programme achievement we may have here an instrument of evolutionary progress unmatched since man first learned to use his tongue and larynx for speech. Robert Bridges said this of Broadcasting in his *Testament of Beauty*:

Science comforting man's animal poverty
and leisuring his toil, hath humanized manners
and social temper, and now above her globe-spread net
of speeded intercourse hath outrun all magic,
and, disclosing the secrecy of the reticent air,
hath woven a seamless web of invisible strands
spiriting the dumb inane with the quick matter of life:
Now music's prison'd raptur and the drown'd voice of truth
mantled in light's velocity, over land and sea
are omnipresent, speaking aloud to every ear,
into every heart and home their unhinder'd message,
the body and soul of Universal Brotherhood. . . .

If sponsored broadcasting comes to Britain, the unhindered message of the voice of truth will be drowned in the obliquities of advertising sales-talk.

THE NATURE OF "COMPETITIVE" TELEVISION

By NORMAN COLLINS*

BEFORE attempting any assessment of the merits and demerits of "sponsored" or "commercial" television, it is necessary to go back over the history of broadcasting in this country, and see how the present system of licence-financed broadcasting arose. Nor is this by any means purely an empty and academic exercise. For the correspondence, which during recent months has been appearing in *The Times* and elsewhere, has revealed that a truly profound ignorance envelops the whole subject. Many distinguished critics, both lay and ecclesiastical, have shown themselves all too ready to come forward either as opponents of proposals that have never been made, or as advocates of principles that have not previously been advanced even by those who believe implicitly in monopoly.

Not that this ignorance and confusion need occasion any surprise. Television itself is still so new that it is largely unfamiliar. Despite the dramatic impact of the televising of the Coronation ceremony—and it should be remembered that there was grave opposition in many quarters to the whole idea of the "intrusion" of television cameras in the Abbey—television has not yet fully entered into the consciousness of the nation. The admirably objective Viewer Research Reports of the B.B.C. show, for example, that viewing is at its very least among the professional classes. Indeed, by its nature, television is likely to make its strongest appeal to the young, or to those whose time is not already otherwise fully occupied. Those however, who hold the most rigidly convinced views upon its social consequences, and are often sincerely anxious to the point of real alarm, are for the most part men and women of mature years and busy lives. It is even probable that a high proportion of those who have invoked the authority of their name or office to denounce the freedom of the air have either never seen television at all, or have watched it no more than in the most cursory and perfunctory fashion. In consequence, for most of the time, a

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note of singular unreality has hung over the whole discussion. It has been—and still is—rather like debating the case for a free press with a thoughtful Polynesian whose only experience in the matter has been a tattered piece of newspaper that once chanced to drift upon his virgin coral foreshore.

Indeed, before we are through with this consideration of the merits and demerits of "competitive" television, we may even find ourselves forced to consider the parent question of the merits and demerits of television itself. And it is here that some knowledge of the legal and political development of British broadcasting and of the changing public attitudes towards monopoly control are so important. For broadcasting, whether in the incomplete form represented by sound radio, or in the completed form of television, was quickly recognised to possess an impact which would affect society as a whole. A new means of communication had been born; and the conjecture and dubiety that surrounded its cradle had not been equalled since the birth of printing itself. Moreover, the whole process of growth has been an exceedingly rapid one. Broadcasting in any form is little more than a generation old. The first broadcasting licence in the United Kingdom was issued as recently as 1922 to a commercial body known as the British Broadcasting Company, and the licence carried with it monopoly rights in the new medium. In 1923, a Committee under Sir Frederick Sykes recommended, though not without severe misgivings, that the monopoly licence should continue for a further two years. Then, in 1926, a Committee under the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres "agreed that the United States system of free and uncontrolled transmission and reception is unsuited to this country and that broadcasting must accordingly remain a monopoly" but, apprehensive of the eventual powers of the lusty infant, recommended that the limited company should be converted into a Royal Charter Corporation. This Charter ran for ten years. And, when the time came, a third Committee—under Viscount Ullswater—accepted the monopoly principle without further question, and recommended the renewal of the Charter for another decade. With subsequent renewals, the Charter remains in force today.

Here it may be remarked that it is one of the most engaging aspects of the British character that we tend to become intensely loyal to anything, good or bad, that we have known since childhood. It is because we are ready to accept what is already

established that we enjoy—often at considerable cost to ourselves—a degree of stability that is unknown among more politically imaginative peoples. We are a race of highly conservative revolutionaries. The constitutional position of the Church of England and of the House of Lords bears witness to the fact. Certainly during the Second World War, the B.B.C. engaged a large part of the public's affection. But in 1923 when Sir Frederick Sykes' Committee was examining sound broadcasting, they suffered no inhibitions deriving from long familiarity. Any idea of the perpetuation of the broadcasting monopoly was repugnant to them. They wrote:

the Government should keep its hands free to grant additional licences, and should consider various alternatives for the operation in the future, either by the Government or by other authorities, of local or relay stations in addition to large stations.

It was not, however, until 1949 that the fundamental question of the monopoly of broadcasting—which by then had come to include television as well as sound radio—was again given serious consideration. The occasion was the setting up of yet another committee, this time under the Chairmanship of Lord Beveridge. And though it is possible to disagree with the findings of that committee—and one member, Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, disagreed even to the point of issuing a minority report—it is impossible to resist admiration for the conscientiousness, the patience and the sense of responsibility with which their task of enquiry was conducted. The report of that committee is a truly remarkable document. It records that during the course of their investigations the committee were bombarded with no fewer than 1,000,000 written or spoken words from outside sources, as well as nearly 640,000 words from the British Broadcasting Corporation itself. No fewer than twenty-one pages in the report are specifically devoted to the issue of monopoly, and to the examination of alternative broadcasting patterns. These pages are, in essence, a study of the B.B.C.'s reiterated claim that "if the public service of broadcasting is to be effective, it must remain a monopoly". And it must be disquieting to confirmed monopolists to discover that the B.B.C. in its own apologia was guilty of special pleading and distortion of the facts. "Not historically accurate" is how Lord Beveridge's committee describes the B.B.C.'s account of previous endorsements by government committees of the monopoly claim. And it is significant to note that the Beveridge Committee found not only

a measure of public acknowledgement of "the prestige and position the B.B.C. has won for itself in the world" (here I am quoting from the B.B.C.'s own description of its status), but also "a substantial body of serious opinion challenging monopoly itself".

The challengers were of many kinds, representing many interests. They ranged from the Radiowriters' Association, British Actors' Equity Association and The Music Directors' Association (none of which liked a situation which gave them only one employer, and therefore an arbitrary paymaster), through such bodies as The Radio Industry Council (which was unconvinced that the B.B.C. was energetic enough in its development of television and accordingly wished to divide the control of television from that of sound radio) and The Radio and Television Retailers' Association (which desired a "commercial" system existing alongside the B.B.C.), to the Liberal and Fabian Research Groups (which deplored the elephantine size of the B.B.C.—number of staff 12,000—which in the words of the Liberals now represents "the biggest single bureaucracy in the world concerned with the propagation of ideas"). Associated with these trade or professional bodies—some disinterested, some not—were a number of individuals including Mr. Geoffrey Crowther and Sir Robert Watson-Watt who attacked the basic concept of monopoly, and argued the counter case by drawing attention to the dangers of totalitarianism. "The only ultimate safeguard of liberty," they wrote, "lies in diversity."

Indeed, faced by such a formidable mass of opposition to the continuance of the monopoly, the Beveridge committee could scarcely have been expected to do other than re-consider the B.B.C.'s basic position. And the report sums up the committee's findings in these words:

There are dangers arising from the mere size of such a Corporation. There are dangers of Londonization. There are dangers of remoteness, of self-satisfaction, of secretiveness. There is a danger of slowness in exploring new, unfamiliar techniques. There are dangers of favouritism and injustice in treatment of staff or performers, each of them an evil in a monopoly more serious than it would be in a concern with rivals. There is the danger, finally, that when a sense of mission such as animates the B.B.C. is combined with security of office, it may grow into a sense of Divine Right.

In view of such unanimous conclusions as to the possibility of evil, it might have been anticipated that the Beveridge committee would recommend the summary termination of the

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mischievous-making monopoly. The majority report, however, ultimately did nothing more than recommend the appointment of a Director of Public Representation, and it made its recommendation in these words:

If broadcasting without competition is to be made and kept as good as possible, if mistakes, inadequacy and bias, are to be discovered and corrected rapidly and certainly the need is somehow to provide a channel, not only for popular but also for expert criticism from outside. . . . The more carefully reasoned the criticism, the more tiresome the interruption may appear.

The majority report went on to observe that "there is no confession of weakness so revealing as the desire to be above criticism"; and the fact cannot be overlooked that more than two years after the publication of the Report, the B.B.C. has still not made this one appointment to which the Committee attached such key importance. Indeed, to have expected the B.B.C. to welcome such public representation would be as absurd as to have expected the Trojans, knowing the nature of its contents, to have welcomed the introduction of the Wooden Horse.

But even though the majority report appears strangely schizophrenic in its grave apprehensions about the effects of monopoly and in its easy complacency about having found a foolproof solution of the problem, the minority report was strikingly single-minded. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd went a great deal further than merely recommending the appointment of a new administrative officer whose functions if they were to be effective at all would inevitably conflict with those of the other Directors and ultimately of the Director-General himself. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd listed his objections to "the evils of monopoly" under four heads: "size and unwieldiness"; "hindrance of development"; "only one employer"; and "excessive power". And he derived no comfort from the classic statement of the first Director-General of the B.B.C. who ascribed the success of the B.B.C.'s "policy of moral responsibility" specifically to "the brute force of monopoly". Mr. Selwyn Lloyd was for immediately breaking up the B.B.C. monopoly, the dangers of which he believed were "both insidious and insufficiently appreciated by the public".

It was against this background of argument for and against the principle of monopoly—and even the most ardent supporter of monopoly could not lightly dismiss the profound misgivings voiced in the *Majority Report*—that in 1952 the White Paper of

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the Conservative Government enunciated the new policy that "in the expanding field of television, provision should be made to permit some element of competition". And it is in turn against the background of this statement, that there can be useful discussion of the merits and demerits of alternative systems, including "sponsored" and "commercial" systems.

In the first place, there emerges the whole question of financing the operation of a "competitive" television service. Without question, the *easiest* method of financing television is to impose a tax on every home that has a receiver, prosecute those who don't pay, and then hand over a generous proportion of the proceeds to one concern, telling them to get on with the job. That is "the brute force of monopoly" with a vengeance; it does, however, undeniably possess the twin merits of providing a lot of money—in the case of the B.B.C. about £13 million *per annum*—and of providing it regularly. It is a broadcasting accountant's day-dream. And any variant of this pattern of broadcasting has to be financed somehow. If the government, intent upon the principle of "competition", were merely to split the B.B.C. asunder and divide sound radio from television, or set up a rival "public service", i.e. licence-financed corporation, or corporations, the money would still have to come from the listeners and/or the viewers; and the more corporations there were, the more the public would have to be taxed to support them. The alternative is a direct Government grant drawn from general Treasury funds—about as unappetising a proposal as any Chancellor of the Exchequer could find himself contemplating. Therefore, it is not unreasonable that revenue from paid advertising should have become regarded by supporters and opponents alike as the obvious answer. (Even those who are opposed to the idea do not regard it as impracticable, merely as undesirable.) It is precisely here, however, that the major ignorances and confusions prevail. For the practice of advertising in radio, though it is the one foundation of the American system and is accepted elsewhere throughout the Commonwealth, is totally unknown in this country. Even the basic methods that are employed are either misunderstood or misrepresented, and the words "sponsored" and "commercial" are all too frequently used with utter indiscrimination as though they were synonymous—with disastrous results to the ensuing argument.

Let us therefore be specific and precise. By "sponsoring" is

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meant a system whereby the advertiser (or more often his agent) devises and himself produces programmes which are calculated to "sell" his particular line of goods, and the television service merely makes a charge for providing the means of transmission. The immediate advantage of this system is that it spreads the costs of the overall production of a television service over a large number of separate units; and the immediate disadvantage is that it jeopardises the editorial planning and control of the service as a whole. "Commercial" television, on the other hand, is "commercial" only in the sense in which the entire press of this, and every other country, with the exception of the U.S.S.R., is already "commercial". That is to say that the television service exists within its own right, seeks to earn for itself the liking and confidence of the public, and then proceeds to sell a certain proportion of its total transmission time for advertisement, precisely as the newspapers now sell a certain proportion of newsprint space. Here, the immediate disadvantage of such a system is primarily that of initially financing so considerable an operation beneath one roof. But the immediate advantage is that the conduct of the service remains in the hands of those who are professionally interested in the shape, texture and purpose of the service as a whole. There is, moreover, no confusion of loyalties; the advertiser seeks to make his advertisements as attractive as possible, thus remaining faithful to his shareholders, and the broadcaster seeks to make the broadcasts as attractive as possible, thereby remaining faithful to his own interests.

The least, and the utmost, that can be said for a national system of competing "commercial" services is that the overall standard of programmes will be neither higher nor lower than the overall standard of the editorial content of the national press. By some this may be taken as less than a sufficient guarantee. For it would be ingenuous to pretend that certain aspects of certain sections of the press do not from time to time arouse considerable anxiety among the more thoughtful. Indeed, anxiety was widespread during the copious reportings of the necrophilious antics of a recent notorious murderer; But it would be equally ingenuous to abandon the whole principle of a free press simply because certain manifestations of freedom are not more patently inspiring and exalted. It is simply the alternative to freedom with all its inevitable abuses that is so profoundly frightening. The control of culture by a national committee is not unthinkable. Indeed, in all totalitarian states it has not merely been thought

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of, but actively practised. And under the existing Charter of the B.B.C., the United Kingdom falls strictly within the totalitarian framework. Everything that we hear on our radio sets or see in television—news, opinions, plays, music, or light entertainment—has been carefully selected because the B.B.C. thinks that they are good for us to hear or see, or as carefully excluded because the B.B.C. fears that they might be bad.

George Orwell had a mind for exploring the darkness of totalitarian terror. The B.B.C. is not in the least terrible: it is nice and benevolent and well-intentioned. But the B.B.C. still has its Director of the Spoken Word. And so long as the B.B.C. remains a monopoly, this otherwise inoffensive Director becomes by definition a national dictator. It is the desire to abolish these individual Dictatorships of the Directors, and their sum total the great dictatorship of the B.B.C. as a whole, that has led to the Conservative Governments' policy of "competition." Some of us, for purely aesthetic reasons, may still prefer a television service that is free from advertisement: few of us for purely political reasons, would admit that we prefer the alternative.

BROADCASTING IN OTHER COUNTRIES

By LORD SIMON OF WYTHENSHAW*

I

WHAT can we learn from the experience of other countries in broadcasting, particularly as regards the present controversies as to monopoly and commercial broadcasting? In order to draw useful lessons from foreign experience it is necessary in the first place to summarise the essentials of the B.B.C. constitution. The constitution was first adopted by a Conservative Government in 1926 which accepted the recommendations of a committee under the chairmanship of the late Lord Crawford. The essentials of the constitution outlined by the report are:

The B.B.C. to be a public corporation with a monopoly of broadcasting.

Controlled by part-time Governors responsible for seeing that broadcasting is carried on as a public service in the national interest for the information, education and entertainment of the people.

Within these limits the Governors to have the maximum independence.

Adequate finance to be provided from licence fees.

Sponsoring prohibited.

This constitution continued unchanged and unchallenged for nearly 30 years. It has been consistently supported by all Governments, who have appointed Governors of integrity and experience, have respected their independence, and have given the B.B.C. a revenue adequate to enable it to do a first-rate job. The B.B.C. is also fortunate in that there is a population of 50 million people living in these small islands. This has two results:

(a) That the cost of transmission is low compared with countries like the U.S.A., Australia, and Canada, where distances are measured by thousands of miles instead of hundreds.

(b) That all the talent among 50 million people is easily available in London.

* Chairman of the B.B.C., 1947-52.

