

THE SOCIAL CREDITER

FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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FROM WEEK TO WEEK

A. J. Brownlee, K.C., ex-Premier of Alberta, has been appointed Leader of the "Independent" party in Alberta—the coalition of all Parties against Social Credit. It is scarcely denied that unlimited funds have been placed at the disposal of this coalition by the financial interests. Mr. Brownlee, who is probably the ablest lawyer-politician in the West of Canada, is being paid a salary and allowance greater than the salary of the Premier.

Now for a dose of sweet reasonableness.—"Yes, of course, Social Credit is a mass of fallacies, but sane reform of the financial system—control, you know, Clarence, and a dash of Beverage—is desirable. We owe it to our lads who are away fighting for Freedom."

That excellent paper, the *Edmonton Bulletin*, which professes Liberal politics, is furious and will doubtless queer the pitch.

Mr. Herbert Morrison says that scarcity means control. So you'll get scarcity, me lad! Little 'Erbie never dreamt of a world like this, and he's not going to wake up if he can help it.

Socialism merely consists in the gospel of grab—grab your neighbour's initiative, grab his opportunities, grab his ideas, and eventually grab his identity. The only new thing about it is its name.

In the Peterborough bye-election the Socialist candidate was supported by the Commonwealth party. We understand the new name of this party is the Christian Communist party. We also understand that a Christian Pawnbroker's party is under consideration.

It is becoming terribly clear that Monotheism, in any form which can be understood by the ordinary man, is the Creed of the Devil, and its child is Monopoly. The official English and Scottish Churches, with their pandering to Socialism and other monopolistic devices, are not merely playing the Devil's game; they are making certain their own final and complete elimination. The Roman Catholic Church is making no such mistake. Quite apart from its philosophy which for the public is not monotheistic, it is quite definitely anti-monopolistic in its social theory. The only comments from a religious source in the past fifty years which are worthy of any serious attention are those which have proceeded from the Vatican. In saying this, we are far from assuming that every pronouncement from this source is

inevitably sound. But looked at dispassionately, the score is quite high.

Neither Mr. Butler nor Mr. Brown seems to have made up his mind whether his White Paper is "a preliminary statement offering a basis for, and so focussing, public discussion" (Butler), or "the basis for public discussion" (Brown); or a flat denial of Mr. Churchill's "Everything for the war, whether controversial or not, and nothing controversial that is not *bona fide* needed for the war."

Mr. Stokes, M.P., has been asking (House of Commons, October 14) that in time of peace "there may be still more jobs to be done than there are people to do them as has been proved to be the case in time of war." How is it that someone does not brand these pagans 'Vulcanites?' Surely so small a trifle as that even the Romans discriminated between a god of furnaces and a god of work should not stand in our way?

SOUTHAMPTON REPEAL STUNT

A special general meeting of the Southampton Chamber of Commerce on September 29 passed, with three dissentients, a resolution calling upon "the local representatives in the House of Commons" to press for "the introduction of such measures as are necessary to secure" repeal of the Bank Charter Act of 1844 and the Currency and Bank-Notes Act of 1928. The long resolution in which this demand was embodied alleged that these Acts prevented the equation of 'consumption with production,' necessary to "achieve the declared object of the Government to provide full employment." The Members of Parliament spoke, and the Bishop of Winchester said (in supporting the resolution) that they might transfer the control of credit to the Government, but the point was what were the Government going to do with the power when they got it? ... He was amazed, sitting there in a representative company of business men, not to hear voices of alarm raised about the effect of the control of business and industry by the Government of the country. ... We could not just have a system of national credit equate to the productivity of the country and think that the productivity would escape control.

N.B.—To avoid monotonous iteration, the considered opinion of this journal on the Monetary Reform Stunt may be inferred from the following references, and others in *The Social Crediter*: *T.S.C. From Week to Week*, second paragraph in the October 16 issue; October 2, paragraphs 2-9 (inclusive) page 1, and paragraph 4, page 4; September 25, paragraphs 6, 10 and 11, page 4.

An Alberta Exposure

The *Edmonton Bulletin* of August 21 last gave publicity to the steps which have been taken, with the backing of financial institutions, to supercede all existing parties by an "Independent" Party opposed to Social Credit. The article says:—

A vigorous program of reorganising the Independent party is now in full swing. Plans for the province-wide convention, to elect a party leader, have been completed according to information from reliable sources.

