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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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THE BIG IDEA (XVI)

By C. H. DOUGLAS.

Dynamics is the science of Force—strictly speaking, of Force in the Absolute. When we come to specific Dynamics—Aero-dynamics, Hydrodynamics, Thermodynamics, etc., we expect to find, and do appear to find in general, a kind of absolute dynamics running through them. But it is often forgotten, and it is most vital to remember, *that we know nothing whatever about Force*—we merely know that *things* of various kinds behave in a particular way in what we agree to call similar conditions. It is perhaps one of the strongest arguments against the correctness of our conventional idea of time, that broadly speaking, anything I could do last Thursday, under certain conditions, I can do this Thursday, although I am apt to say "Of course this Thursday is not the same as last Thursday." That is to say, I can repeat the experiment, although one, at least of the conditions is not the same.

This digression is necessary by reason of the fact that there is a tendency, which can be traced to the Encyclopedists who were the forerunners and preparers, *inter alia*, of the French Revolution, to treat of social forces—Social Dynamics—as though they could be separated from human beings reacting to them.

But in fact, human beings do *not* react in the strict sense to "social forces." The conception of the exteriorisation of force (like the exteriorisation of Divinity) is quite modern in its general acceptance. It is not easily *dis*provable in connection with inorganic matter (any more than the Pure Idealism of Bishop Berkley is any easier to disprove than to prove) and it seems to afford a technique of design, although an alternative might be found. But to apply this idea, as for instance, Socialists apply it, as though individuals were iron filings which, if placed in a magnetic field, would obediently assume a certain pattern, is contrary to all experience. Sir Farquhar Buzzard, the well-known doctor, no doubt had something of this kind in mind when he said "It is the business of a physician to treat a patient, not a disease."

The people who say "It is the system we are fighting, not men" are in general, of course, people who don't want to do any fighting at all. By asserting that it is electricity they hate, not the power-station, they keep well away from the troops defending the power-station. To them, the petition "Father, *forgive* them, *they* know not what they do" is conveniently taken to mean that no guilt is involved, and therefore nothing need be done about it. The still graver implication that *forgiveness* is only asked for those who are unconscious, is rarely given any consideration whatever.

Human beings do not re-act to "social forces," they react to facts, although not necessarily what are commonly called material facts. When a considerable portion of the population of the Eastern United States developed a wild panic at the broadcast of Mr. H. G. Wells's Martian Invasion, that was a fact, even if it was fiction. "Freedom" does not interest people, as soon as they realise that it does not mean *being* free.

There is no more remarkable feature of the present chaos than the exoneration, immunisation, and, in many cases, glorification of the chief actors. If we abolished, as quickly as possible, the whole system of rewards and punishments, that might lead at no great distance of time to something like the millenium. But a system which hangs the perpetrator of a single killing, and canonises the author of ten million murders is simply a school for gangsters. *Circumspice.*

There is only one sound basis for co-operative society, and that is individual and personal responsibility. It is no part of my intention to rest any argument upon theological grounds except where these themselves are capable of demonstration, but it does seem to me to be difficult to have a plainer and flatter repudiation of collectivism in all its aspects, and of the idea that an organisation can absolve an individual of the responsibility for his actions, than the statement "He took upon *Himself*, the sins of the world" [Society].

Probably the future of humanity turns on the answer to a single question:

"Does Social Power proceed from within, or does it reside in guns, tanks and aeroplanes"?

It appears to be indisputable that there is some definite, conscious, design operating to pervert the efforts of men to their own destruction. Many people have dealt with it—it is an idea as old as recorded history. Lincoln accepted it as axiomatic in his lament that you can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you can't fool all the people all of the time.

Obviously, if "the best brains" are concentrated on fooling as many as possible as much of the time as possible, "the best brains" have, from their point of view, a good reason. I think I know the reason.

The most irresistible social force is Integrity.

When, a short time ago, a body of workmen "somewhere in England," on finding that they were working on material "subject to Japanese Military Inspection" refused to con-

tinue, they did something much more important than framing windy Atlantic Charters.

Integrity is single-mindedness—the mind of a little child. It is the test of quality before quantity.

If success is to attend the efforts of monetary reformers, *inter alia,* it will not be because of numbers. It will be because of a sufficient *quality* of Integrity.

(To be continued)

FROM WEEK TO WEEK

The "B".B.C., which often broadcasts in English, never omits Hitler's (verbal) attacks on the Jews. You see the idea? Hitler is the enemy of the Jews, Hitler is your enemy. Therefore the Jews are your friends. So if you win, you do the handsome thing for the Jews. If you lose—well, what do *you* think? What happened to the Germans at the hands of the Jews, when the Germans lost?