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During my five years as Chairman of the B.B.C., I spoke to hundreds of people from all parts of the world where serious broadcasting is carried on. Some of them said that the B.B.C. was perhaps not quite as good as it thought it was; but they were practically unanimous in saying that the B.B.C. was the best public service broadcasting system in the world. And, while many British institutions are among world leaders: for example, parliament, the judiciary, the police, the universities, the civil service, I do not think that in the case of any of these services there would be the same kind of general agreement that the British institution is the best in the world as there is in the case of the B.B.C.

There was, I think, no serious criticism of the B.B.C. monopoly till the Beveridge Committee began to take evidence. That evidence did include a number of criticisms of the monopoly from various quarters, and there is little doubt that Lord Beveridge was himself hostile to the monopoly in the early days of the enquiry. But, after a very thorough study of all the possible alternatives, the committee decided by a majority of ten to one in favour of a continuance of the monopoly on practically the same lines as before.

The Labour Government intended to carry out the recommendations of the Beveridge report, but went out of office before they could act. I think it true to say that the Conservative Government had a similar intention in the early months, but in January 1952 a surprising revolt broke out among the Back Bench Conservatives demanding the break-up of the monopoly, by the institution of competitive commercial television. The Government introduced a White Paper acceding to this demand in May 1952. The debate has raged ever since and the whole matter is expected to come up again in parliament in the course of the next few weeks. There is still time to think.

II. THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES

We are now in a position to consider what lessons can be learnt from broadcasting in other countries. Let us begin with the European democracies. Nearly all of them founded broadcasting corporations at about the same time as the B.B.C. was created and on a similar pattern. Nearly all have a single Director-General, responsible either to part-time Governors or directly to a minister. Nearly all of them are instructed to broadcast for the information, education and entertainment of the people. They

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are all monopolies; with the curious exception of Holland, where broadcasting is divided between four stations owned by political parties. They all draw the great bulk of their income from licence fees or government grants.

Not one of them has had continuously over the whole period of its existence advantages comparable to those the B.B.C. has enjoyed. Germany began well and in the early days was probably as good as the B.B.C. Then came Hitler and the war. Germany, having been deprived of her wavelengths, was the first country to develop V.H.F. with outstanding success and has already built up a good broadcasting system which in the English zone closely follows B.B.C. lines. The licence is £2 for sound and £5 for television.

In the American and French zones there is no sponsorship but some "controlled advertising". This means short advertisements inserted between programmes. Both programmes and advertisements are controlled by the broadcasting authority.

In France the constitution is roughly on B.B.C. lines, but the Director-General is responsible to a minister and the rapid changes of Government have been unfortunate. France has not had an income corresponding to that of the B.B.C. At one time Radio Normandy was commercial, but that is no longer the case.

Italy is rebuilding after the war very much on B.B.C. lines, including a Third Programme similar to ours. There is a very small amount of advertising on the air strictly controlled by the public service broadcasting organisation.

The broadcasting systems of Germany, France, and Italy were practically destroyed by the war. The process of rebuilding has been expensive and difficult and has involved the charging of higher licence fees than in Britain. Yet these three countries have confined themselves to public service broadcasting, financed by licences, and only in the American zone of Germany and to a very small extent in Italy has any form of commercial broadcasting been allowed.

The smaller countries with a population under ten million have the great disadvantage that, even though in almost all cases the licence fee is substantially higher than in Britain, the aggregate income is not sufficient to enable them to spend anything like the same amount of money per hour of broadcasting as in the case of the B.B.C. And the smaller countries inevitably have fewer high-class artists whose services they can command. For instance, Switzerland has one-tenth of our population; if we

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had the same proportion of artists per thousand of the population, the B.B.C. would have ten times as much talent available as Switzerland.

Luxembourg, Monaco, and Andorra have commercial stations which earn their living by sponsored broadcasts to other countries. Greece, Eire, and Austria allow advertising on the air but very little of it is sponsored by advertisers; nearly all of it is controlled by the broadcasting organisation.

To sum up, there is very little *sponsored* radio allowed in the European democracies, i.e. practically no commercial programme in the American sense. In the few countries which allow some advertising only approved advertisements are read on the air between programmes, and programme material is controlled by the radio organisation. Apart from these exceptions, and in spite of their financial difficulties, all the smaller democracies have unanimously and firmly refused to have anything whatever to do with commercial broadcasting. That is the first lesson to be learnt from these countries.

DECENTRALISATION OF BROADCASTING IN SWITZERLAND

As regards monopoly, I was much interested in studying Swiss broadcasting to find the lengths to which they carry decentralisation. Switzerland has a population of under five million; it is divided into three language regions and 22 cantons which insist on great independence. Switzerland is politically the most decentralised country in Europe, and as a natural result its broadcasting is also more decentralised than in any other country. There are six regional radio societies which are the basis of Swiss radio. They produce six regional programmes; *there is no national programme.*

An interesting example is that of Berne. Here we have a small area with a population of a few hundred thousand. The Berne Radio Society is fully under local democratic control. Any resident in the region can become a member on payment of francs 10; the members elect the Governors; the Governors appoint the Director and the rest of the staff. Subject to finance and very generalised directions from the Federal broadcasting corporation, the regional Governors have full and uncontrolled responsibility for the programmes.

In Britain there is a good deal of devolution of responsibility to the six Regions, and some added independence has been given to the National Regions (Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland)

in the new Charter. But the staffs of the National Regions are still appointed and can be dismissed by the B.B.C., the Governors of the National Regions are far from having the same degree of responsibility as have the Governors of Berne Radio Society. If it is desired to break up the monopoly of the B.B.C., then I suggest that this can be done very simply by giving the six Regions the same kind of responsibility and independence as the regions have in Switzerland. This would mean that there would be a board of governors in each Region appointed not by the B.B.C., but either by the national Government or by election in the Region. They would appoint their own controller, their own programme staff, and their own studio engineers. I have given this matter much thought since leaving the B.B.C. and I think this change would undoubtedly conduce to variety in broadcasting and would be a definite advantage to the whole national system. I am satisfied that the Governors of the six regional Swiss radio societies have just the same sense of responsibility for the information, education, and entertainment of the people, just the same desire to maintain high standards, as the Governors of the B.B.C.; and I am confident the same would be true of Governors similarly appointed for our Regions. The B.B.C. would have to allocate grants to the Regions; otherwise, as far as I can see, they could safely be left completely free. If Berne can do the job on a high standard, dare anybody suggest that Scotland or the North could not do equally well? Would it not be well worth while for the Government to send a mission to Switzerland to investigate the decentralisation of radio and to make recommendations as to whether some similar decentralisation to the Regions in Britain would be desirable, and if so, on what lines?

III. THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

I have paid many visits to the U.S.A., usually in connection with some special interest; I have always been stimulated and learnt much. When I was appointed Chairman of the B.B.C. I read all the available books on American radio and found that they unanimously took the view that the Americans have the best system of radio and the best broadcasting in the world. The following quotation is typical: "Because radio is operated for profit and because it is highly competitive, the quality and variety of most of the programmes in this country can be equalled nowhere else in the world."

I went to America not to find out what was wrong with American radio but to try to find what was good. I listened and viewed a lot, I talked to all kinds of people. It gradually became clear to me that the difference between public service broadcasting, as in the B.B.C., and commercial broadcasting, as in the U.S.A., is fundamental and far-reaching. The Governors of a public service broadcasting concern are responsible for spending the available resources to produce what is in their judgment the best broadcasting, not only for the entertainment, but also for the information and education of the people; not only for the majority, but also for all significant minorities. In commercial broadcasting the Directors are responsible to their shareholders to secure the best return on their invested capital, which means seeking the maximum audience for every broadcast, and disregarding minorities.

Broadcasting is controlled to some extent by the heads of the networks and stations, to a much greater extent by the sponsors, and by the advertising agents. The major responsibility of all these four groups is to make profits for their shareholders. Some of the heads of national networks and of local stations are men with ideals, who would, I am sure, if they were Governors of the B.B.C. produce much the same programmes as we do. Others are purely out for profit. Dr. Angell, formerly President of Yale and educational adviser to one of the biggest networks, has stated that the local stations are usually owned by hard-boiled small-town business men who are unashamedly out for all the profit they can get. The sponsors are usually powerful business firms who undertake advertising for the sole purpose of selling their goods. Their shareholders would have a legitimate grievance if they did not make every effort to get the largest audience for every broadcast.

As regards the advertising agents who are responsible for the bulk of the programmes, it has been said that Americans would consider any advertising agent who had any motive beyond the profit of his sponsor to be crazy. He would certainly be out of business in a very short time.

The Government, recognising the danger of uncontrolled broadcasting for private profit, appointed a commission known as the Federal Communications Commission (F.C.C.) whose task it is to insist that all broadcasting shall be of decent standards, and that the programmes shall contain a reasonable amount of public service broadcasting. The F.C.C. does its best but its

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efforts are opposed by the National Association of Broadcasters (N.A.B.), the trade association of the broadcasting industry, which had in 1948 a budget of 750,000 dollars, many times more than the F.C.C. The N.A.B. professes the highest ideals and harps constantly on "freedom" which it regards as synonymous with commercial broadcasting. The Broadcasters' Creed, published by N.A.B. in 1948, states that "It is our obligation to serve the people in such a manner as to reflect credit upon our profession, and to encourage aspiration towards a better estate for all mankind. . . ." Among other standards of practice is the following: "Good taste should prevail in the selection and handling of news. Morbid, sensational or alarming details, especially in connection with stories of crime or sex, should be avoided."

I was not able to find any evidence that N.A.B. brought any pressure to bear on its members, apart from the publication of idealistic documents, to observe high standards in practice. Two ex-Chairmen of the F.C.C. told me that what the radio industry wants is that N.A.B. should keep Congress quiet, fight the F.C.C., and leave the industry completely alone. That, they said, is what N.A.B. is in fact doing today.

Here is an example of what is happening in television sent by a parent living near Washington in 1952:

The programmes on television for children are, with few exceptions, quite dreadful. Like other parents resident here I am faced with the eternal problem of preventing my children from watching blood and thunder stuff which has the immediate effect of keeping them awake half the night. What its long-term effects would be I shudder to think! I note that today a thousand mothers in the little town I live in sent a protest to the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters, saying, "Two to four hours of visual education in violence and crime are refuting our own efforts to protect the standards of our homes".

The radio critic of the *New York Times* has written:

The effect upon America of a perennial, irresistible, inescapable outpouring of mediocrity from television will be not to weaken our moral fibre, but to weaken our intellectual fibre to the point where we can no longer function effectively as a democracy. Our stake in television is intellectual freedom.

I went to America with an open mind, hoping that some aspects of sponsored radio might be of interest and value to us. I found two fields in which the U.S.A. was ahead of us. First, America has a number of first-rate commentators on public

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affairs who appear regularly and become very expert. The B.B.C. has not felt able to allow regular commentators on public affairs because they would become too powerful. That is a real disadvantage of monopoly. Second, the U.S.A. has found that in large cities a station can be run profitably to play continuously classical music on discs. The audience is large enough in cities of over two million to make this profitable. Music on discs, except for a very small weekly ration is prohibited by the Musicians' Union in Britain.

Apart from these two special cases and in spite of the immense amount of money spent in the U.S.A. on radio and TV, I found very little that we could usefully copy. I concluded that:

(a) There was a great deal of light entertainment, some of it of very high quality. The bottom 25% of the people enjoy it and are well entertained. The radio does nothing to make them wiser or better citizens of the U.S.A. or of the world. Its influence is almost certainly the reverse.

(b) The sensationalism and excitement of radio is certainly bad for children. This has become worse in recent years. The influence of television has proved to be far greater and more dangerous than that of radio.

(c) The elite (the top 25% culturally and educationally) do not listen much except to the news, some high-class commentators, and in large cities classical music on discs.

My final conclusion was that if we do not want a disastrous lowering of standard of broadcasting in Britain we should avoid sponsored broadcasting like the plague.

IV. THE DOMINIONS*

The experience of our older Dominions is perhaps more important for us in this country. Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa all have immense areas, which are expensive to cover with broadcasts, and relatively small populations, from which it is difficult to obtain adequate licence revenues. All four Dominions have therefore felt compelled to seek additional revenue from advertising. The B.B.C. has been much more fortunate. With a large population in a small island our income from licences has hitherto been adequate for a first-rate broadcasting system at an almost ridiculously low cost to the listener.

* I am indebted to *The Times* for permission to reprint this section.

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There are interesting differences in the way in which the four Dominions have tackled the problem. Australia and Canada both have national public service systems similar to the B.B.C. In each case there are a number of independent commercial stations competing with the national system, almost exactly as proposed in this country.

There has recently been a Royal Commission on broadcasting in Canada, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Vincent Massey, the present Governor-General. It reported that:

We were particularly impressed by the fact that few of the representatives of the private stations who appeared before us recognised any public responsibility beyond the provision of acceptable entertainment. The general attitude was the Government might, if it chose, subsidise cultural programmes, but that the private stations must be left free to pursue their business enterprise, subject only to limitations imposed by decency and good taste. [Further] We have observed that some of the wealthiest of the private stations have the lowest standard in programmes, and show serious neglect of their obligations as part of the national system.

But the most serious trouble of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is competition from American sponsored radio. In Toronto, for instance, people can receive the Buffalo stations perfectly well. A member of the C.B.C. writes:

It is a bit discouraging when, say on a Thursday night the C.B.C. in Toronto is carrying a good full length drama excellently produced, Buffalo carries three rather trashy mystery shows—and about three-quarters of the Toronto audience appear to watch Buffalo. This pressure is bound to affect our thinking and planning a good deal, but we are fighting hard to keep decent standards and ensure that television does make a real contribution to Canadian life.

Conditions in Australia are on the whole very similar to those in Canada. Private stations go all out for light entertainment, leaving the responsibility for serious broadcasting to the national system. Most observers agree that the competition of the continuous light entertainment provided by the private stations greatly reduces the number of persons who listen to the serious broadcasts of the national systems, and has an unfortunate tendency to cause the national systems to lower their standards in order not to lose too many listeners.

South Africa

The example from which most can be learnt by Britain is that of South Africa. South Africa up to 1947 had a public service monopoly of broadcasting; their organisation was

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similar to that of the B.B.C. In that year the Government decided, with the agreement of the Governors of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, that in order to increase the revenue it was desirable to introduce commercial broadcasting. They wisely decided to send the Director-General of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, Mr. Gideon Roos (a Rhodes Scholar) to investigate public service and sponsored broadcasting in the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. He reported that independent commercial radio competing with a national public service system would cause very serious damage to that system, but that a commercial network *under the control of the national system* would provide large additional revenue and could be so managed as not to cause serious damage to public service broadcasting. Advertisements would be accepted by the corporation and inserted both before and after broadcasts; the broadcasts themselves would be produced solely by the corporation. The system of dealing with advertisements would be exactly the same as in the press, and the advertisers would have no influence whatever on the actual broadcast.

This policy was adopted, has now been at work for four years, and is regarded in South Africa as an outstanding success. There has been a great increase in revenue and a great increase in the total amount of listening, and it is understood that standards of public service broadcasting have been maintained. If advertisements are to be accepted on British radio, then the experience of South Africa as to the best method of doing this without lowering standards may be of the first importance.

A Unanimous View

There has recently been a meeting in London of leading representatives of all the Dominion broadcasting organisations. I had an opportunity of meeting them, and they unanimously and strongly took the view that the introduction of independent commercial television, as proposed in the new Charter, would so lower the standards of broadcasting in this country as to be a calamity, not only for Britain but for the whole Commonwealth which has always looked up to the B.B.C. as an example of how a national broadcasting system should operate. On the other hand, they held that commercial broadcasting under the control of a national system, as in South Africa, had the advantage of bringing in a large extra revenue, and could be so controlled as

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not seriously to affect standards of programmes or numbers of listeners to the public service programmes.

V. CONCLUSIONS ON COMMERCIAL BROADCASTING

I have attempted to survey the main features of the broadcasting systems of the European democracies, the U.S.A., and the Dominions. My conclusions as regards commercial broadcasting are:

In the U.S.A. commercial broadcasts have practically a monopoly of the air. The result is that the cultural and educational standards of broadcasting are on the average lower than in any country with a public service broadcasting system.

Australia and Canada have a dual system including a public service corporation and many independent commercial stations; the latter concentrating exclusively on light entertainment. This reduces the number of listeners to serious broadcasting and tends to lower the standards of the public service broadcasting corporation.

South Africa has also a dual system, but the advertisements are controlled by the public corporation. Under these conditions the acceptance of advertisements in order to increase revenue is said to have little effect in lowering broadcasting standards.

The European democracies, although in much greater need of money than the B.B.C., have (with insignificant exceptions) refused to have anything to do with commercial broadcasting. I should add that India and Pakistan have no commercial broadcasting. It is a depressing thing that with negligible exceptions commercial broadcasting is confined to the English-speaking world.

It would indeed be a tragedy if Britain, which led the world in public service broadcasting, should be the first European democracy to hand over part of its programmes to persons whose dominant aim would be their own pecuniary profit.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AS REGARDS MONOPOLY

I recommend that serious consideration should be given to breaking up the B.B.C. monopoly by making the Regions fully independent of the B.B.C. on lines similar to those on which the regional radio societies have been operating successfully for many years in Switzerland.

PUBLIC CONTROL OF COMMERCIAL TELEVISION

By ERNEST DAVIES, M.P.*

IN the television controversy parliament has once more demonstrated that it is not only a debating chamber, but that, when feeling runs high, the concerted efforts of the back bench members can prevail over the executive. In the present controversy a reluctant government has been the victim of conflicting blows directed at it from both sides of the Chamber: on the one side from a small section of its own supporters with a vested interest in commercial radio and on the other from an opposition united in resistance to the introduction of sponsored television and supported timidly by many, and courageously by a few, nominal government supporters. The result has been indecision, prevarication, and finally a modification of policy. Parliament's influence could not have been thus exercised but for the control that it already retains over the B.B.C. This made possible question and debate, pressure and counter-pressure.

The B.B.C.'s responsibility to parliament derives not so much from its Charter as from the Licence and Agreement which because it creates a charge on public funds must be voted by parliament. Charters are the Royal prerogative and do not require parliamentary approval but the Licence, issued by the Postmaster General, does.

It is in the Licence and Agreement between the Postmaster General and the B.B.C. that the powers of control reside. In the 1946 licence these differed as between sound broadcasting and television. The Postmaster General had a right of veto over any broadcast matter, and the B.B.C. could state when such power was exercised unless the Postmaster General forbade it to do so. The B.B.C. also had to broadcast any matter when so requested by a government department. This did not apply to television. The Postmaster General's other powers in regard to sound concerned technical matters. In practice the veto has been little used, but a general instruction stands preventing the B.B.C. from expressing an editorial opinion. Control of overseas services is of course greater, but that is not relevant to television. Under the 1946 Licence the Postmaster General had full and far reaching

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powers of control over television since he could give wide instructions to the B.B.C. and could impose any conditions or restrictions upon it. This curbed the responsibility of the B.B.C. and was justified by the Post Office in its evidence before the Beveridge Committee on the grounds that television was still in the development stage. Clause 5 provided that:

The Corporation shall observe and perform such stipulations conditions and restrictions and do such acts and things in relation to the Television Broadcasting Stations or the television service as from time to time may be prescribed by the Postmaster General in writing.

These powers were never formally exercised but their existence enabled ministers and parliament to take more interest and exercise greater influence in regard to television than in regard to sound broadcasting.

A further difference lies in the existence of the Television Advisory Council which was appointed by the Postmaster General and is responsible to him. Since this body could advise the Postmaster General and make recommendations to him it would appear necessary for him to have powers to direct the B.B.C. to carry them out. It further enabled parliament to question the minister about the Council and his action in regard thereto. The Council differs, of course, from the other B.B.C. Advisory Councils which are appointed by the Corporation itself; and in their case there is consequently no Ministerial responsibility. The original terms of reference on its appointment in October 1945, and which ran until the appointment of the Beveridge Committee in 1948, were very wide, covering planning and standards, research, patents, and investigation into all television developments, which were not confined to the B.B.C., including the question of public showing. While the Beveridge Committee was in being, its activities were limited to development problems of the Corporation's television service.

Changes were introduced into the new Charter and Licence and Agreement to make it consistent with sponsored television and to facilitate its introduction. First, though the Charter and Licence had not previously been defined as exclusive and the Post Office could always grant other licences it never did so but the new instruments were specifically described as "non-exclusive". Secondly, despite the Beveridge Committee's recommendation to the contrary, the Postmaster General's greater powers of control over television as compared with sound were abolished and the two placed on the same footing. The Beveridge

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Report argued that because of special technical problems, and the possibilities of public showing outside of the B.B.C., the government should retain greater powers and responsibilities in regard to television than in regard to sound. It suggested a modified clause giving the Postmaster General power of direction in regard to technical matters and public showing. The government ignored this recommendation justifying its action on the grounds that both should equally enjoy independence in programme matters. The Postmaster General's powers are therefore now limited (except in technical matters) in the case of both sound and television to a veto over any broadcaster matter, but the Postmaster General can no longer forbid the B.B.C. to state that the veto has been imposed, and to the requirement, now extended to television, to broadcast any announcement when so requested by a government department. This is now limited however to announcements and not to any other "matter", which is now reserved for times of emergency.

The government's proposal that the Governors should be appointed by a body of appointing trustees instead of by Order in Council on the advice of the Prime Minister was dropped following strong representations by the opposition. Had it been adopted it would further have curtailed parliamentary responsibility.

In October 1952 the Television Advisory Committee was reconstituted, but its terms of reference were specifically confined to advising the Postmaster General on the development of television and sound broadcasting with special reference to competitive television services and television for public showing.

Such is the extent of control by the Postmaster General from which parliamentary control follows. It is not great and does not extend to programmes, staff or day to day administration. Parliamentary control is thus mainly limited to the reserved powers of the Postmaster General, general policy, and technical matters. But even this comparatively small measure of control would not apply, unless specifically provided, to non-public bodies licensed to broadcast sound or television. Such organisations engaged in sponsored television, unless it were a condition of the licence, would not be responsible to the Postmaster General or to parliament, because their boards would not be appointed on the advice of the government and they would not be in receipt of public funds voted by parliament. No one can own a station or transmit programmes without a licence nor can the

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B.B.C. undertake commercial broadcasting without the Postmaster General's consent, but parliament would not have to approve each licence granted by the Post Office for television transmitting services. Under its Standing Orders the House of Commons need only approve such licences when public funds are involved. During parliamentary debates government spokesmen have given assurances that parliament will have the opportunity of debating the conditions under which sponsored television is allowed and the White Paper provides that before the first station is licensed parliament will be given opportunity to consider the terms and conditions under which competitive television would operate. That does not mean that the licences themselves would be subject to parliamentary approval. Neither in the original debate on the White Paper on 11th June 1952, nor subsequently have the government given any definite assurance that this would be the case. On 11th June, Mr. Maxwell Fyfe said:

My third point which is also of great importance, is our proposed parliamentary control of the terms and conditions of sponsored television. Hon. Members will bear in mind that the terms and conditions on which competitive television would operate would be subject to the consideration and control of parliament.

Mr. Gammans was somewhat more specific when, in reply to a short debate on the adjournment on the 5th February 1953 he said:

Before the licence for the first sponsored station is granted the House will have a further opportunity of discussing the terms of that licence.

Although parliament will be able to debate the first licence it will not need to approve any other licences which may be issued and therefore it would have no control over their issue or non-issue in any particular case, nor, and this is most important of all, would parliament have any subsequent control over the stations, services, or organisations responsible. A commercially owned station or service would be in a very different position from the B.B.C. because, unless the licence so provided, neither the Postmaster General nor parliament would have any right to interfere with its services once it was in operation. Parliament might therefore have no say as to whom licences should be granted, or the conditions of each specific licence. So far the Postmaster General in the Commons has refused to disclose the

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names of applicants, but he was driven in reply to a supplementary question on 11th March 1953, to say "Parliament will certainly have an opportunity of knowing to whom licences are given". But that does not prevent the names being disclosed after and not before the licences have been issued. Following persistent pressure at question time from the opposition Mr. Gammans on 20th May conceded that it was the Postmaster General's "intention to announce the names of all applicants as soon as firm conditions had been decided and applications confirmed". When pressed as to whether the names would be given before the licences were granted he retreated to the original position already taken up by the government that "the House had been promised a full debate on the terms of the licence when the first television licences are granted". That confirms that parliament will be faced with a "fait accompli" and its function limited to debate.

It seems fair to conclude that as far as the licensing of sponsored television is concerned, ministerial and parliamentary controls which are imposed on the B.B.C. by the Licence and Agreement will not apply to commercial television, because each licence will not be subject to parliamentary approval, and the concerns will be financially and managerially independent of the state. Parliamentary control imposed by the terms of the licence will almost certainly be lacking where it is most needed. The B.B.C. is a public board whose objective is to serve the national interest, whereas the commercially owned stations and sponsored services will be concerned with attracting advertising revenue, which means seeking the largest possible audience. It is argued that public control over the B.B.C. is necessary because it is monopoly. From this it would follow that when made subject to competition and with the termination of its monopoly any such necessity ends and control should cease. That cannot of course be accepted. The B.B.C. is quite rightly to remain subject to parliamentary control but its competitors are to be free from it. That is wrong. Any organisation, whether publicly or privately owned and operated, which has such influence over men's minds as broadcasting and television can exercise should in any case be subject to a measure of public control exercised through parliament. Certainly, if one is subject to it the other should be also, and since private profit is the incentive of the one and public service that of the other, the greater danger lies with the former which therefore requires it the more.

There is of course the Television Advisory Council which is appointed by the responsible minister who is answerable to parliament for it, but this body does not fulfil a controlling function. Whereas the Beveridge Committee recommended that its terms of reference be widened, they are now confined to technical matters, and, since reconstitution, the personnel includes a generous proportion of commercially interested parties. The government has made it clear in debate that it does not intend to give it enlarged powers such as advising the Minister on licence applications as does the Air Transport Advisory Council in the case of independent air operators. That function is to be reserved to another body, the necessity for the establishment of which is an admission by the government that there must be some external control over sponsored television to save it from itself and to safeguard the public against possible abuse. It has not committed itself as to the nature or functions of this body or of its relationship, if any, to parliament. Such a body could however be made a vehicle for parliamentary control, but the government has given no indication that it intends to use it for this purpose. The White Paper indicated its administrative functions would include the regulation of the conduct of the stations, a general oversight of the programmes, and that its advisory functions would include advising the Postmaster General on the granting or withdrawing of licences.

In view of the importance of the functions which the government apparently intends to entrust to this controlling body, the manner of its appointment, the seat of its responsibility, and its relationship to parliament become of paramount importance. It may be that through it parliamentary control of sponsored television can be exercised and if that is to be the case on its functions and nature will depend the extent of that control. From the government statement of 2nd July 1953 it emerges that the controlling body will have two main functions: to advise the Postmaster General on the issue of licences and to compel the fulfilment of standards laid down. It is therefore to have a dual role: that of an advisory licensing authority and a board of control. But whether it is to be the controlling body that determines what shall be in the licence or whether the rules of the air are to be incorporated in it or the standards are to be separately determined and enforced is not yet determined. Apparently the government envisages the board of control as a non-departmental body with advisory powers only, the

Postmaster General retaining full final control through the licensing procedure. That is to say the controlling body will in the first place recommend on licence applications and lay down the conditions of operation, the Postmaster General will then act on their recommendation and may or may not include the recommended conditions in the licence or make the licence dependent upon the fulfilment of these conditions. In the second place, the controlling body will keep check over the owner or operator of the station to see that the conditions are fulfilled and if there is default will recommend the Postmaster General to withdraw the licence. To enable it to carry out this function the controlling body is to have power of censorship, but pre-censorship of scripts is neither practical nor desirable and it will almost certainly be a case of closing the stable door belatedly.

That the government has not yet decided to what extent the licensing procedure or the controlling body is to be the vehicle for the imposition of conditions of both a technical and programme nature and for their enforcement is clear from the July statement. Mr. Crookshank then said that certain things which might be specified in the licence or by the controlling body included such important matters as number of transmission hours and control of advertisements. These are vital; and if it is the controlling body that is to be left to determine them and they are not included in the provisions of the licence then it must be given considerable powers and be made fully responsible to the Postmaster General and through him to parliament.

To ensure this it must be appointed directly by the government and must not be a body established by the trade itself. The former ensures that the Postmaster General is responsible for it and answerable to parliament for the fulfilment of its functions. The Postmaster General would not be able to take cover behind the controlling body when attacked as he could if it were appointed by outside organisations however representative they might be. The crux of the matter is that if there is to be parliamentary control there must be ministerial responsibility for the decisions of the controlling body. Parliamentary control diminishes in proportion to the delegation of authority and, if it is desired to retain control over sponsored television to the maximum extent possible, then final authority must rest with the minister responsible and any other body must act in a strictly advisory capacity only and the minister be under no obligation to carry out its recommendations. Unfortunately it is doubtful

if the government has this in view. The powers which it apparently proposes to entrust to the controlling body are very great and include those which should rightly be retained by the Postmaster General himself, such as the number of transmission hours and time devoted to commercials. To interpose a powerful body between the television owners and operators and the government can but diminish the authority of the latter and enhance that of the owners and operators themselves. It is no doubt for that very reason that the establishment of such a body is proposed. The government desires on the one hand to disarm those critics of sponsored television who claim it will lead to deterioration of programmes by setting up a facade for maintaining standards and policing the air by establishing a code and giving it powers to enforce it. But if that code is established and enforced by interested parties, its effectiveness is that much the less. Such scepticism is justified by the government's parliamentary record on sponsored television. It has been humiliating to witness the success of a small self-interested pressure group within the Conservative Party in forcing a policy upon a government which at first did not understand its implications and when it did was reluctant to proceed. By then it was too deeply committed and therefore incapable of total retreat. Those responsible for forcing sponsored television upon the government are Members intimately connected with advertising agencies and radio manufacturers as has been usefully pointed out by Mr. Christopher Mayhew in *Dear Viewer*.

By accepting the proposal of the advertisers and the industry to establish this controlling body, it has inadvertently or by intent given its approval to establishing machinery whereby Parliament can be by-passed. Whether it is or not depends upon the personnel of the controlling body, its relationship to the Postmaster General, the manner in which he uses the licence to impose rigid conditions of operation upon stations and services, and to the extent to which he himself ensures their fulfilment. If he retains final powers himself then parliament will be able to exercise greater control over sponsored television than would be the case if executive authority were vested in the controlling body and the conditions were not written into the licence. If the advertisers and the industry want a voice in the control and administration of sponsored television it can be an advisory voice raised in consultation and not in giving directions. In the publicly owned industries and services joint consultation

between users and producers has been established and this machinery could be used to enable advertisers and owners to meet the representatives of the Post Office and to make recommendations regarding sponsored television transmissions. Such a consultative council could have the right to make recommendation to the minister where he had responsibility. That is the extent to which interested parties should have influence over those matters which the government has been forced to admit are of public concern by its acceptance of the necessity for some form of controlling body. If such matters are of public concern, they should be publicly controlled and that in the last resort is the function of parliament.

To sum up, any privately owned transmitting stations or any privately operated television services require as much public control as do those of public corporations. Control is now largely exercised over the B.B.C. by the Licence and Agreement between it and the Postmaster General. From this flows his responsibility to parliament. Similar control through the licensing procedure should be imposed upon all alternative services. Any delegation of authority to an appointed body should be limited to the power of recommendation and final responsibility must remain with the minister. Any conditions imposed upon owners or operators under which alternative services are transmitted should be incorporated in the licence which to enable flexibility should include power for the Postmaster General to vary the conditions. The role of the parties most concerned, such as the advertising agencies and the radio industry's trade associations, should be confined to advice through consultative machinery. If, however, the government insists on interposing a controlling body, it is important that the personnel be appointed by the minister and directly responsible to him and that it excludes persons engaged in the advertising and radio industries or at any rate has a majority of independent members. In sponsored television there are inherent dangers which no amount of control by the executive, by parliament, by the industry itself, or by any extraneous body can eradicate. The only hope of minimising them is to maintain the maximum possible public control which must never be less than that exercised over the public services and should preferably be greater. This can alone be democratically and effectively achieved through the exercise of the long-established principle of ministerial responsibility to parliament.