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Have you noticed the steady stream of suggestion that the luxurious rubber-planters of Malaya were in some way (chiefly by drinking whiskey which ought to have been exported to America, apparently) responsible for the fall of Singapore?

The rubber-planters of Malaya, by cultivating rubber plants imported from Brazil, transferred the all-important rubber industry to the British Empire, and they aren't going to be allowed to forget it. Exactly what part of their business it was to repair the damage done by the Labour-Socialist Party, in retarding the defence of Singapore, is not disclosed.

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"Soviet Russia has not yet got rid of every trace of her origin which she owed to the Grand Orient. They are still working hand in hand in that country. Before the world war of 1914-1918, the Grand Orient had founded the 'Renovators Lodge' in Paris with the object of overthrowing Tsarism." (Thus sacrificing 5,000,000 French lives—Ed.). "Another Lodge called the 'Purifying Flame' has now been founded for the purpose of 'getting rid' of Stalin. Litvinoff-Finkelstein, a Jewish member of the Grand Orient of France," (Russian Ambassador to U.S.—Ed.) "and leading members of the Ogpu, are the chief Conspirators in Russia at the present time (1931)."

— LUDENDORFF: *The Coming War.*

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Mr. Somerset Maugham, has written an article for an American magazine entitled *Why do you dislike us?*

The same question occurred to us, too, after sampling some Lease-Lend ham.

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The new Finance Bill makes stricter the law dealing with income-tax frauds and defaults: where any fraud or wilful default has been committed in any year since 1936-37 extra assessments and surcharges may be made at any time, although the existing time limit for such procedure may have expired.

This provision is in the same spirit as that retrospective legislation which makes into crimes acts which were not crimes at the time when they were done, and which increases the punishment exacted on misdeeds in the past: when such measures can be imposed without even protest, no man can have security and the first foundation of a bearable society is undermined.

The Bill also proposes to extend the present time limit for starting proceedings for recovery of fines.

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An outspoken criticism of programmes for post-war reconstruction is made by Dr. Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester, in the Gloucester Diocesan magazine:—

"The papers are full of speeches which are being made by every type of theoretical politician about reconstruction after the war.

"As I read them I begin to feel that while the effect of the war on the country may be partly good, and the extent to which it does harm may be remedied, if the proposed reconstructions were forced upon us the injury would be irreparable.

"I hope we may be allowed an interim period in which we may think of what is going to happen, because it is the idealists, the faddists, the progressists, or whatever one may call them, who are reconstructing the world at the present time, and all the intelligent people are engaged on doing their best to win the war. We want the intelligent people to advise us as to what has to be done in the future."

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An enthusiastic journalist of the *News Chronicle* is impressed by the "very valuable" effort being made to batter down class consciousness in the huge new workers' hostels built to accommodate 1,000 or so people in standard cubicles (ungratefully called "cells" by the workers) and public rooms. The aspect of the building is depressingly described as "grey in colour, symmetrical in design and functional in purpose. . . rather like a factory in a futuristic film." Never mind, it has all the "amenities," and the writing room is hung with reproductions of the best French Impressionist paintings!

The workers themeslevs register a different verdict by avoiding the hostels whenever it is humanly possible. The result is that most of the hostels, erected near the munitions works scattered about the countryside, are half empty. In some, less than 25 per cent. of the places are occupied, even in remote country districts where other living-room is extremely difficult to get. The bureaucrats who materialised the 'progressive' idea of workers' hostels with all possible amenities (except laundries), are now toying with the still more progressive project of forcing the workers to live in them.

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THE JEWISH CHAMPION

An extract from "Punch," April 10, 1847.

Mr. Disraeli has written no less than three novels to further the great cause of Jewish ascendancy, and to prove that the battle of the Constitution is to be fought in Holywell Street. The clever 'litterateur' anticipates a golden age, should his views be carried out, but he forgets that it is, after all, only an age of Mosaic gold that he is contending for. After reading his last work of *Tancred,* we took quite a fresh view of all the itinerant sons of Israel whom we met

in the street of the Great Metropolis. "Look at that old clothes-man," said we to ourselves; "who would think that the unmixed blood of Caucasus runs through the veins of that individual who has just offered us nine-pence for our penultimate hat, and is refusing to give us ten-pence for our preter-plu-perfect, or rather more than finished and done for, highlows?"

It is evident that Mr. Disraeli has determined in his own mind, that until there is a Mosaic Parliament, sitting in Rag Fair, the object of his great mission will be unaccomplished. We shall begin to suspect that Mr. Disraeli is the poet of MOSES AND SON'S Establishment, and that "Costume Castle" is to be the foundation-stone of a new Jerusalem, removed from over the way, that is to say, from the other side of the world, for the convenience of business. The Jews are sharp fellows no doubt, and many of them are very amiable, excellent people; but we wish Mr. Disraeli would reform the errors of his favourite race, before he calls upon us to succumb entirely to its influence. How is it that Jew-manufactured-clothes always tumble to pieces and wear out in no time? that pencils purchased of the Jews are ninety-nine parts stick to one part lead? that oranges bought of the Jews are eleven bad to one good? that Mosaic jewellery is an imposition altogether? and that if you give an old coat to a Jew for a canary, the bird is sure to have the pip, the hooping cough, or the mumps? How is it that a Jew attorney is the worst of his class? and a Jew's-harp a wretched take-in—a miserable lyre? Why is it that they are always the sons of Israel who call for your broken china to mend, and never bring it back again? or sell you sets of jugs which you find upon using them are full of cracks on which your attention has not at the first glance been—though the jugs have—rivetted? When Mr. Disraeli will clear up these few little matters, outstanding, by no means on the credit side, in our account with the Jews, we may begin to join him in his demand for Mosaic Institutions, to replace those we at present live under.

The Con-quest of Nature

By H. J. MASSINGHAM

The book I propose to write about reveals how monetary reform touches subjects that appear to be remote from it. It is called *The Discipline of Peace* and is written by a young Midlands doctor and biologist, and why it is important I shall try to indicate in a sentence. It is the first direct, reasoned, wide-embracing and scientific attack that has yet appeared upon the concept of material Progress which has for a century proved so disastrous to the welfare of our native countryside, in soil-fertility, in plant-life, in the nutritional values for both animals and men, in agriculture and in the living-power of our farms, villages and small towns. The admirable cartoonist, Low, once gave us a pictorial representation of Progress in the form of the Eskimo twins, Upanupanup and Onanonanon, conducting, I may add, their celebrated tour from the jellyfish to the angel. It is the philosophy underlying this notion, whose validity the war has scattered to the four corners of the earth, that Dr. Barlow has in a somewhat stiff and cumbrous style but with a very remarkable quality of intellectual synthesis set himself to undermine. His idea is that the delegates to the Peace Conference (if it ever arrives) must, in order to constitute a peace that is not merely a breather before another conflict even more gigantic than the present, renounce the bad philosophy based on bad economics which has brought western "Christendom" to disaster and painfully feel after another which is nearer to reality. What is the other?

Primarily, it is one which recognises the inadequacy of present-day science, obsessed with the inorganic and abstracted concepts of matter and energy, to account for the co-operative architecture of plant-life as a system of life in which the inorganic plays but a small and subordinate part. Organic life, whether in soil, plant or animal, is an infinitely delicate and subtle series of balances woven into a pattern which is not susceptible to the crude definitions of the "survival of the fittest," still less to Huxley's gloss upon the "cosmic process" as a "gladiatorial show" or anarchy of the jungle. Now this anarchy of the jungle is a true description of the 19th century individualism which divested economics first of all religious and finally of moral restraints and has culminated in the predatory State of modern times. In the world of men this philosophy has led to a crescendo of wars which actually threatens the survival of the human race; in the world of nature it has led to a violent dislocation of natural balances and a fearful impoverishment both of wild life and of natural resources; in agriculture, it has led to a brigandage in the treatment of the soil whose consequences over vast areas of originally fertile land are soil-erosion. To operations of predatory commerce and a raptorial economics science itself has lent all its magical and manipulative powers, while its over-specialised and highly fragmented methods has deceived it into interpreting the natural order and discipline of life as a mechanistic arrangement of raw material capable of unlimited exploitation. The fundamental reason why we look upon nature merely as a source of supply, as a "bargain basement," comes not merely from a vicious but an ignorant philosophy of life or rather not-life, so that we read into nature the same predatory assumptions we act upon ourselves and apply to her mechanistic principles which are enslaving the whole of humanity.

I have no space here even to indicate through what biological, ecological, genetic, psychological and physiological channels Dr. Barlow reaches his conclusions that this philosophy of progress is a false one. The interesting thing is that these conclusions advocate a new patterning of life based on the soil, the region and a chain of small co-operative communities which is fundamentally Gothic in conception and implicitly religious. God is restored to His universe not by the priest but by the man of science! And if we think clearly and deeply, we see that this is inevitably so. Since the Industrial Revolution, which was the consequence of tendencies preceding it, man has deified himself and regarded himself as the sole arbitrator of his own destinies. The result, as many people now begin to see for the first time, is that steep place mentioned in the Scriptures. Most fortunately for us, we have in England a deep-based rural tradition of co-operation and liberty which, if violated, is not yet destroyed. Dr. Barlow's remarkable book leaves no doubt in my own mind that we must return to and modernise this tradition, which is both religious and secular in one, and repudiate the philosophy of progress that has supplanted it.