THE HISS CASE

By R. H. S. CROSSMAN, M.P.*

MOST of us know Whittaker Chambers as the ex-communist whose testimony convicted Alger Hiss. If he had just been that and nothing more, only those with a taste for criminology would need to bother about his autobiography.† But the trial of Alger Hiss was not merely a forensic melodrama, with a fascinating and unsolved detective story as its background. It was an event which may well have changed the whole course of American history; and its two protagonists, the brilliant, impeccable public servant from New England and the self-confessed informer, have become far more important figures than any living Congressman, with the exception of Senator McCarthy. Alistair Cooke has brilliantly described how the court proceedings became the trial not of one man, but of a whole generation. "Since the New Deal is on trial", said the American Liberal, "Hiss *must* be innocent." "Hiss is guilty", replied those who had been longing for a chance to drag the New Deal down ever since Roosevelt launched it in 1932.

The Hiss case, in fact, was a Dreyfus affair which went wrong. In this regard, it bears a strange resemblance to the trial of Oscar Wilde. When Wilde took his libel action against Lord Queensberry, the whole avant-garde in art and literature rallied to his side against the disreputable old nobleman, who seemed to personify philistinism in its crudest form. But Wilde was found guilty, and the verdict was felt as a terrible defeat. In *The Tragic Generation*, W. B. Yeats reminds us of the atmosphere. "Cultivated London", he writes, "that before the action against Lord Queensberry had mocked Wilde's pose and affected style, and refused to acknowledge his wit, was now full of his advocates, though I did not meet a single man who considered him innocent. One old enemy of his overtook me in the street. 'He has made', he said, 'of infamy a new Thermopylae.'" And Yeats ends the chapter with the wonderful, tragic sentence: "When the verdict was announced the harlots in the street outside danced upon the pavement."

Those words give us an inkling of the emotions which

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† *Witness*, by Whittaker Chambers. Andre Deutsch, 21s.

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Americans must feel about Alger Hiss and Chambers. A few still tenaciously assert that Chambers was a liar and that Hiss was the innocent victim of a terrible miscarriage of justice. But I suspect that most American liberals now feel about Hiss what Yeats and his friends felt about Wilde. Why, oh why, they ask, should history have picked on him to stand trial on behalf of us all?

But what about Chambers? Before I read his book, I believed that, even if Hiss was guilty, that did not make Chambers anything but an insignificant little spy. One good reason for reading *Witness* is to get rid of this over-simplification. Whatever else he is, Chambers is not insignificant. He is a writer of immense power, and *Witness* is indubitably one of the most important books I have read since the war. 600 pages long, it is a completely absorbing spiritual autobiography, the work of a writer who can be compared for the intensity of his penitent's vision with John Bunyan, for his unbalanced insight into spiritual abnormality with Dostoevsky, and for the macabre brilliance of his style with Edgar Allan Poe.

But before we come to his writing, let us see first who Chambers is. His own account of his life is very difficult to follow, since he rarely gives dates and does not bother to keep to a chronological order. Apparently he was the son of an unsuccessful actress and an equally unsuccessful newspaper artist, who drew illustrations for the newspapers before photography superseded him. He was an unhappy child in a down-at-heel, Bohemian home, and a lonely boy at school, where he had a sexual experience which obviously left a deep impression on him. Anyway, he ran away at the age of 16 to work for a short time with the navvies doing street work at Washington, and then found himself, somehow, in a New Orleans doss-house with a prostitute called One-Eyed Annie. After this he returned to his home and was sent to Columbia University. There, encouraged by Mark Van Doren, the literary critic, he wrote poems, became an atheist, and visited Germany during the inflation of 1923. Two years later he became a communist on the staff of the *Daily Worker*. Here is his own explanation:

The dying world of 1925 was without faith, hope, character, understanding of its malady or will to overcome it. It was dying but it laughed. And this laughter was not the defiance of a vigor that refuses to know when it is whipped. It was the loss, by the mind of a whole civilization, of the power to distinguish between reality and unreality. . . . The dying world had no

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answer at all to the crisis of the 20th century, and, when it was mentioned, it cocked an ear of complacent deafness and smiled a smile of blank senility—throughout history, the smile of those for whom the executioner waits. . . . The ultimate choice I made was not for a theory or a party. It was a choice against death and for life. I asked only the privilege of serving humbly and selflessly that force which from death could evoke life.

Since 1925 was a year not of crisis in America but of optimism and boom, it is clear that Chambers became a communist, as so many young men from middle-class families became communists, largely because of his own inner unhappiness. He projected on to the external world his loneliness and his desire to destroy the surroundings in which he had failed. What confirms this diagnosis is that he himself admits that, in the Communist Party, he found himself just as lonely as he had been at school, taking no interest whatsoever in its factional disputes and never once attending a meeting of the cell to which he belonged.

I had to fight the sense that I was absolutely alone. In the Communist Party I found at first no one else remotely like me. I believed that my vision of the Communist was the right one, but when a man finds himself completely alone, he must always question if he can be right.

But if he found no happiness in the party, why did he become a communist? His own answer is to refer to a pamphlet of Lenin's called *A Soviet At Work*. It was the doctrine of terror in this pamphlet which at once attracted and repelled him, but which finally convinced him of his destiny. This simultaneous love and hate of violence is an important element in his character. He is always torn between a longing to escape from this tormenting world by suicide and a violent desire to destroy his tormentors. Here are his thoughts when he was first told by his mother to kill a chicken:

Something in me, the deepest thing that makes me what I am, knows that it is wrong to kill anything. But there is something else—a necessity—that forces me to kill. I have the strength to overcome the feeling in myself against killing, and I am proud that I have it for it is part of what makes me a man. All right. As a man, I will kill. But I will kill always under duress, by an act of will, in knowing violation of myself. Let me never kill unless I suffer that agony.

This idea of killing by necessity is linked in his mind with the idea of vengeance. On one occasion, he tells us, a schoolmate kicked his dog in the stomach and he felt an irresistible urge to kill him.

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If you kick my dog in the stomach, though I have refused to fight one hundred times, and will refuse again, that time I will wait and fight to destroy you. I cannot help myself. Within me there is a force. It says that that gentleness, which is not prepared to kill or be killed to destroy the evil that assails life, is not gentleness.

These passages of self-analysis ring true, and suggest that Chambers joined the Communist Party because that party's doctrine of violent revolution seemed to give him the rationalization of one of his two conflicting urges. If he was not to kill himself in order to escape from his misery, he must destroy the environment which caused it. He became an undistinguished member of the *Daily Worker* staff, and then, in 1928, drifted out of the party for two years, and eked out a living translating German books. But in 1930 the economic crisis broke. The pattern of the external world was now the pattern of his internal misery, and he was welcomed back into the party when he wrote a short story for *New Masses*, which was praised in a Russian literary journal. Then, a few months later, he was summoned to communist headquarters and told to leave the *New Masses* in order to work in the communist underground, which he later discovered meant spying for the Russian secret service. Here is his description of that first interview (a description, incidentally, which reveals how brilliantly he can write):

The day Max Bedacht first commanded me to his office, he was not cordial. He looked like a shopkeeper who has been caught by a late customer just at closing time and is trying to hide behind his glasses. He also looked a little like Heinrich Himmler. About both brief, tidy men there was a disturbing quality of secret power mantling insignificance—what might be called the ominousness of nonentity, which is peculiar to the terrible little figures of our time.

Chambers' description of his years in the communist underground is extremely hazy and confused. We hear a great deal about secret meetings and stolen documents, but never anything of what the documents contained. However, it seems clear that, after a period in New York, he was sent to Washington, where he met a group of party members and fellow-travellers high up in the New Deal. Among them was Alger Hiss. Despite Hiss's denials, there is no real doubt that these two men, the untidy Bohemian and the suave, precise bureaucrat, became close friends, and that their wives were friends too. Chambers writes about this friendship:

People have sometimes asked me: What did you talk about when you were together? I have to stop and think. What *did* we talk about? We talked

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about everything. It was the spontaneous surface talk of people among whom there exist, not only fierce convictions, but intangible compatibilities of temperament, an instinctive feeling as to what is serious and what is absurd about people, things and life. People are truly friends when they love even one another's foibles. We knew one another's weaknesses and could laugh freely at them. For our friendship was almost entirely one of character and not of the mind. Alger was a little on the stuffy side. Ideas for their own sake did not interest him at all. . . . So great a gap in the temper of minds might have been expected to set us apart. On the contrary. The bond that cemented his friendship and mine was a profound, tacit esteem of character. Each of us sensed in the other an unwielding purpose about those things which we held to be decisive. . . . We shared another more elusive, but very real bond. That was the mutual simplicity of our tastes, a profound sense that labour in itself is one of the highest goods, a profound suspicion of the pursuit of pleasure as an end in life, a distaste of materialism in its commonest forms of success and comfort. It is not at all chance that both the Chamberses and the Hisses, arriving over very different routes, should at last have found their way into the community of Quakers. For the simplicity inherent in the Quaker way of life must make an authentic appeal to the Hisses.

Early in 1938 Chambers broke with the Communist Party—and with Hiss. As a man who *lived* conspiracy, Chambers made his break conspiratorially. He fled from Washington in a car he bought with \$400 loaned from Hiss, and took refuge in two rooms at the back of a big house in the Maryland countryside. That Christmas he went to see Hiss and tried to persuade him to break too. Hiss listened to him and said, "What you have been saying is just mental masturbation." Then, according to Chambers, he had a pang of conscience, turned back from the front door, rushed to the Christmas tree and shoved into Chambers's hand a Christmas present for his little daughter. When Chambers got back to his lonely house, he found it contained a little wooden rolling-pin, worth a nickel. This was as bad as kicking a dog in the stomach. "I took the little rolling-pin and its wrappings down to the cellar and threw it in the furnace. It was years before I could bring myself to tell my wife about it."

A year later Chambers got a job on *Time* magazine, where he rapidly rose from book reviewing to become one of the senior editors at \$30,000 a year. Finding peace in the countryside, he bought a farm and brought up his family on it, while he worked in New York. He was relaxed and entirely happy during these years. The past seemed buried. He had, on one occasion before the war, interviewed one of Roosevelt's advisers, Adolphe Berle, and told him about the espionage group, giving a list

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of names, including that of Hiss, but nothing came of this. The past seemed to be a closed, forgotten chapter.

Ten years after his break with the party, the Committee on Un-American Activities, searching round frantically for some revelation to keep it in the news, hit on an ex-communist agent, a certain Elizabeth Bentley. In the course of describing the spy ring she claimed to have run, Miss Bentley mentioned Whittaker Chambers, and he was summoned to appear before the Committee. Suddenly he felt that God's purpose was clear. He had been sent into the world to sin, to repent, and to bear witness. So he testified, with the results we all know.

We need not follow the story further. What interests us, and what makes this book so significant, are not the details of the trial—the prothanatory warbler, the Woodstock typewriter, and the rest of them—but the character and philosophy of the author. He has joined the Quakers, and now believes that the only force which can defeat godless communism is religion. According to Chambers, everyone is a communist, or at least tainted with communism, who does not share his belief in God:

Two faiths were on trial. Human societies, like human beings, live by faith and die when faith dies. At issue in the Hiss Case was the question whether this sick society, which we call Western civilization, could in its extremity still cast up a man whose faith in it was so great that he would voluntarily abandon those things which men hold good, including life, to defend it. At issue was the question whether this man's faith would prevail against a man whose equal faith it was that this society is sick beyond saving.

So he came to see the New Deal as part of the revolution it was his duty to fight:

Whether the revolutionists prefer to call themselves Fabians, who seek power by the inevitability of gradualism, or Bolsheviks, who seek power by the dictatorship of the proletariat, the struggle is for power.

And again:

What I hit was the forces of that great socialist revolution, which, in the name of liberalism, spasmodically, incompletely, somewhat formlessly, but always in the same direction, has been inching its ice cap over the nation for two decades. It was the forces of that revolution that I struck at the point of its struggle for power.

Hiss, Acheson, Truman, Attlee—they are all, in Chambers's view, part of one single conspiracy, which he has been called upon by God to fight and to destroy. Instead of the terrible certitude, which previously possessed him, that he must destroy the capitalist world, Chambers is now inspired with an equally

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terrible certitude that he must destroy the conspiracy of communists, socialists and liberals which threatens America.

But this certitude, this conviction of righteousness, is only one part of his personality. The urge to self-destruction is still strong, and so is the sense of guilt. Chambers is not a Christian, who can throw off his burden and enter the Celestial City. He calls his book *Witness*, but one of its themes is the misery of the informer:

There is in men a very deep-rooted instinct that they may not inform against those whose kindness and affection they have shared, at whose tables they have eaten and under whose roofs they have slept, whose wives and children they have known as friends—and that regardless of who those others are or what crimes they have committed. It is an absolute prohibition. It is written in no book, but it is more binding than any code that exists. If of necessity a man must violate that prohibition, and it is part of the tragedy of history that, for the greater good, men sometimes must, the man who violates it must do so in the full consciousness that there is a penalty. That penalty is a kind of death, most deadly if a man must go on living. It is not violent. It is not even a deepening shadow. It is a simple loss of something as when a filter removes all color from the light. I felt its foretouch. It was soon to be on me.

This conviction that, in atoning for sin, a man kills himself, is the most peculiar feature of Chambers's creed. It is only intelligible in terms of his early life—or rather, of the vision of his early life which fills the first chapters of his autobiography. The more I ponder on these pages, the more I wonder whether one can call them "facts". In writing of his home, Chambers seems to be putting down on paper not recollections but a series of visions or nightmares. Here is his description of his father's death:

My father lay huddled in his bathrobe on the sea-blue tiles my brother had laid. His body was still warm. Of the bodies I had lifted in the last years, his was the most inert. I could move him only inch by inch. My mother had to help me raise him to his bed. Later, the undertakers carried my father downstairs. Without my knowledge, they began the preliminary stages of embalming, in our living room. Unsuspectingly, I walked into the room. My father lay naked on a stretcher. One of his arms was dangling. From this arm, near the shoulder, his blood, the blood that had given my brother and me life, was pouring, in a thin, dark arc, into a battered mop bucket. We buried my father beside my brother.

And here is a passage about his grandmother:

For years, in addition to our old tensions, this dark, demoniac presence sat at the heart of our home. Usually, her movements were almost soundless and she seemed to be able to move with abnormal swiftness. She would be standing beside you before you knew she was there. Winter and summer,

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she wore a long sealskin coat in the house. For long periods, she would be quiescent. Then a spell would come. She would float downstairs, take a knife from the kitchen and sit by the window in my mother's bedroom, where she knew that she should not go. . . . When my father was resting of an evening, my grandmother would stand just behind her door, and in those withering tones that had an almost toxic effect on a normal mind, would take derisive inventory of his appearance and what she imagined, or pretended to imagine, were his depravities. My father would stand this for long periods. But sometimes it would get too much for him. He would fling himself out of his own room in a berserk rage, and hurl himself against her locked door. From the other side, she would shout mocking defiance. There would be a sound of splintering wood, a crack as the lock snapped, then cries. For Grandmother was a courageous woman, and she was always waiting to defend her stronghold with the scissors which she kept handy for such occasions. I would rush in and throw, or wedge, myself between them. The small scars on my hands are where the scissors missed my father and caught me.

If these were scenes from a novel, I should say that another Edgar Allan Poe had risen across the Atlantic. But *Witness* purports to be autobiography. Does it tell us facts, or the nightmare visions of a powerful imagination? It is impossible to be sure. But it is also impossible to deny that the man who wrote it is an abnormal and riven personality.

Whittaker Chambers personifies the American epoch in which he lives, the divided loyalties, the swiftly alternating moods of exaltation and despair, the conflicting urges, now to put the world to right and now to retire into lonely isolation; now to appease and now to smash the enemy. All these features of his autobiography are a microcosm of American political life—or rather, to change the image, a distorting mirror, in which one aspect of America is reflected, monstrously distorted, yet still recognisable, an American which prophetically demands the destruction of anyone and everyone who questions the validity of the American way of life.

Where else have we read such a book? Where else has an unknown man risen from the depths to denounce liberalism as part of the Communist disease and to call his countrymen to destroy both, root and branch? Where else have the repressions of a childhood without love and the resentments of an unappreciated, lonely adolescence been rationalised into a volcanic *Weltanschauung*? Where else has a conspiracy against Christian civilisation been presented as a valiant defence of it? Yes! The prophet of the Third Reich might well have called his book *Witness*, just as Whittaker Chambers could have renamed his —*My Struggle*.