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Correction

We have received from an external source an account of the Meeting of the "Social Credit Movement of New Zealand." We have no contact with this body and cannot express an opinion as to the degree to which it is entitled to the name. There were about sixty members present, as compared with the seven or eight hundred in the Camp which was convened on the occasion of the visit of Major Douglas.

As, however, it appears to have a Secretariat with Departments bearing the same names as those of the Social Credit Secretariat, which might suggest that it was affiliated to that body, it is necessary to correct such an impression if it exists.

The Resolutions carried at the Conference were for the most part matters of internal politics, and we should not wish to comment upon them. But one Resolution in support of the so-called Indian National Congress, which is neither entitled to the name of Indian, or National, we must characterise as wholly improper, and we must state, with a full knowledge of the circumstances, that the aims of the Indian National Congress, which are, and always have been, primarily subversive, are inconsistent with the somewhat impudent assurance of the loyalty of 'the Social Credit Movement' to the King and Queen, which formed the subject of the opening Resolution.

There are at least three organisations in India with much better claims to be representative than that to which the resolution was addressed, and we think that the selection of it for encouragement would repay investigation.

WORK TO DO

English common sense is asserting itself, not, as the newly-elected 'Independent' (Socialist) Member of Parliament, Mr. W. J. Brown, thinks, to intervene in matters which are as highly technical as the major strategy of the War, but in abhorance of planning and planners. Mr. Austin Hopkinson's speech, reprinted from the Official Report of the House of Commons on another page, is a great advance, and although not flawless to the specialist eye of a social crediter, shows that Parliament, however battered, is not yet broken.

The Minister of Works and Planning Bill, like most measures which go so far in the wrong direction, is carried there by a chorus of protests alleging that it does not go far enough. Mr. Hopkinson did not help to swell this chorus.

The Government has no mandate to introduce socialistic legislation under the cover of the war. It has no mandate to alter the economic system, and the substitution of a coupon economy for a flexible monetary system, either in whole or in part, would be a profound alteration in the economic system, removing from the individual the last vestiges of control over his own property. The public is now familiar with the kind of restriction of freedom incidental to the use of coupons for rationing. It is not so clearly familiar with the capacity of the system for extension. Essentially the coupon system is a distributive system based upon arbitrary official permissions over-riding either or both of the citizen's capacity to buy and the producer's capacity to supply goods in demand. Planning as it is envisaged by the ubiquitous plotters which now infest our country is essentially a curtailment of liberty in the acquisition and use of private property, and, as G. K. Chesterton once said, the alternative before us is whether we shall go *back* to freedom or *forward* to slavery.

The recollection reminds us of the connection in which these wise words were uttered. They appear in the introduction to a remarkable little book by William Cobbett, who, says Chesterton, defied industrialism when it was, "if not exactly young and beautiful, at least young and hopeful," being thus more in credit for his insight than Ruskin, who had "the advantage of living when the terrible transformation was almost complete" and we were well within sight of the congestion and collapse which Chesterton did not live to see, although we have lived to see it. "Cobbett," says Chesterton, "understood something that can only accompany freedom, property; and something that can only come with property—thrift": —words highly suitable to a book which was written to tell labourers how to brew beer, make bread, keep cows, pigs, bees, ewes, goats, poultry and rabbits; how to select, cut and bleach the straws of English grass and grain to make hats and bonnets; and how to make and use ice-houses. And how many of these desirable ingredients of freedom are now left, not only to labourers but to anyone? If Cobbett had been alive he would now be adding to his little book (called *Cottage Economy*) a chapter on the winding of hemp to hang plotters, and, in contradiction of the Lord Chief Justice who said there wouldn't be enough, directions for the raising of lamp-posts to hang them from. Cobbett "saw the cottager as master of his cottage; and had the historical instinct to grasp the great virtues that go with such a small estate."

Let the planners have their way, and there will be an end to estates great or small. Says Chesterton again: "The free man of England, where he still exists, will doubtless find it a colossal enterprise to unwind the coil of three centuries."

He will! The steps in the unwinding are first steps in Social Credit, and Social Crediters have practised them. It is time to practise them again. "Tell your M.P. what you want!"

T. J.

Commonsense

Why level downward to our dullest perception always, and praise that as common sense? The commonest sense is the sense of men asleep, which they express by snoring.

—THOREAU.

BREAKDOWN OF BUREAUCRACY

Under this title "The Social Crediter" publishes from time to time significant statements, whatever their authorship, concerning the development of the crisis forced upon the world by neglect of the principles of Social Credit.

The occasion for the speech by Mr. Austin Hopkinson the substance of which is printed below was the Debate on the Minister of Works and Planning Bill in the House of Commons. Further points from the debate are published elsewhere in this journal: most of the speakers urged more "planning" (each with copious instances from his own private Utopia) and more power for a central authority to impose its schemes on individuals and local authorities.

Mr. Hopkinson Condemns Planning

It seems to me that we are discussing one of those questions which puts this House into a sort of dreamland in which it is completely detached from all the realities of life. When it gets into that state it usually continues so to the end, and an interruption which I made during a previous speech was an attempt on my part to bring it back to realities, at any rate for a moment or two. The hon. Member was advocating, in accordance with the Montague Barlow Committee's report, that direction should be given from headquarters to industry as to where it should locate itself. He was talking about the congestion of certain industries in certain areas, and I made the perfectly innocent suggestion that in parts of my native Lancashire, where, as in other parts of the country, there is very serious congestion of colliery workings on the coalfields, it would be highly desirable that the collieries should be removed from the coalfields and distributed about the country. The next speaker rubbed in my point, because he pointed out that it would be equally reasonable in connection with the location of industry to take the ports away from the sea coast and locate them inland. There have been endless other examples of what I meant when I say that the House is in a sort of dreamland, completely detached from all the realities of life. We have a sort of fashionable opinion in this country that something called "planning" is vaguely beneficial. We think the same about something which we call "education." We all loathe education just as we all loathe planning, but we have all been brought up to believe that there is something nice about them and something very virtuous in advocating planning and education. As a matter of fact, as I think the House must agree, every Debate on education for years past has been entirely about the number of free meals provided and the amount of teachers' salaries, and that is all there is in education, so far as we were concerned.

I support the rejection of the Bill because, whatever its effect, the Bill proposes to enable Superior People to over-ride even those small private liberties which are left to us to-day. In order to show that I do not speak from personal prejudice against these admirable people who call themselves planners, I would remind the House of the history of this planning business. In historical times the first good example of town planning was that of the Tower of Babel. At that time, inundations seemed to be somewhat frequent upon the face of the earth, and therefore the town planners planned the Tower and proceeded to erect it. Like planners to-day, only more so, they imagined that things were always going to be as they were.

The next prominent example which occurs to me in history is the case of the Emperor Nero. Students of Roman history will agree with me that contemporary writers drew attention vividly to the housing conditions which existed in Rome at the time of Nero, and to the housing of the working classes. There were great blocks of tenements overhanging the streets and collapsing at frequent intervals. Therefore Nero, being a town-planner, and having the power that the Bill will give to some hon. Gentlemen in this House, burned the whole damned place down. Had he survived, he would have planned Rome exactly how Nero thought Rome ought to have been planned. What amenities he would have provided for the city I will not tell the House. The next example in history of any great prominence is Napoleon III of France, who completely ruined Paris. A further example is that of William II, Emperor of Germany, who is to some extent responsible for those abominable planned Rhine towns like Dusseldorf, beautiful in every respect, but utterly impossible to live in because the streets are straight and everything is planned so beautifully that they are fit only for Germans to live in.

The supreme planner of all—I omit for the moment Mr. Stalin, because he is our Ally at the moment, and I do not want to make any remarks about him—is Adolf Hitler, who is going to plan the whole world. He is doing so most successfully in his own country. What are we fighting this war about? We are fighting to avoid planning. [Laughter]. It is no use laughing; what I said is true. The totalitarian State is the planned State. It is based upon the supposition that some superior person knows what is good for people better than they do themselves. That is the whole theory of the totalitarian State as it exists to-day. We are simply talking cant and humbug if we advocate an extension of planning in this country and at the same time conduct a world war against that same theory being imposed upon us. The whole scheme of planning of a country is the sort of thing to impose, not upon a victorious England, but upon a defeated Germany. After all, what have our statesmen said we are going to do when we have won this war? We are going to plan Germany thoroughly, through and through. . . . .

Having looked at the historical period, and lightly touched upon some of the great planners of history who hitherto have not been regarded as models of what rulers should be, let us consider what would have happened in prehistoric times if planners had been in existence. At one remote period, instead of living in houses we lived in trees, and gracefully swung from branch to branch by our tails. Fortunately, there were no planners in those days, or the whole country would have been planted with nut trees in

order to provide suitable food for the future population. [*Laughter.*] It is no use laughing, it is a fact, and it is also a fact that, from beginning to end, the progress of the human race has always been brought about by the revolt of individuals against the common opinion of the time. I challenge any hon. Member present here to give an example of real progress, biological or of any other kind, which has not been due to the revolt of a few individuals against the prevailing opinion of their time. After all, we should still be little, amorphous lumps of slime and not human beings, if it had not been for the revolt of individuals against the mass mind. In more serious terms, that is what we are fighting the world war about; It is against the attempt of rulers abroad to produce the mass mind and to eliminate the individual mind and soul; in other words, to eliminate all that makes religion.