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THE B.B.C. FROM WITHIN. By LORD SIMON OF WYTHENSHAW. (*Gollancz*, 360 pp. 16s.)

THERE have been numerous books written on broadcasting in this country, but this is the only one which deals at length with the B.B.C. as an institution. Lord Simon of Wythenshawe was chairman of the B.B.C. from 1947 until 1952, and in that position he was able both to survey the Corporation from inside and to look out from Broadcasting House at the world outside. The present work is of exceptional interest partly because the author brings this double vision to bear on the subject; and partly because it contains much information and wisdom which can guide the British people in making the right decisions on the future of television.

The first part deals with the constitutional framework of the B.B.C. In describing this the author distinguishes the formal constitution laid down by the charter and the licence granted by the Postmaster-General from the working constitution. The latter is centred mainly on the relations between the chairman and the governors on the one hand and the director general and the board of management on the other. Almost everyone who has studied nationalized industries and services in Britain has criticized the curiously weak position of the chairman and governors of the B.B.C. compared with the boards of the other public corporations. This was originally due to the dominating personality and strong will of Lord Reith combined with the failure of governors and ministers to understand the need for a strong board of governors. The extraordinary status of the director general became crystallized in the Whitley document, which declared that "the functions of the governors are not executive, their responsibilities are general and not particular, and they are not divided up for the purposes of departmental supervision". This document has hitherto served as a government instruction to governors, who are expected to do no more than attend infrequent board meetings and to read papers.

Lord Simon makes it clear that Sir William Haley supported the Reith tradition of managerial independence to the utmost extent. The Board of Management, consisting of the director general and six directors, decide all important questions of administration except finance, which is even more closely under the director general's control. Lord Simon was never invited to attend these meetings even as an observer. He tells us that he "gradually acquired the increasingly firm conviction that it was quite wrong that any one man, whatever his ability, should be allowed in effect to be sole dictator of the B.B.C.; and the Reith conception almost resulted in that when put into practice". The Beveridge Committee came to the same conclusion, and one hopes that the position will be changed in the future. Lord Simon considers that the position of the board should be strengthened in relation to the director general; that the governors should serve for longer periods; that they should include some younger individuals; and that members of the board should take a far more active part in the organisation.

Part Two is entitled "How the B.B.C. Works". It contains an account of the main activities of the corporation. From it we learn how policy is made in regard to sound broadcasting and the nature of the complex organization

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by which the programmes are built up and carried out. The author gives us much information about the B.B.C. both quantitative and qualitative, which has not hitherto been available.

In Part Three Lord Simon considers commercial broadcasting as an alternative to the public service principle embodied in the B.B.C. He devotes chief attention to the U.S.A. and deals in less detail with Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Ceylon. It is a pity that, apart from a few pages on Switzerland, no attention is given to countries outside the Commonwealth and America. We should like to know something of the systems obtaining in France, Scandinavia, and Holland.

The study of American broadcasting methods, motives, and results has reinforced the author's belief in the overwhelming advantages of public service broadcasting over the commercial systems. Sponsored radio makes the magnitude of the audience the sole criterion of what shall be broadcast, and this has a disastrous effect on standards. The lightest possible entertainment, the most sensational newsmongering, and the most irresponsible commentators; these are the big attractions for the mass of American listeners and viewers, and these are what they get nearly all the time. The great majority of the people enjoy what they get, and the immensely wealthy American radio industry makes no effort to raise their cultural level, to improve their understanding of the world, or to make them better citizens. The one outstanding advantage of the U.S. stations is their ability to present able and intelligent commentators on current affairs, like Edward Murrow, Howard Smith, or Joseph Harsch, a feature the B.B.C. apparently avoids for fear it should build up radio personalities with too much political influence. But when one sets against this the immensely greater popularity of the hysterically sensational commentators who command the mass audiences, one cannot avoid the conclusion that, far from helping to train the American nation for world leadership, the radio industry is a positive impediment to that highly necessary task. There is nothing personal in this indictment, as Lord Simon is careful to point out. The directors of the great broadcasting chains are able and well-meaning men who can do nothing else in the circumstances which surround them. It is the commercial broadcasting system which is at fault.

The facts speak for themselves. The Columbia Broadcasting system broadcasts less than one hour a week of live classical music, compared with the B.B.C.'s 50 hours a week on its home programmes. C.B.S. gives about 1½ hours a week of talks and discussions, compared with 10 hours a week by the B.B.C. on its London programmes. C.B.S. does no school broadcasting, while the B.B.C. does 16 hours a week in term-time. In the sphere of plays and serious features, the disparity is even more striking.

The position in regard to television is horrifying, so far as children are concerned. During the hours between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. enormous numbers of American children are viewing an endless series of murders, hold-ups, robberies, sluggings, and other crimes of violence, which appear to exclude almost everything else. It is no wonder that Robert Hutchins, the former Chancellor of Chicago University, has declared that "one of the great instruments of enlightenment and one of the greatest triumphs of the human mind [is] employed almost exclusively to debase those whom it might enlighten and ennoble. . . . American radio is a disgrace." And this, we are

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told, is freedom on the air! Any improvement will be extraordinarily difficult to achieve because of the powerful political lobby which the radio industry has developed in Washington.

In the fourth and last part of the book, Lord Simon discusses the B.B.C. monopoly. He analyses fully and frankly all the arguments brought against the monopoly and shows how little evidence there is to sustain the fears and allegations of those who believe that the B.B.C. possesses a dangerous concentration of power. He explains the way in which the B.B.C. takes account of the hundreds of thousands of letters it receives each year; of the 400 press cuttings which pour in daily from newspapers and reviews that are often highly critical and always on the look out for abuses at Broadcasting House; of the constant investigations carried out by the audience research organization maintained by the corporation; of the 30 or so general and specialized advisory committees, composed of independent persons, on whom the B.B.C. relies for guidance; and of the many pressure groups which are interested in all kinds of different subjects. Apart from these outside influences which affect the policy of the B.B.C. in many ways, there are ultimate safeguards in the shape of Parliamentary criticism and governmental control. The charter imposes certain fundamental obligations on the B.B.C. which it dare not ignore. The Postmaster-General can dismiss all or any of the governors whenever he pleases. And Parliament can intervene if anything goes seriously wrong. The likelihood of the B.B.C. exercising power in an arbitrary or irresponsible way is, therefore, exceedingly remote.

There are, Lord Simon concedes, certain disadvantages in any monopoly. He detects signs of complacency in the B.B.C.; an unwillingness to learn from others; a tendency towards overcentralization. But he considers these to be small flaws compared with its achievement in raising the standard of public taste in music and drama; and by means of serious news and talks making Britain "politically the most balanced and thoughtful of the large countries of the world". In writing this book Lord Simon has performed a considerable public service. His informed views should receive the most careful attention before the vital decisions are made on the future of television.

W. A. ROBSON.

BRITISH GOVERNMENT. By HIRAM MILLER STOUT. (Oxford University Press. ix + 433 pp. 42s.)

FIFTEEN years ago Mr. Stout wrote a capable study of *Public Service in Great Britain*. Since then he has held posts in Political Science in American universities, has been attached to the American Embassy in London, and has worked in the Bureau of the Budget, in the War Department, and in the State Department. He has visited the United Kingdom several times before, during and after the war. He knows us, and he knows government; and he is thus well qualified to do what he says in his preface he wants to do—"provide American readers, principally college and university students, with a description of the present-day structure and practice of British government". He seems to have read very carefully nearly all the

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recent books and articles and government publications that are of value for his task, and he has utilised this reading well: his book is detailed and in general very reliable. It has the advantage, moreover, of covering a wider range than its title implies, for in addition to taking the reader through constitution and parliament, parties and elections, justice, administration and local government, it goes into policy and administration in national security, social services, industry, and imperial affairs, and it finishes with chapters on the Commonwealth and the colonial empire. The footnote references are very good and there is a useful short bibliography. I doubt whether there is another single volume on the subjects dealt with that provides so much up-to-date information.

But Mr. Stout has unfortunately elected to remain very impersonal. His book is 'correct' as an official document is, and it has no summing up. It is, indeed, very much of a text-book. Yet it has some demerits as a text-book, mainly in its organisation, which, as the preface reveals, has clearly bothered the author. Mr. Stout's account proceeds smoothly once he reaches administration, but there are parts of his description in Chapters V to VIII on cabinet and parliament which will not be clear to unfamiliar readers until they have read Chapters X to XII on parties and elections. Further, a good deal more historical background is supplied for some topics than for others—there is relatively little, for instance, on the imperial side—and it is not easy to see what the rationale of this distribution is. On some matters, too, Mr. Stout gives shorter measure than one would have liked to see. He is very brief on the critical activities of the House of Commons apart from question times: he does not emphasise the importance of the Comptroller and Auditor General's staff: his account of the Labour Party may not reveal to some readers the nature and extent of divisions in that party; and in discussing the Conservative Party he does not bring out its characteristic pragmatism. There are also some minor discrepancies and errors in the text. The account on p. 60 of the choice of Baldwin as Prime Minister in 1923 has a qualification that is omitted when the question is referred to again on p. 116. Some nomenclature is wrong: for instance, (p. 38) the Irish 'External Affairs Act' should be the 'Executive Authority (External Relations) Act'; and (p. 55) the Electress Dowager of Hanover is not generally known as 'Sophie'. One wishes, too, that an American as conversant as Mr. Stout is with this country and its ways would explain to other Americans that the expression 'Labourite', which must look convincingly English to them when so spelled, is not an English expression at all.

Mainly because it does not succeed in leaving the reader with a living general picture, I should not be inclined to recommend this book for use by students making their first approach to British government. On the other hand, its very full and up-to-date accounts of certain topics, especially administrative topics, will make it very useful for reference by students on both sides of the Atlantic who have got a grip of the outlines and need an introduction to the more detailed study of particular fields. Because of its price, however, the British student at any rate, is likely to have to refer to it in libraries.

WILFRID HARRISON.

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A STUDY OF THE STATUS OF THE CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE WITHIN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA. By SHEILA PATTERSON. (Routledge. 402 pp. 30s.)

THIS is a gloomy and depressing book. It tells dispassionately a story of human perversity which seems to threaten the peace and wellbeing of South Africa without any hope of remedy. It is the story of a minority of the coloured people, which is closest to the white European minority, and is known as Cape Coloured. The minority includes about a million persons who are of several types of miscegenation; white and Hottentot, white and black slaves, etc. To-day they are threatened with the same segregation as the black majority, and their former political and legal rights are being rapidly whittled down. The writer, who is a skilled anthropologist, examines with her scientific method every aspect of their life and their frustration, political, legal, economic, educational, and social.

The story is the sadder because till fifty years ago, before the Union of South Africa, English liberalism held out the prospect of an improving status for the coloured people determined by religion and culture. In the latest period the rights of the coloured, even those sanctioned by the Constitutional Law of the Union, have been cancelled, and they are being compelled to accept a status determined almost exclusively by colour. Since the book was written there has been another turn of the screw; and the government of Dr. Malan has been returned with a sufficient majority to sweep away the remaining constitutional protection. In the background is the darker shadow of the conflict between white and black, which threatens to rend the society in South Africa.

Mrs. Patterson is at pains to apply the anthropological technique which befits a tribe or racial community. In her first chapter, which defines the approach, she uses a scientific dialect or jargon which is baffling to the layman. Fortunately, perhaps, when she comes to the detailed analysis, and sets out the specific measures of discrimination and differentiation, or describes the social life and the internal organisation of the coloured, she uses the common language and drops her complicated apparatus. She lapses into it again in the concluding chapters, but the greater part of the text, and of the notes and appendices—which cover more pages than the main text—are a lucid and moving tale of human misery told humanly.

Why is it that the communal and human relationships have gone awry in South Africa? In the latter part of the nineteenth century, British colonial administration, under the influence of Christian missions and philanthropic liberalism, established what are called "Colour-blind" political institutions, the rule of law was declared to apply without discrimination, and educational opportunity was opened for the coloured man. But in the northern territories of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State fear gripped the Afrikaner, fear of the black Bantu and fear of any non-European element. Then, too, the "poor white", driven from the land to the towns, feared that he would be cut out by the competition of the skilled and even the unskilled coloured workman. White supremacy, indeed white existence, could only be assured by keeping down the black and the coloured, and by segregating them from competition and contact with the European. That harsh dogma and that gnawing fear have bit by bit taken possession of the mind of the white man in

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the southern colony and corrupted his good manners. Neither the Christian church nor the liberal politicians have been able to stand firm and uphold the principle of social equality.

It is distressing to read that thirty years ago Dr. Malan himself supported a measure for the coloured woman's suffrage on the same terms as it was accorded to the white woman. To-day the only political representation of the million coloured persons is four members, none of whom must be coloured, in a house of 150. And the Spacial Services (a compendious term for housing, transport, and public buildings) are more and more organised on the lines of rigid separation of whites and others. Even in death the segregation is maintained by separate cemeteries. The author sardonically adds—"It is outside the scope of the social scientists to enquire into events beyond that point, but there seems little doubt that many South African whites would be greatly put out to find no colour bar in Heaven."

There is another lighter touch in the dark picture. When the New Zealand Rugby football team were to visit South Africa, they were warned not to include any players from the coloured Maoris. So the "All Blacks" were represented by "All Whites".

The concluding part of the book, which describes the present situation of the coloured people internally and externally, is particularly depressing. The first of its two chapters examines the internal structure. Cut off from the white society whose culture broadly they share, they are thrown back on themselves. The second chapter deals with the moral and social consequences of the colour bar. The young persons had to form their own societies, coon troupes and carnivals; and the external pressure is giving them a sense of being a political community, forcing them into closer relations with the blacks, and strengthening their cohesion. For the white community the rationalisation of their repressive action has generated a series of myths, the "bad blood" of the mixed community, the "pure blood" of the whites; and they have formed distorted "stereotypes" of the black man and the coloured man, dirty, lascivious, callous, and superstitious.

One gleam of hope is vouchsafed in this sorry tale. It is the provision of higher education for the non-European as well as for the European. The churches gave the lead in the establishment of schools for the coloured people; and though their educational standard lags behind that for the European, the state-aided university colleges now give something like a fair opportunity to a small fraction who are fitted for higher study. Besides the mixed colleges in the Cape Town and Johannesburg universities, and the "parallel" structure of the university of Natal where Europeans and others share teaching-staff, lectures, and examinations, but have separate libraries and residential and recreational facilities, the coloured, including the blacks, have a completely non-European university college at Fort Hare. It is a satisfaction that a "colour-blind" university education, and a college comparable with those for the white students, are now available. It would seem obvious that the Government cannot give equality of educational opportunity without strengthening the demand for civil equality. Whether that demand will be met by passive or by violent measures depends on the mind of the young generation of the "two nations" of South Africa, at present divided by colour. Will the common culture prevail over the colour conflict?

NORMAN BENTWICH.

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MACAULAY'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND. (*Dent. Everyman's Library.* 4 vols. 7s. each.)

EVERY time a new edition of the *History of England* is published, people ask: "How good an historian is Macaulay?" The answer is simple. Macaulay is beyond all doubt the greatest master of narrative history in English. His style has often been analysed and its faults exposed: it is too loud, too mechanical, too given to antithesis, too relentless and too uniform in texture. Yet, strangely enough, no one who picks the book up and opens it at any page can put it down. At the turn of the century when positivist history was at its height ("History is a science, no more, no less") he was said to be inaccurate. Yet Macaulay is astonishingly accurate on matters of fact; and if he erred in certain matters of interpretation—for instance in the role which Marlborough played—then it must also be allowed that few historians of his age can escape this kind of censure. His strident tone and philistine complacency have pained the connoisseurs of English letters from Arnold to Strachey; and indeed this bustling politician and slashing reviewer is too worldly in a small way and too spiritually poverty-stricken to convince us that he is wise as well as knowledgeable. Yet this coarse vitality, deficient both in the delicacy, the sensibility and the minute perceptions of eighteenth century vision and in the ability to imagine and construct those vast panoramas painted in tragic and grandiose hues which the nineteenth-century romantic revolutionaries conceived, was in reality peculiarly appropriate to Macaulay's purpose. That purpose was of course to write the history of modern England.