Let us suppose that town planners had been existent in this country about 150 years ago. What would have been the position? My native Manchester possesses, and I believe is very proud of, one of the worst slums in the whole world, known as Ancoats. Town planners have represented Ancoats as containing the worst conditions anywhere in the world, and I believe justifiably, although I believe Leeds can run it pretty close. Ancoats was planned with great wisdom. It did not grow up haphazard. In the early days of the cotton industry, when Mr. Watts invented what he called his "fire engine," and water wheels were no longer necessary, mills were put up even where there was no water power. We started building mills, and our ancestors used to employ persons of the age of three years and upwards for anything up to 18 hours a day, day in and day out. It was no use building the hovels of the poor a long way from the mills, because after the day's work they could only crawl a few yards to their homes.

Therefore, being town planners, our ancestors built the hovels of the poor as close to their mills as they could, and so they produced the slums of Ancoats. Is it not a perfectly true argument that if perfectly sensible planning 150 years ago produces Ancoats to-day, it is obviously highly probable that equally effective planning to-day will produce something equivalent to Ancoats in 100 or 150 years? [HON. MEMBERS: "No."] I must apologise to the House for being so long, but so rarely on occasions of this sort does anybody get down to brass tacks that it is desirable that somebody should make some attempt to regard the matter from a sensible point of view. Suppose that even 50 years ago this planning had been in existence and had been all the rage and fashion of the day. Transport problems then were different from what they are to-day; there were no motor-cars or electric trains. Let us suppose that this planning had been going on then. What would have happened? The whole country would have been covered with stables in which to house the horses which were to develop the transport of the country, and now we should have had an enormous redundancy of stables all over the place. That is exactly what is happening to-day. The planners are all acting on the supposition that things will always be as they are now, only more so, and that people's demands and requirements will always be the same, therefore the only thing to do is to provide them with still more of what they want to-day. I am afraid, however, that they do not carry out their theories. I said just now "to provide people with more of what they want," but the whole essence of this thing is not to provide people with what they want, but to provide them with what somebody else thinks they ought to want. That is the reason for planning.

The American Constitution is based on the supposition that every individual is entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Unhappily in many quarters in this country to-day the view prevails that nobody is capable of judging what is best for his own happiness, but that somebody must judge for him. We have bred up a race of Superior Persons, who are never happy unless they are interfering with other people's private affairs, and town planners are perhaps the worst offenders. Let us get back to the actual personalities of these town planners. When a man has been abandoned by his relations and has found it impossible to earn his living by any honest means, he runs about the country saying, "I am a town planner; give me a job," and he goes on running about the country saying that—though what a town planner is, nobody knows; it requires no qualifications of any sort except the assertion that you are one—until they give him a job of some sort or other. . . . These are the people to whom we are going to give our unhappy country to be messed about. It is they who will tell people what is good for them, whether they like it or not. After all, what is the difference between public works and private works? If you get down to realities, the difference is purely this: private works are works which people want, and public works are things which people do not want. Otherwise why are they public works?

Two considerations are involved in planning—first of all the practical and then the aesthetic. I have pointed out one or two reasons for supposing that the Superior Persons to whom I have referred are not very good on the practical side. If they had their way, they would move ports so that the coast should not be congested and spoilt, and would move collieries off the coalfields because the grouping together of collieries is very ugly. One member suggested for instance that the Welsh coal valleys should not remain entirely dependent on coal because if the coal trade were depressed it would be very serious for the population. I venture to say that those hon. Members who know the South Wales coal valleys will agree that it is going to be very difficult to get other industries into these valleys. I know them pretty well, and I could not imagine any industrialist who was not completely mad going and settling down there. In the first place, the very difficulties of the ground itself make it almost impossible to put works of any size there, and the difficulties connected with the local population are also considerable.

On the practical side, I have given another point of view and have pointed out to the best of my ability that the town planners of history, and the planners generally, have been representative of what we should call a totalitarian State, such as we profess to be fighting against at the present time. Now we come to the aesthetic side. Again the Superior Person comes along. He never seems to realise that matters of taste, as was found out a very long time ago, are not very good things to argue about. Aesthetics are concerned with values and we are always arguing as if value is an intrinsic quality. I have noticed in this House again and again, whatever we have been debating, that we have fallen into that fallacy. Everybody who ever thought about it knows perfectly well that value is something attributed to a thing, and is purely a matter of opinion. You cannot lay down an aesthetic norm and say, "This is right and the other is wrong." All you can say is, "I think that is good, but somebody else thinks it is bad." Let me give

an example. There was a period in this country when the Albert Memorial was regarded by educated opinion as a much superior building to the Parthenon. . . .

The proof is to be seen in the streets of Oxford in the form of a pseudo-Gothic building designed by Ruskin himself. . . . . At that period . . . . Ruskin was the very high priest of taste. He is not to-day, and that is exactly the point. Aesthetic standards are purely matters of fashion, varying almost from day to day and certainly from year to year. In the case of painting, for instance, values are settled very largely by Hebrew art dealers. . . .

I have not the slightest doubt that in the days when those lovely Cotswold villages were being built the best taste of the age said they were awful, that they were perfectly shocking, that they ought to have built them in the way they built places like Chatsworth, which to the modern man is the abomination of desolation! We cannot afford to stereotype taste. This is an attempt to do it, an attempt to lay down the law of what constitutes aesthetic values which, I have endeavoured to prove, is impossible because value is not a permanent thing but a matter of opinion varying from age to age and from person to person. That is my reason even more than the practical side for opposing this Bill to-day.

Finally, for planning one requires to have two preliminaries: first of all, data to go upon, and, secondly, some sort of idea of what one is planning for. It is obvious from speeches to-day that neither of these two preliminary conditions are present in this country to-day. We do not know yet what the issue of this war will be, although we are convinced that it will be victory in some form or other. But what may seem to us at the time a victory may be very far from complete victory. It may produce a condition of affairs when, although hostilities proper will have ceased, at least a generation in Europe will have to be ready for war instantly and war in its most horrible form. To put it at the extreme, it is by no means certain whether the next generation in this country will live above or below ground. That is the extreme case, but without going to the extreme we know perfectly well that it is possible that this year is only the preliminary to the third world war.

Consider the seriousness of the position. There are already men actively engaged in producing a state of affairs which will lead to an inconclusive peace. One can clearly see, in the action of certain men prominent in this country and elsewhere, that a defeatist party is deliberately being built up in this country; and attempts are being made to sow dissention between ourselves and our American Allies. Any reader of the newspapers must see that steps are being taken to weaken this present Government with a view ultimately to an inconclusive peace. In that case, where is your planning? . . . .

Even supposing that we get a conclusive peace, we do not know yet what is to be the industrial future of this country. This at least we do know, that if the Atlantic Charter is carried out in the spirit as in the letter, the industrial days of Great Britain are over, and we have to face the fact which we should have faced long ago, that an industrial age is only one stage in the development of a nation, and a very primitive stage too. Before the war we pursued a policy of driving our people back into the mills and works and mines instead of leaving less progressive races to do the hard work of the world. It is certainly clear, so far as heavy industry is concerned, that unless we go on attempting to make ourselves self-contained we can never preserve the standard of living which we regard as necessary for the workers in our heavy industries without some artificial means, and that is ruled out by the fact that in the spirit of the Atlantic Charter Declaration there will be no prohibitive tariffs.

I make no secret of what I have felt all along. I believe it is to the benefit of this country that the industrial age in this country is over. Thank God it is over. It is a miserable state of affairs for any nation to be in We set out at the beginning of the nineteenth century basing our whole practice upon the theory that to become great as a nation is to become richer and richer, without any further idea beyond a great Empire. The state of the world shows us what is the inevitable end of a civilisation built on that basis. Everyone knows now that the best way to get richer and richer and have a higher standard of living is the totalitarian State, with its elimination of all which makes man more than an animal, as they have found in Russia, Italy and Germany. I will not believe that this nation of ours is so utterly degraded as to set that ideal before it at this time of day. The ideal of the nineteenth century, summed up in the words of Lewis Carroll in which the White Knight says:

> "I was thinking of a way to feed myself on batter,
> And thus go on from day to day getting a little fatter."

Surely that was the idea of the British race throughout the industrial era of this country in the nineteenth century—the whole idea of the Labour party to-day. Perhaps the future has a better hope, so that eventually I can see this country—not over-populated as it is to-day, so that life is not one long worry to maintain that population, and one long hurry to raise the standard of living—but a nation which is exporting to the world, not cotton goods and pig-iron, but what is of infinitely more value, both to those who export and those who receive—ideas and ideals, as once Athens exported them to her small world.

Points from Parliament

APRIL 28.