It was appropriate because it was middle class; and those who object to being addressed by one who assumes that in the middle classes all virtue reposes, forget that this assumption is broadly speaking a national assumption. The English aristocracy has always been tainted. European nobles, reared in the shadow of the *Almanach de Gotha*, rightly suspected the English lords as fellow-travellers of the bourgeoisie in that they were capitalist farmers and allied themselves willingly with merchants and bankers. In the eighteenth century political status was attainable by men of humble birth and though in the nineteenth century entry into the House of Commons became more difficult, Evangelical religion made the aristocracy bow to middle class standards in a way which astonished the French, Austrian, or Russian nobility, whose morality retained much of the spirit of ancient aristocratic despotism. Moreover the working classes, far from developing a revolutionary tradition, looked to the middle class for leadership and brought down upon themselves Engels' well-known anathema. The plight of the English radical is unhappy. On only four occasions, in 1832-5, 1869-74, 1905-14, and 1945-50, has he seen his hopes dawn. But the radiant dawn is followed by years of the typically English grey skies of consolidation under conservative or near-conservative rule. For the rest his countrymen have stood exactly where Macaulay stood—slightly to the right of centre. Like Macaulay they mistake the platitudes of the club or pub for political principles, they prefer solid, safe government to adventure or doctrine, and they happily assume that the differences of yesterday belong to the past. The hero of Macaulay's history is William III, a sagacious colourless figure rising above mediocrity, but with no sign of greatness about him: is he not

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paralleled by the Prime Ministers of the past hundred and fifty years? The fate of the exceptions is illuminating: Disraeli and Churchill were long excluded from power, Lloyd George was unable to retain it, and, if Gladstone was permitted to tower above his fellow men, his party broke under the strain of his leadership. Some of us may like to imagine that Macaulay is a caricature of the English middle class ethos; but we are deluding ourselves. He is the political norm.

Not only is the tone appropriate to the purpose but Macaulay achieved his end. At first sight it may be supposed that he failed since he never finished the history, and to suggest that the history of modern England is contained within the period which begins with the death of Charles II to the accession of Queen Anne sounds too paradoxical. But it is true. In the most obvious sense Macaulay wrote the history of his country. What has distinguished Britain in the past two hundred and fifty years from other countries? The answer is its remarkable success in the art of politics. If we want to know why we possess a high degree of freedom; or why we have no problem of church and state; or how our financial stability, which is a necessary condition of our wealth, was established; or how we achieved international independence, at once free from perennial European wars, yet able to intervene decisively when threatened; if we want to know how modern Britain was founded, we must read Macaulay. Macaulay, if he did not invent, at least crystallized the myth of Our Island Story and myths are necessary to every national culture. They become false and injurious only when they cease to bear any relation to present day life; and to see the history of England as the story of civil and religious liberty is still far from grotesque.

What then is the main objection to this kind of history? The revolution which Sir Lewis Namier has effected in the study of English political life is the clue to Macaulay's weakness. The result of telling how freedom slowly broadens down from precedent to precedent had been to produce gross distortions of the kind which made George III into a tyrant who tried to undo all the work of the good Whigs in making the country free and democratic. And the technical triumph which Sir Lewis achieved in re-writing a considerable portion of history was underlined by Professor Butterfield in his polemic against Whig historians who, because they were interested solely in how the past became the present, did not study the past for its own sake, and thus regarded their ancestors as those who were on the right side which won and those who were on the wrong side which lost. The present determination among historians to analyse the sources and distribution of wealth, the shifting power relationships, and the exact structure of institutions, and their distrust of ideology as a key to the understanding of any period of history are inimical to Macaulay's simple view of politics as a struggle for political power between individuals inspired by different ideals. Thus Macaulay's *History* is rapidly coming to be regarded as the mother of error, the fascinating but monstrous creator of a false historical mythology which to despise is the duty of every honest and serious scholar.

Two things, however, still remain to be said. First, it is as much a fallacy to conceive politics in terms of the mechanics of power as it is to see it as the expression of ideas. Men are not such cynical opportunists that when they advocate certain policies or measures they are consciously masking their

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true designs. The historian's task is to get behind their pronouncements and establish their situation but he must never forget that men's ideas are a part of their total situation; to neglect what Fox or Russell or Gladstone said about liberty or progress is as much an error as to imagine that their actions were solely inspired by these ideals. Even if the ideals, as they always are in politics, were imperfectly realised, they are still worthy of comment. Where the work of the technical historian ends—and it ends before such comment—his judgment as a civilised intellectual begins. If he is craven he will leave such comment to his reader and leave him to supply what the reader has a right to expect his author to bequeath.

The second point follows from the first. History as narrative is unfashionable among professional historians, but it is a perfectly valid form of history and to dismiss it as pseudo-literature is puritanical and blind. Any survey of man's existence in the past if it extends over more than a few years must be shaped by the historian's mind and its form will be moulded by his conception of what is important. Macaulay omitted much that is important, in particular the power of religion, but he valued much that ought always to be valued; and he broke new ground in his dazzling chapter on the social history of England at the time of the Glorious Revolution. Nor did he fail to see that the revolution was glorious in the proverbially mundane English fashion. His history will endure not only for its dramatic accounts of battles and deaths or the lucid analysis of the recoinage or the astonishing vitality which he injects into the veins of the characters who cross his pages, but because his vision, though it lacks profundity and even nobility, is wide, clear, and eminently sensible; and because through hard work and out of respect for his readers he fashioned a remarkable style which perfectly expressed his vision of how the world works. If we grant, as we must, that all visions exclude some part of the horizon, and that the clearer the focus upon some issues the hazier and more out of perspective others will appear, we must equally allow that the Whig view of history is certainly not more fallacious than others. Are the cyclical views of history of Vico or Spengler or Toynbee any truer? Do we see, and seeing understand, more of the world's history through Hegel's eyes? And, at any rate with regard to English history, the prophecy by Macaulay and Guizot of the triumph of the middle class is truer than Marx's analysis. There is less nonsense in Macaulay with his unpretentious view of unilinear progress than in the more vaunted historical philosophies with their elaborate and wrong-headed analyses of historical causation and their dubious metaphysics which purport to reveal inexorable and inevitable laws of change; like Paley or John Stuart Mill his inability to be obscure lays him open to the attacks of the methodologists. And the virtues nearest his heart, liberty, progress, and enlightenment, seem still to me to be more admirable criteria against which the sufferings and vicissitudes of man may be set than those exalted to-day which are designed to show how man is so totally in the grip of impersonal forces or of his own sinfulness that he cannot improve his lot by any act of will or intelligence.

NOEL ANNAN.

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INTRODUCTION TO FRENCH LOCAL GOVERNMENT. By BRIAN CHAPMAN.
(Allen and Unwin. 238 pp. 18s.)

HERE, at last, is a first-rate *exposé* of how local government is organized and how it works in France. Mr. Chapman has done good service to every student of modern France, as well as to students of comparative institutions and political science, by the skill with which he has reduced his diverse and complex material to orderliness without over-simplification and to clarity without inaccuracy. His chief purpose has been to give an up-to-date account of the system, explaining precisely the make-up and functions of municipal and general councils, the powers and duties of mayors and prefects, the working of the system of 'tutelage', of administrative courts in relation to local authorities, and of local government finance. He rightly and most valuably adds a special chapter on the organisation of Paris. Important changes have been introduced since 1945, and he has been careful to include the General Statute of April, 1952, and the overhaul of the Ministry of the Interior achieved during M. Jules Moch's long tenure of that office.

In achieving this purpose so admirably, he has done more. He has demonstrated how misleading are the traditional *clichés* about the extreme centralisation of administration in France, so often perpetuated in more general studies of French political life. He makes clear the double functions and ambiguous position of the mayor and the prefect, each the agent of the central authority and yet each, too, the executive officer of the locally elected council: so that local government in France rests on a subtle balance between forces of central and local power. Although the hints of more drastic decentralisation included in the constitution of the Fourth Republic have not been implemented, and are not likely to be under the present régime, Mr. Chapman is wise to emphasize that "the slow and infuriatingly impersonal process suggested by the term centralisation is far from being an accurate picture of French local government" (p. 220). In so far as local decisions are subordinated to the agreement of state officials appointed by the ministries in Paris, the system may be called centralized. But, for the most part, the state official who deals with local matters lives in the area, is fully aware of local outlooks and problems, controls most other officials of the central government within his area, is easily approachable, and in some of his capacities has to represent the locality *vis-à-vis* the central power. Moreover the mayors, as the chief executive officers of the 37,983 communes, ensure that much of the initiative and most of the effective decisions in local government derive from the localities themselves. Politically, since deputies have to cultivate departmental connections and interests and so often share in local government themselves, the danger is more often that provincialism may prevail over national policy than that local life may be sacrificed to excessive regimentation.

Likewise, the extent to which France of the Fourth Republic is a 'welfare state' may be misjudged if the multifarious municipal and departmental activities are overlooked. Local government ranges, as the author shows, from "hospitalization of destitute lunatics" to the precise location of *vespasiennes*, and in many respects plays a larger part in the life of the ordinary Frenchman than the activities of the politicians and bureaucrats in Paris. There is less excuse for forgetting this now that Mr. Chapman's admirable book exists.

DAVID THOMSON.

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FRENCH POLITICS: THE FIRST YEARS OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC. By DOROTHY PICKLES. (*Royal Institute of International Affairs*. 292 pp. 25s.)

ANYONE who seeks to explain French politics undertakes a task that calls for a close understanding of French political attitudes and traditions, and, at the same time, an ability not to become so immersed that the advantage of an outsider's point of view is lost. Mrs. Pickles combines in good measure these two requirements. The result is a book which, if not uniformly stimulating throughout, has at least an excellent final chapter on "The Crisis of Parliamentary Government" and two very useful chapters on the political thinking underlying the French Union and the problems facing it. Those who would seek to understand the ills that beset France, recently called the 'sick man of Europe' by French political leaders themselves, will find much to enlighten them in the final chapter. Institutional problems are put in their proper setting, against a background of the policies to be achieved.

Mrs. Pickles depicts the most urgent problem facing France as a fundamental inability to adapt political habits and political thinking to post-war economic conditions. The traditional ministerial instability and doctrinal disputation was only made possible because of a feeling of economic security. That is now gone, though many Frenchmen remain unaware of that fact. The Frenchman still uses his political institutions as the playground of his political passions and of his local interests. They need however to be used to-day for sterner realities of fundamental economic and financial reforms. Or if, on the other hand, some are aware of the pressing problems facing France in the economic sphere, traditional beliefs in institutional safeguards, giving parliament the whip-hand over the government, prevent the evolution of institutions in the direction of strengthening the government, so that it may enjoy the necessary authority and powers. This analysis of the crisis facing French parliamentary government makes interesting reading in the light of recent developments in France. It remains moreover a valid analysis whether one believes that economic adjustment is a matter of governmental or individual initiative: for, both those who would have the government itself control the economy, and those who argue that it is laden with subsidies and compulsory charges, are agreed that the government needs to enjoy greater authority and powers if anything is to be done.

Mrs. Pickles also pays attention to the working of the constitution on more detailed points, such as the formation of governments and their relation to the Assembly, the working of the electoral law and the relation of ministers and deputies to their parties. But such questions are dealt with but briefly either by way of passing comment throughout the book or in the chapter on "The working of the New Constitution". It is with the wider aspect of parliamentary government that Mrs. Pickles is primarily concerned, with what it must set out to do and whether it is suited to do it. The difficulties in the way are not constitutional, although certain amendments are necessary, in particular the granting to the government of the power to rule by decree. Nor are the difficulties primarily caused by the existence of large communist and Gaullist minorities; it is contended that they do not represent actual threats to the regime rendering it incapable of being worked but are on the contrary reflections of discontent with present political leadership. The

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remedy lies rather in opinion being mobilised in favour of policies which will put aside disputes about fine principles and defence of local interests and tackle instead the adjustment of the French economy to the post-war situation.

Analysis of this kind is however only a minor part of the book, and more is the pity. For the most part it is a political—and indeed almost a running—commentary on the French political scene both before the new Constitution came into force and during the period of the first parliament. Accounts are given of the early post-war hopes, of the difficulties caused by the devastation of the war, of communist intransigence, of the efforts to reconstruct the economy, of the failure to control inflation, of the internal bickering within the governmental coalitions at every turn, and of electoral preoccupations. Much skill has gone into compressing so much into so few chapters. They are also useful in that they portray and recall the political atmosphere in which the Fourth Republic was born and had to establish itself. But they tend to become too much a recital of party tactics, especially socialist tactics, in face of the immediate political issues of the day. Less description and more analysis, especially on the way the institutions worked first under "tri-partisme" and then under the "Third Force", and of the way they settled down to traditional French ways of parliamentary government, would have made this part of the book more enlightening and brought it more into relation with the final analyses. It is, however, full of incidental information, both on the points just mentioned, and on such matters as the working of the nationalised industries, parliamentary procedure, and the budgetary procedure. As already mentioned, the chapters on the French Union are particularly useful. On the whole, it is a book that both those already familiar with the French political scene and those who are somewhat mystified by it will find profitable to read.

K. PANTER-BRICK.

SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, 1949-50. By PETER CALVOCORESSI; with an Introduction by Arnold Toynbee. (*Oxford Press* and *R.I.I.A.* 590 pp. 52s. 6d.)

THE years 1949-50 saw the development of the most acute stages of the "cold war". The authors of the present survey have set themselves the Herculean task of producing an objective account of the happenings of those two years. The prejudices, fears, and the general atmosphere of distrust which characterised the international situation three or four years ago are still very much with us, and so Mr. Calvocoressi and his colleagues have taken great pains to place themselves in a detached position. It is perhaps for this reason that they have produced simply a catalogue of events and a description of the policies of states. An assessment of the real aims and values of these policies is almost totally lacking. This omission is in marked contrast to the lively discussion of the foreign policies of Hitler, Mussolini, the Western Powers, and Russia which appeared in the war time (1939-46) series of surveys, but it is, perhaps, inevitable. The dangers of an attempt at evaluation

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of policies currently continuing, in a book which is intended to be purely historical, are illustrated by the opinion expressed by Mr. Toynbee in his introduction that the cause of the conflict between America and Russia was the invention of the atom bomb: an over-simplified assertion with which many of his contemporaries will disagree.

As a fully documented description of the course of international affairs the survey leaves little to be desired. Arrangement is good. Style is clear, though inclined at times (as in the section on International Co-operation) to a ponderous pomposity.

The tangled threads of British economic policy are unravelled by Mr. R. G. Hawtrey in his section on European Economic Co-operation. This is one of the best explanations of the reasons for the devaluation of the pound and its consequences that has so far appeared. On the other hand, the account of European progress towards economic and military co-operation by means of the Schuman and Pleven plans contains nothing new.

However, much that is new for the general reader is contained in the excellent section on China. It is interesting for westerners to read of Mr. Mao Tse-tung's opinion of them and their governments, and to follow the story of his successful efforts to establish a strong central government. After an examination of the evidence the author concludes that at this time Mao and the Chinese communist party leaned more heavily than is generally believed upon the example of Russia and upon Marxist-Leninist teaching.

This was a period during which the alignment of many states on the side of the U.S.A. or of Russia was decided. It is pointed out that the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949, which ranked the Western European states decisively on America's side, was counter balanced to some extent by the final triumph of the communist forces in China in September 1949 and the signing of the Russo-Chinese treaties on 14 February 1950. The outbreak of the Korean war reacted further to the disadvantage of the West, and caused many governments to re-examine their positions. The attitude of the neutralists of western Europe (particularly of France), and their failure to convince those responsible for the policies of their countries, receives detailed attention. From a mass of information the certain fact emerges that the world in December 1950 was more rigidly divided into two armed camps than had been the case at the beginning of 1949, when some powers still held aloof. In these circumstances the stand taken up by India as an objective observer and a mediator between the combatants in Korea and between East and West was unique. In recognition of this Mr. Calvocoressi has devoted no small amount of space to Pandit Nehru's pronouncements.

We are left with the impression that the two principal protagonists in the conflict between East and West were, during the period under study, following closely similar policies in opposition to each other. Both were bent on the building up of situations of strength in the hope that their opponent would then be prepared to come to terms. The motive forces behind these similar courses of action were presumably different, but the authors of the Survey leave us guessing as to their nature. Imperialism? Ideological fervour? Greed? Fear? Perhaps after all, there is some truth in Professor Toynbee's remark about the atom bomb.

E. JOAN PARR.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE PARTY SYSTEM IN GREAT BRITAIN. By IVOR BULMER-THOMAS. (Phoenix House. 323 pp. 25s.)

THE AUSTRALIAN PARTY SYSTEM. By LOUISE OVERACKER. (Yale University Press; London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. 373 pp. 32s. 6d.)

THE interest now being shown in problems of party structure and organisation in Great Britain may well be something more than the political scientists' contribution to the new nostalgia for Edwardian styles in dress and furnishings. Ostrogorski, Lowell, Belloc and Chesterton, and Graham Wallas, set out to warn their readers against the pitfalls of caucus and machine politics, and to emphasise the dangerous possibilities of a professionalism in politics based upon values purveyed by the penny press. But for a variety of reasons the reader of political dealings associated in the U.S.A. with the times of Randolph Hearst, and described by Lincoln Steffens, was not touched in Great Britain. Graham Wallas feared that we might sink as low in these matters as they had in America and it is interesting to consider why we did not do so. It is possible that the answer will be found somewhere in a consideration of the opportunities for corruption, the toleration of it by the traditions of the country, and the effects it has upon efficient government. The form of government too is of some importance, but of more weight is the general role of government as conceived by the mass of the people. The weakness of the reformer's slogan "turn the rascals out" and "return the government of the people to the people" was that more people than were interested in these calls were interested in keeping government, corrupt and clean, out of their personal calculations. If however the fundamentals of a constitution are sacrosanct and a government's functions limited by law reforming zeal will turn to examining party organisation, for there it may be possible to devise a more effective lever with which to actuate the cumbersome machine. But where the government, legally, can do anything there will be a tendency to argue about what it ought to be made to do. Parties with reasonable hopes of effecting important reforms will gain the support of those people, who, were they living under a system of limited and difficult government, would look for personal favours from politicians. Moreover for corruption to thrive there must be a surplus of wealth for the paying of political hirelings, and an absence of those rational emergencies, at home and abroad, which make racketeering unpatriotic. It is, I think, no accident that books of the type of Mr. Bulmer-Thomas' on the British system have been appearing in the United States for over a generation. Perhaps the House of Commons of 1918-22 is the nearest we have ever come to the political value of President Harding's America—and that is still miles away. (A repetition of the "Coupon" election in 1945 would have been quite inconceivable, not merely because of E.P.T., but because the strength and vigour of the Labour Party meant that Conservative candidates had to be of better calibre and character than those who had merely done well out of the war.)

The current interest in British party organisation is perhaps attributable to the fact that our system of government has achieved a high level of efficiency. Its ability to produce more rapidly than other systems long-term policies (and to adapt these to changing circumstances) and to show a continuity of policy which is not necessarily a polite word for stagnation, is

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due to the increasing dominance of a Cabinet supported by a tightly organised party system. We hear relatively little nowadays about "parliamentary reform"; the second chamber question is a bore; fewer people get excited about delegated legislation; but the questions of the formation of party policy, the selection of candidates, the work of the back bencher,—these seem to be the more interesting and urgent to students of politics. For if we accept in the interests of governmental efficiency the domination of the legislature by the Executive, the policy pursued by the Executive ought, it is felt, to be something on which the rank and file have been consulted, and to which they have made their contribution.

Mr. Bulmer-Thomas' book is the first full-scale study of the British party system that has appeared in 50 years. As such it must be welcomed as filling the gap on our shelves of political volumes so often pointed out to us by foreign students. It deals with the growth of parties, the two-party system, party organisation (parliamentary, local, regional, national and international), ancillary organisation, and it concludes with a review of some current problems. It is cautious and balanced in treatment, and a useful book for the beginner. But it must be said that for those who have a little knowledge, practical and theoretical, of our party system, it is a disappointment. Internal party politics are far more exciting than one would suspect from reading Mr. Bulmer-Thomas' rather formal descriptions of the relations between the central office and the local party; of the selection of candidates; of the influence of trade unions, party agents and important local personalities. There is a reluctance to use real material with names, dates and constituencies. It is, for instance, not possible to say that in all circumstances certain party rules will be used against individuals or local parties which get out of step with headquarters, and therefore it is the more important that reports in the press, particularly the local press, should be used to illustrate the realities of formal party rules, and to give those readers whose practical knowledge of parties is small, some idea of the working of these rules in practice. The Labour Party does most things in public, the Tory Party in private, but Newcastle North had a row almost as interesting as Gateshead's, and the Greenwich Conservatives showed great spirit in fighting amongst themselves in 1950. We are admittedly more discreet in these matters than the Americans, but where there is public material it should be used, and where it is not all quite public and incontrovertible, it is surely useful to indicate the general nature of an intra-party dispute even at the risk of being less than one hundred per cent. accurate. The moves to adopt Mr. Henry Brooke in Hampstead and to drop Capt. Cunningham-Reid in St. Marylebone are the sort of incidents which show a local party actively at work, and go a fair way to illustrating the usefulness of the rule book of the organisation. For the Labour Party abstention from voting is tolerated by the parliamentary party, but what Mr. Dalton has described as "organised and ostentatious abstention" is not. We have to ask, who decides on the degree of organisation and ostentation exhibited? is it a rule applied without question to any Labour member, or are some more vulnerable than others? Mr. Zilliacus was expelled from the Labour Party along with some other "Leftists". He is now back in the party: they are not. Was his "crime" really different from those committed by the others, or is he personally more acceptable than they? Perhaps the others have not tried to get back; it would be interesting to

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know, and this reviewer rather hoped that Mr. Bulmer-Thomas, who has experience in both great parties, might feel able to enlighten us on some of these matters.

Professor Overacker's book says many of the things that Mr. Bulmer-Thomas leaves unsaid. She has as many quotations from Australian newspapers as she has from conference reports. The important individuals are described in their origins and their interests, and the rivalries of ideology and personality give life to her pages. But she does not proceed by anecdote alone, for the main theme of the book is the development of the pattern of Australian politics set by the Australian Labour Party, a party which antedated the formation of the Australian Commonwealth by some years. The Australian Labour Party is, to Australian political values, what Jefferson's party has been to America; a body of sentiments and practices to support or oppose, which, even when electorally defeated, colour the actions and influence the organisation of the victors.

Those who are concerned about the influence exerted over British Labour governments by "outside" bodies like the National Executive and the party conference should study Prof. Overacker's book closely. Such influences have gone much farther in Australia than with us, but nevertheless it seems quite possible to organise a federal government, effective for modern purposes, based upon an elaborate structure of party conferences, executives and "caucuses", in which the M.P. is, in effect, always the delegate of those who sent him to the legislature, and in which the government can proceed only with the consent of the party organs.

R. H. PEAR.

THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM IN BRITAIN, 1918-1951. By D. E. BUTLER.
(Oxford University Press. xiv + 222 pp. 25s.)

IN 1918, when the principle of universal adult franchise in parliamentary elections was virtually established, the radicals and the suffragettes won their campaign for electoral reform. Discussion of our electoral system no longer takes the form of an argument over human rights, but is concerned with technical questions like proportional representation or with relatively minor matters such as the university vote. It is not surprising, therefore, that popular interest in election machinery has been at a low ebb in the period covered by Mr. Butler's book: the slogan, "One man, one vote", cannot be expected to rouse as much feeling as the cry "Votes for women".

This lack of support for further reform is both a symptom and a cause of the decline of the Liberal Party. Only a party that has lost hope of winning an overall majority in the Commons will wish to change the existing law, and when that hope has gone a party will not have sufficient influence to secure any change. It is true that when MacDonald resigned in 1931 a Bill had passed the Commons to introduce the alternative vote, but even had the Labour government survived longer it is not certain that the Bill would have become law. The opposition to the Bill in the Lords was strong and, as the Labour ministers suffered from a lack of enthusiasm for it, whether the alternative vote might have been obtained through the procedure of the Parliament Act is a matter for conjecture. Since then a major change in the franchise, the abolition of the ratepayer qualification in local government

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elections, has taken place without any agitation. Administrative convenience favoured this reform and, while some Conservatives were not keen on the idea, no political party had anything to gain from opposing it.

Mr. Butler's work is divided into two parts; a chronological survey of private and public negotiations over proposals for electoral reform and the changes that have been made is followed by an examination of the way our electoral system has worked in practice. The use of the chronological method was inevitable, but its limitations are sometimes apparent; it may account, for example, for the relegation of the case of the Rev. J. G. MacManaway to a brief footnote. However, many minor topics are fully covered as well as the major incidents like the award of the "flapper" vote in 1928, the fate of P.R. in 1918 and the alternative vote in 1931, and the debates on various questions in 1944 and 1948. The investigation of the operation of the system is especially valuable. The facts relating to plural voting, the demise of independent and minor-party candidates and the cost of elections are clearly set out. There is also an analysis of election results throughout the period and of the relationship between the votes cast for a party and the seats obtained, together with a consideration of the probable consequences of the introduction of P.R. or the alternative vote. The whole volume is a product of diligent scholarship. It is written with steady precision and is destined to take a place among the standard works on the British constitution.

Some parts of the book are of immediate political interest. There is an exhaustive description of the controversy over the university vote and of the allegation that by its abolition the Labour government broke a bargain made at the Speaker's Conference of 1944. Should the Conservatives carry out their declared intention to restore university representation, it is likely that politicians will turn to Mr. Butler for factual material and moral support. But the author's judicious conclusions are unlikely to give much comfort to anyone. "The strongest charge that can be sustained is that the Labour Party in 1944 had allowed certain misconceptions about the duration of the bargain to grow up . . . and that in shattering these illusions it gave many people the idea that it had broken faith." When Mr. Butler suggests, in negative fashion, that the Labour government were not guilty of "gross unconstitutionality", he is undoubtedly correct. To be unconstitutional, an action must break either a law or a convention. The extinction of university representation was not illegal, and it is contrary to the record of history to suggest that changes in the electoral system are subject, by convention, to agreement between the major parties.

The analysis of by-election results is also of contemporary significance. The by-election gives the voter an opportunity to register a voice of protest against the government without making a serious decision as to whether the government ought to be replaced. Between 1932 and 1939 the share of the poll obtained by Labour candidates at by-elections was roughly five per cent. greater than the percentage of the poll won by Labour candidates in the same constituencies in the General Election of 1935. So as fewer people trouble to vote at by-elections, and mainly because the by-election tends to under-estimate the popularity of the government, it is usually unwise to attach too much importance to by-election returns. But the results of the recent by-elections at South Sunderland, Abingdon, and Birmingham

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(Edgbaston) fail to fit into the pattern of the past. It is unprecedented for there to be no swing against the government over a year after the previous general election, but in these three seats the Conservative share of the poll (ignoring Liberal interventions in two by-elections) increased by an approximate average of two per cent. If we add to this the proposition that by-elections tend to under-assess the popularity of the government, the outlook for supporters of the Labour Party is black.

In his introduction Mr. Butler has commented upon the neglect of electoral matters in academic study. This book, together with the other Nuffield surveys of the 1945, 1950 and 1951 elections, forms the core of British electoral studies. Elections are a basic feature of the democratic way of life, and their earlier neglect is, in part, a reflection of the relative weakness of political science in British universities before the war. Nuffield College is now playing a leading rôle in the attempt to remedy this weakness.

PETER G. RICHARDS.

THE MINERS: A HISTORY OF THE MINERS' FEDERATION OF GREAT BRITAIN FROM 1910 ONWARDS: YEARS OF STRUGGLE. By R. PAGE ARNOT. (*Allen and Unwin.* 567 pp. 35s.)

MR. ARNOT's history has rightly expanded in scale as it moves towards the present, but one cannot help feeling that in this volume the material has become unmanageable. Of this enormous book of 567 pages, twelve out of fifteen chapters are devoted to the period from 1910 to November 1926, and the shapely organisation of the material in such detail seems to have proved impossible. In a way Mr. Arnot has had to deal with almost every aspect of British domestic, political, and economic history through these years, and at the same time to keep his subject firmly in the foreground. I believe that the decade 1910-1920 is possibly the most important and the most neglected in the recent domestic history of this country, and until it has been properly examined probably nothing better than the present fantastically learned volume is possible. What is quite clear is that Mr. Arnot's Marxism does not provide a sufficient clue.

Thus compared with his excellent first volume, Mr. Arnot has failed in his second. His failure is, however, more important than much success. Here is an essential book for anyone who would understand about modern Britain, about the coal industry, and about that extraordinary community within a community which the miners form. Mr. Arnot knows all the facts and most of them are here, and his two volumes taken together are undoubtedly the most solid and important account that exists of any British trade union. What is more, Mr. Arnot has seen throughout his tragic and heroic story that one cannot write merely the history of a trade union, and that one must always reach beyond into the fabric of society itself. What we need now, very badly, is a continuation of this history up to the present with an account of the developing effects of nationalisation and a proper sociological analysis of the mining community in Britain. Only the self-understanding which sociology can bring will fully illuminate the vitality, the nature, and the needs of this most important and much enduring section of our society.

D. G. MACRAE.

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FEDERALISM: AN AUSTRALIAN JUBILEE STUDY. *Edited by G. SAWER.*
(Published for the Australian National University by F. W. Chesbire,
Melbourne. 1952. pp. xii + 254. With appendix of leading constitutional cases and Index. 39s. 6d.)

It is very doubtful whether any federal system has searched its soul more often than the Australian Commonwealth. From almost the day of its birth the great debate—"Federalism, Success or Failure"—has echoed through its texts, its referenda, and its elections. Why is this so? Does its constitutional record compare so badly with its federal contemporaries—or for that matter with any other constitutional system? Is its ceaseless self-criticism a reflection of a high craftsmanship in political matters? Or is it simply the impetuosity and immaturity of a nation young in the ways of federal politics? Is it the restlessness of a so-called "Left" party for whom there is a permanent evil in a constitution which denies the central government anything less than complete authority? Or is it some endemic illness in the federal structure which all men and all parties recognise and desire to cure? Whatever the precise reasons for this constitutional heart-searching, it is clear that what always draws the crowds to the intellectual playing fields in Australia is not its parliamentary system, its administrative arrangements, its local institutions, or its political ideas, but the traditional sport of "federalism" *versus* the unitary state.

In a sense this Australian jubilee study of federalism falls into this tradition of confession and self-criticism. The difference on this occasion, however, is twofold. In the first place the level of analysis, speculation, and discussion is not merely more dispassionate, but, in some of its parts, of a quality rarely achieved before. In the second place, there is, at long last, some recognition that the ideas of moral and political philosophy form an indispensable field of reference for the great debate. For this the contributors to the jubilee seminar convened by the Australian National University in Canberra deserve a large measure of praise.

The eight papers which compose this volume are not devoted to one specific federal problem. Nor are they confined to Australian experience, including as they do one paper on Canadian federal finance, and one paper on the fiscal arrangements under the Northern Ireland system of devolution. The contents page of this volume, indeed, contains a heterogeneity of titles. Yet in spite of their apparent diversity these papers really focus on two questions: first, what is the most efficient mode of distributing fiscal resources between the central and provincial governments in a federation?; and secondly, by what means can federal systems survive and justify themselves in a world of rapid social and economic change?

The four papers which deal with the fiscal problem are undoubtedly of much value. There is a fine study of the legal aspects of taxation and grant in the relations of Northern Ireland and Great Britain from Professor Montrose; an admirable account by Professor Mackintosh of federal finance in Canada; a stimulating short essay by Mr. Colin Clark on the principles of fiscal decentralization; and a competent diagnosis of the federal-state fiscal predicament in Australia from Mr. H. P. Brown. Once due homage has been paid to sound scholarship, however, one must point out that none of these papers throw any exceptional light on the two questions which lie at the heart of the matter: namely how fiscal resources can be related to specific functions; and

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how the units of a federal state can enjoy both a sufficiency of resources and freedom in their use. Professor Montrose does, for a fleeting moment, excite some hopes by asking three questions: "What are the just financial relations which should exist between politically organized states of different degrees of social and economic circumstance and development which are nevertheless bound together in a political union? Is it logically possible to isolate certain aspects of total welfare which may be called federal welfare? Is it ethically right to require all citizens of the wider federal union to make equal contributions to the federal welfare?" (p. 4). But unfortunately Professor Montrose gives no direct answer to these crucial questions.