Oral Answers to Questions

NOMINEE SHAREHOLDERS (IDENTITY)

Major Sir Jocelyn Lucas asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the increasing practice of hiding the identity of company shareholders under the title of bank nominees; and whether, in the public interest, he will take immediate action in the case of nominee shareholders in newspapers or public utility companies to secure the names of the real shareholders being made available to the public in the ordinary way?

Sir John Mellor asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he will take steps to amend Section 101 of the Companies Act, 1929, so as to require bare trustees, who are registered shareholders, to disclose, and companies to register, the names and addresses of the persons entitled to call for a transfer of the shares, but expressly providing that companies shall not thereby be affected with notice of any trust?

The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Dalton*):

There is full power under Regulation 80A of the Defence Regulations to compel disclosure to the Department concerned of the beneficial ownership of shares held by nominees, where it is considered necessary or expedient to obtain the information in the interests of the public safety, the defence of the realm or the efficient prosecution of the war. I am considering with my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary whether any further action is necessary.

Sir J. Mellor: If the identity of the beneficial owner is easily concealed, is there much value in the public right of inspection of the register as provided in the Companies Acts?

Mr. Dalton: The Companies Acts, as my hon. Friend knows, are a very complicated affair, and to begin to modify them would be a complicated legislative business. We have under the Defence Regulations power to obtain the information which my hon. Friend has in mind. It can be obtained by Ministers and by Departments, and it is within their discretion whether it should be disclosed to the public.

Sir Joseph Lamb: Will my right hon. Friend make it public, or is it a secret of the Department?

Mr. Dalton: It is a matter for their discretion.

Mr. Bellenger: Does my hon. Friend know of any Government Department which has exercised the powers which he has just outlined to find out who is behind some of these company holdings?

Mr. Dalton: I think that the powers have been used but the information has not been made public. I repeat that I am consulting with my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary to see whether any improvement in the present arrangements under the law and the Defence Regulations is possible or desirable.

Sir J. Mellor: What steps should a member of the public take to obtain this information?

APRIL 29.

MINISTER OF WORKS AND PLANNING BILL

Order for Second Reading read.

The Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works and Buildings (Mr. Henry Strauss): . . . The intention is that the Minister of Works and Planning, when he is appointed, shall exercise the functions hitherto exercised by the Commissioners of Works, the Minister of Works and Buildings, and the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, together with the town and country planning functions hitherto exercised by the Minister of Health. . .

Mr. Silkin (Peckham): . . . My right hon. and learned Friend may have that authority. I do not know. He has been up to the moment carrying out his work in secret. He has been ploughing a lonely furrow, and perhaps we may know shortly what he has been doing and what his powers are. I am certain that what he has been doing he has been doing well, but the House does not know what is happening about planning. Lord Reith was a person who accepted his responsibilities with enthusiasm. I believe that he was an enthusiastic planner, and there are many people in this country who were looking forward under Lord Reith's supervision to seeing a very fine post-war Britain. Why he went I do not know. There are many people who believe that the departure of both the former Minister without Portfolio and Lord Reith was something which indicated that the Government were not considering post-war planning as seriously as many people wished them to. The departure of these gentlemen was regarded in a sense as a defeat for town planning. I hope that it will be possible to give the House some reassurance on this point. . . .

[*Mr. Austin Hopkinson's speech in this debate will be found on page* 5.]

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Information about Social Credit activities in different regions may be had by writing to the following addresses:

BELFAST D.S.C. Group: Hon. Sec., 20 Dromara Street, Belfast.
BIRMINGHAM (Midland D.S.C. Association): Hon. Sec., 20 Sunnybank Road, Boldmere, Sutton Coldfield.
BLACKPOOL D.S.C. Group: Hon. Sec., 73 Manor Rd., Blackpool.
BRADFORD United Democrats: R. J. Northin, 11 Centre Street, Bradford.
CARDIFF S.C. Association: Hon. Sec., 8, Cwrt-y-vil Road, Penarth, South Wales.
DERBY: C. Bosworth, 25 Allestree Road, Crewton, Derby.
LIVERPOOL S.C. Association: Hon. Sec., 49 Prince Alfred Road, Liverpool, 15. Wavertree 435.
LONDON D.S.C. Group: Mrs. Palmer, 35 Birchwood Avenue, Sidcup, Kent. Footscray 3059.
Lunch hour re-unions on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 12-30 p.m., at The Plane Tree Restaurant, Great Russell Street, W. C. 1. Next Meeting May 21.
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE D. S. C. Association: Hon. Sec., 10 Warrington Road, Fawdon, Newcastle, 3.
SOUTHAMPTON D.S.C. Group: Hon. Sec., 19 Coniston Road, Redbridge, Southampton.

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