The four following papers contain matter of a different kind. Their concern is with law, politics, and administration, and not the propositions of federal finance. In this group Professor Wheare lays down some of the familiar reasons which lead men to federate; Sir Douglas Copland discusses the administrative devices which enable the federal and state governments in Australia to work in concert on matters of national concern; and Professor Sawyer examines the vagaries of judicial review. These three papers are again of high quality and deserve the closest attention. Few, however, will feel slighted by the view that it is Professor Partridge's paper on the "Politics of Federalism" which offers by far the most illuminating and original contribution to the subject of federalism. His paper is a gem. From beginning to the end he pursues the old assumptions and the ancient arguments with a sustained rigor, clarity, and penetration. He turns the scrubby shibboleths over and over, to raise new questions, suggest new answers, and provide a rich fund of ideas for research: "... to discuss whether or not our system of government has proved adequate to its tasks, we must consider how we establish what those tasks are" (p. 177). "Has the constitution permitted to be done what the political parties or public opinion have felt needs to be done?" (p. 178). "To what degree, and in what ways, has our federal system forced governments or parties or public opinion to accommodate themselves to its own requirements..." (p. 178). "Is there any sense in asking what popular attitudes are to the constitution as it now exists?" (p. 182). And so on. True, Professor Partridge may not attempt to answer all his own questions; and, very often, some of his answers fall below the level of the questions he raises, but here is, at least, a style of speculation, of analysis and argument which is all too rare in Australian political literature.

Enough has been said to indicate the nature and quality of this volume. For the student of federal government it is an indispensable work.

S. R. DAVIS.

THE CONCEPT OF EMPIRE: BURKE TO ATTLEE, 1774-1947. *Edited by*
GEORGE BENNETT. (Black. 434 pp. 18s.)
THE STATUTE OF WESTMINSTER AND DOMINION STATUS. (Fifth Edition.)
By K. C. WHEARE. (Oxford University Press. xvi + 347. 21s.)

THE only suitable sentiment towards the Commonwealth is one of admiring astonishment—admiration of the delicate tracery of its patterns, astonishment that it exists at all. Moreover, here at least it is true that wonders never cease—in two senses: first, the Commonwealth produces almost each year

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some manifestation, some characteristic more awesome, much stranger than before; second, the more one learns about the Commonwealth, the more one is surprised.

In the last decade both Commonwealth and Empire (or, if we prefer, both the independent and dependent parts of the Commonwealth) have been more consistently and in more various ways before the public eye of this country than for very many decades past. And the literature on the subject fairly accurately reflects this growing interest and awareness. The book which Mr. Bennett has edited, for the admirable British Political Tradition series, is a notable addition. How fitting that the concept of empire should find a place in this series; how fitting, equally, that students of the Commonwealth should be reminded of the movements and conflicts of British thought on the subject from the beginnings to the present day.

At a first reading, an impression of the conflicts and variety of viewpoints, both over time and at any one period, may predominate. Here is the eloquent argument between Burke and Hastings, the violent contrasts between Cobbett, Cobden, Bentham, and Buxton, the divergence between Goldwin Smith and Disraeli or between Seeley and Hobson, the gap between Churchill and Attlee. Variety there certainly is, and Mr. Bennett's arrangement of the documents in such sections as those labelled "Economists and Radicals", "The Evangelicals", "The Colonial Reformers", and so on tends perhaps to emphasise this aspect rather than any continuity. Yet the continuity is striking enough for all that—and would be even clearer if these documents could be placed for a moment alongside a similar collection of French or Dutch material.

Mr. Bennett gives us 128 documents arranged in sixteen sections, each illustrating a school of thought at a particular period. He has chosen his material from books, speeches in Parliament and outside, pamphlets, letters and memoranda. He has wisely been prepared to use some of the more important statesmen and writers more than once; thus Joseph Chamberlain 'scores' seven, Milner five and so on. There is a nice balance between colonies of settlement and of conquest, between periods of time, between statesmen and publicists. Many of the documents carry useful short notes which give their context.

Of course, it is never easier than with a selection of documents for a reviewer to complain that the editor has omitted this or that important item; and never is the reply to go and do better more apt. Limits of space are always severe and Mr. Bennett has used his four hundred pages well. Just one point we will permit ourselves: the section on "Criticism from the Left" properly includes passages from Shaw, Hobson, MacDonald, Morel, and Leonard Woolf, but the Labour movement's attitude to colonial issues during the period 1900-1914 included two approaches which are not quite adequately represented here: first, a jealous protection of British labour standards from competition by underpaid colonial labour; and second, a combination of class-solidarity and humanitarianism which was offended by cheap colonial labour.

Mr. Bennett has contributed a short introduction to his documents; here the only regret is that he felt it had to be so short. It does serve to whet the appetite for the material that follows and he has discussed the documents from an angle a little different from the way in which they are arranged. But it

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tends to fall between being a critical essay and an expanded table of contents, and this might have been avoided if he had given himself a little more space. It is also to be regretted that Mr. Bennett, who has clearly sifted a great mass of material, should have restricted himself to a tiny one-page bibliography; there will surely be many readers who would have valued more guidance into the sources.

The fifth edition of Professor Wheare's standard work tries to deal with the important changes that have taken place from 1948 up to the end of 1952. This has been achieved mainly by additions to some of the chapters (especially to that on "The Statute and the Monarchy") and by a new chapter raising the question "The end of Dominion Status?" One of the consequences of "our changing Commonwealth", however, is that while the book is thus brought technically up to date, it cannot fail to have a somewhat old-world air about it. It will, of course, always be *the* book on the Statute of Westminster; it is no longer quite *the* book on Commonwealth membership which it could once claim to be. At the very least, that aspect of membership with which it deals is a smaller part of the whole picture than it was at the time of the first edition.

W. H. MORRIS-JONES.

BRITAIN'S ECONOMIC PROBLEM. By C. A. R. CROSLAND. (*Cape*. 224 pp. 12s. 6d.)

Nearly all discussion of Britain's economic difficulties is heavily overlaid with platitudes. The nature of the problem has been analysed so often and from so many points of view that there is little new to say. Everyone now knows—or there is no excuse for them if they do not—that the war and the convulsions of the years immediately after did no more than exacerbate trends of older origin, and that these trends and the troubles they brought with them were inevitable in a world whose economic centre of gravity was moving away from its traditional position. That more people did not realise it earlier was due, in the main, to their unwillingness to see themselves as poor relations whose salvation depended on efforts which they were unprepared to make.

But if the nature of the disease is understood, its cure is still a matter of vigorous dispute. One may propose, with those whose memory stops in 1930, to drop all controls and restore the convertibility of the pound in the belief that some mystical process of adjustment will follow and the world recover its balance. Or one may join hands with Lord Beaverbrook and the Bevanites in a new Empire Crusade, in the hope that the sterling area can progress to a solution of its troubles along the road of happy self-sufficiency. Neither of these approaches is very realistic; the tragedy is that there are so many people who believe in them. Not, however, Mr. Crosland.

His analysis of the background to the problem, which takes up about a third of the book, is the familiar one and is quite well stated. Most of the rest is (as it should be, for he writes as a politician as well as an economist) concerned with remedies, and he can hardly be blamed if there is nothing startlingly original in what he proposes. His realism is refreshing; he does not, as too many people do, shut his eyes to the unpleasantnesses which some of his proposals will entail.

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There is no help to be expected from a change in the terms of trade in Britain's favour. Apart from short-term fluctuations, the probability is that the prices of raw materials and food will rise in relation to those of manufactured goods, and that this rise will continue perhaps for several decades. Britain must therefore commit herself to a long period of export expansion, concentrating as far as possible on goods with a high conversion value. At the same time she must help all she can to develop the sources of raw materials, which in the long run will increase supplies and lower their prices. (Mr. Crosland avoids the pitfall into which a number of other economist-politicians have fallen, of expecting quick returns from development programmes; he is also much too wise to suggest that the need to improve Britain's terms of trade is the only, or even the main, reason for wanting development programmes.)

There is nothing original in most of this. Nor is there in his second argument, that before the sterling area can stabilise its balance of payments there must be co-ordinated action to make sure that a temporary easing is not followed by a wild burst of spending. The sterling area is well worth preserving, for political as well as economic reasons, but it does not exist in order to allow a few of its members to live off the others. Britain has not been an offender—Mr. Crosland produces convincing figures to show that her contribution to the rest of the area in recent years has been just about as great as what she has received—and one or two other countries like India cannot really be expected to cut their imports very far. In other words, Australia and New Zealand must be asked to show greater restraint, but at the same time a means must be found of circumventing the rule of the game by which reductions fall on sterling as well as dollar imports.

This is far short of the imperial autarky argument; it means no more than that the sterling area should carry out what development it can and make what cuts it can in its dollar imports. It would not be desirable to isolate one half of the world from the other. If the American economy booms, or if the population of the United States continues to grow at its present rate so that in time America becomes a net importer of some of the things she now exports, there will be no great problem. The acid test of the political capacity of the rest of the world to manage its own affairs will be if, in the meantime, there is an American slump. Mr. Crosland clearly does not think that Britain could insulate herself against its consequences; but he does believe that it should be possible to prevent the worst happening, and that the means for doing so are broadly speaking the same political measures which would be needed to bring about the changes in structure necessary for the type of development he has outlined earlier.

The most valuable part of his book is where he deals with the internal policies of Britain, and it is directed against both the "dash for freedom" school and those who want public control or public ownership for their own sakes. Central control there must be, perhaps accompanied by the extension of public ownership. There must also be full employment, since at any lower level the industrial and economic structure of the country tends to greater rigidity (a point unfamiliar to many on the political Right, but worth thinking about). But Mr. Crosland is highly contemptuous of those who advocate any or all of these things without knowing why. Not a single piece of control, not a single measure of nationalisation, should be proposed

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unless it can be shown to serve the overriding purpose of restoring economic balance. Anything else is irrelevant.

Mr. Crosland is a Labour Member of Parliament. The significance of his using such an argument is considerable, and it is even more significant that he is far from alone in the Labour Party. Inside Britain, the main socialist objectives of the past have been so nearly attained that the present generation can afford to look for different reasons for the next stage of action. The cynic might carp, and argue that this shows no more than a desire for self-justification even when the forms of socialism have ceased to be applicable. But Mr. Crosland would reply, with a ring of assurance in his voice, that it simply proves that a Britain socialist since 1918 or 1900 would have escaped many of the troubles which have befallen it.

T. E. M. McKITTERICK.

SHORTER NOTICES

SEEDTIME OF THE REPUBLIC. By CLINTON ROSSITER. (*Harcourt Brace & Co.* 358 pp. 50s.)

THIS book traces the origins of the American tradition of political liberty. The first part describes the circumstances in which the republic was born. There are chapters on the government of the American colonies, their religion and attitude towards religion, their economy, their social structure and social life, their state of education and the intellectual climate. The second part portrays some of the men who played a formative part in moulding the young republic. They included Thomas Hooker, Roger Williams, and above all, Benjamin Franklin. The third part is concerned with what the author calls the heritage: that is, the political ideas which evolved or developed between 1765 and 1776. This part contains chapters discussing in turn the general nature of American political life and the sources of American political theory during this vital decade; the rights of man; and the pattern of government. Professor Rossiter writes with deep feeling for and understanding of the men, the ideas, and the environment. He considers that the heritage remains a living force in contemporary American life, although he is not quite certain that it is appropriate to modern circumstances.

THE TOOLS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE. By JOHN MADGE. (*Longmans, Green & Co.* 308 pp. 25s. net.)

THE social sciences have undergone an immense expansion during the past 25 years, and their methods have been transformed and in some respects even revolutionized. It is highly desirable that social scientists should pause to consider with some care the directions in which the social sciences are moving and the instruments which they are using to advance knowledge. The object of this book is to describe and discuss the practical techniques which social scientists have evolved. Professor Madge begins with a description of the linguistic problems, or perhaps one should say semantics. He traces the search for a distinctive language applicable to each group and each social science. He goes on to examine the status and condition of logic. The next chapter deals with documents in relation to social research,

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including in that comprehensive term not only personal documents such as diaries, letters, and autobiographies, but also objective documents such as records, reports, official histories, case studies, etc. The interpretation of documents is, of course, a matter of interest and difficulty. Professor Madge deals in Chapter 3 with first-hand observation, which he rightly regards as an essential part of empirical social science. He then goes on to treat of interviews of different kinds, and subsequently with the experimental method. The concluding chapter is entitled "The Limits of Social Science". This consists of 5 pages of a wholly inadequate and inconclusive kind, which are certainly not up to the standard of the rest of the work.

CURRENT LEGAL PROBLEMS, 1953. Edited by GEORGE W. KEETON and GEORG SCHWARZENBERGER. (Stevens & Sons. 324 pp. 37s. 6d.)

THIS is the sixth volume to be published containing the annual course of lectures which is given under this title by the Faculty of Laws at University College, London. As in former years the lectures cover a wide variety of subjects possessing in many instances not only legal interest but also political, social, or economic significance. The first lecture is on "The Influence of Remedies on Rights" by Sir Raymond Evershed, the Master of the Rolls. This is followed by three lectures on African questions: one on the constitutional crisis in South Africa by Professor Keeton; a second on federation in Central Africa by Professor Norman Bentwich; and a third on constitutional experiments in British West Africa by Mr. D. C. Holland. Then come a lecture on "Peacetime Espionage" by Mr. S. Prevezer, and two lectures on questions relating to land: the first by Mr. Fitzgerald on "The State and Title to Land"; the second by Mr. E. H. Scammell on "The Development of Land under the Planning Acts". Other interesting lectures are those on "Copyright Law Revision" by Mr. E. R. H. Ivamy, "The Failure of the Astor Trust" by Mr. O. R. Marshall, and "The Bonn and Paris Agreements" by Dr. Schwarzenberger. We hope that this series will continue to be published annually.

THE CHANGING LAW. By THE RT. HON. SIR ALFRED DENNING. (Stevens. 122 pp. 10s.)

THIS short book consists of five addresses which Lord Justice Denning delivered recently in various universities. They deal with the spirit of the British constitution; with the rule of law in the welfare state; with the changing civil law; with the rights of women; and with the influence of religion. The author deliberately focused his addresses on a common theme, which is an analysis of the profound changes which are taking place in our law. Sir Alfred Denning belongs to the small *avant-garde* of eminent lawyers who are not afraid of change; who think that much change in the law is both necessary and desirable; and who themselves participate in the process of changing it. For these reasons, and also because he has a broad outlook in which professional culture and humanism are well blended, Lord Justice Denning is always interesting and always worth reading or listening to. The most important essay in the book is that on "The Rule of Law in the Welfare State". The general tenour of this address is distinctly optimistic about the extent to which the judiciary is legally competent and

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adequately equipped to control the executive in Britain today. One has the impression that the author has selected the judicial decisions which favour his general theme that the rule of law is being maintained in the welfare state. By a different choice of cases one could arrive at a very different conclusion.

WHO KILLED KENYA? By COLIN WILLS. (Dobson. 111 pp. 9s. 6d.)

MR. WILLS is not a resident in East Africa; he appears to have no intellectual or ideological axes to grind. He has travelled extensively on both coasts of that unhappy continent. He has listened to what men of various coloured skins say in Kenya and has taken the trouble to learn from books the historical background to one of the grimmest of contemporary social problems. He has written a book which is well worth reading, for it gives a surprisingly cool and objective account of what is happening in Kenya. It may help people to understand how it has come about that one of the most unwarlike and "cowardly" of African tribes has, with desperate courage, taken to a campaign of the most savage violence and murder, not only against the European, but against its African brothers, and why a British administration has reduced itself to the sterile policy of merely killing "terrorists". The situation is a shameful blot upon our colonial record and threatens the settlers and ourselves with a terrible racial nemesis. It is good that people should know the facts, though things have probably gone too far in Kenya, Central Africa, and South Africa to prevent the white man from reaping the disastrous fruits of his insensate treatment of the black man.

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