Ample funds are in hand and will be released on a basis of \$3,000 a month to provide a new leader with a yearly salary of \$8,000 and \$4,000 travelling expenses. The head office will be maintained in Calgary, with a branch office in Edmonton. Four organisers will be placed in the field at an early date, to organise the rural ridings. Two organisers will work out of Calgary, covering Red Deer and south, while two organisers will operate out of the Edmonton branch

office, covering all the territory north of Red Deer.

It was pointed out, the wasteful hit and miss method used by the Canadian Bankers' Association and the mortgage companies in the 1940 general elections on behalf of the Independents, will not be repeated. More than \$250,000 is alleged to have been spent in the "Throw Aberhart Out" campaign, which back fired in the rural constituencies.

Little money will be spent in Calgary and Edmonton. Proportional voting in these five-member ridings makes it impossible for the Independents to gain more than two seats each. Social Credit also cannot gain more than two seats each and it is conceded the C.C.F. will win one in each city and a bare possibility of two in Calgary.

The work and money will be spent in the 44 ridings which make and change Alberta governments.

It is considered certain, former Premier J. E. Brownlee, K.C., will be the choice of the Independent Party convention. His old riding of Ponoka is considered certain for the Independents, which would leave Mr. Brownlee free to devote all his speaking time in the other rural ridings, where he still has great personal strength with the old U.F.A. locals.

The men behind the scenes, admit the growing strength of the C.C.F. will make it impossible for either the present Social Credit government to win an over-all majority or the Independents, with the C.C.F. certain to win eight to 10 seats.

The most the Independents can hope to win is 23 seats, giving them the largest group. According to some political experts, the Manning government cannot win more than 21 seats.

The Independents can then, with the largest group, put through the Bond Dealers' Association program of refunding the \$140,000,000 Alberta debt on their own terms, similar to the Fortin Plan of debt extension but restoring the back unpaid interest on a basis of 3½ per cent. to date from 1936, when the cut was made. New bonds, amounting to about \$30,000,000 will be necessary by 1945 to cover the interest cut. This will mean a total debt of \$170,000,000 at 3½ per cent.

The mortgage companies are vitally interested in no interference with their contract rights of foreclosure and are said to be prepared to go the limit in support of the reorganised Independents.

Some bitter comment has been made of the statement made by Gerald O'Connor, K.C., at a recent meeting of the Edmonton Liberal Association, that for the joining of the Edmonton Liberal Association with the Independents, members of the Liberal executive would be given a 75 per cent. membership on the executive of the Independent party. They say the deal was for a fifty-fifty basis with the Progressive Conservatives and point to the fact that on the inner governing executive announced by Chairman J. Percy Page, M.L.A., of 14 members, it is divided fifty-fifty, and will be maintained on that basis by the convention, when the general executive is formed, plus former U.F.A. and defeated Social Credit* members are included.

One thing that is said to be certain, the newspaper concludes, is that Independents will not lack campaign funds for their drive to defeat the present Alberta Social Credit government.

*The "handful" (*To-day and To-morrow*) of former Social Credit men who changed sides.

BOOKS TO READ

By C. H. Douglas:—

Economic Democracy	(edition exhausted)
Social Credit	3/6
The Monopoly of Credit	3/6
Credit Power and Democracy	(edition exhausted)
Warning Democracy	(edition exhausted)
The Big Idea	2/6
The "Land for the (Chosen) People" Racket	2/-
The Tragedy of Human Effort	7d.
The Policy of a Philosophy	7d.
The Use of Money	6d.
Social Credit Principles	1½d.

ALSO

The Bankers of London by Percy Arnold	4/6
Hitler's Policy is a Jewish Policy by Borge Jensen and P. R. Masson	6d.
Democratic Victory or the Slave State? by L. D. Byrne	4d.
How Alberta is Fighting Finance	4d.
Southampton Chamber of Commerce: Report of Economic Crisis Committee	9d.
The Planners and Bureaucracy by Elizabeth Edwards	8d.
The Dangers Inherent in the Proposed Schemes for International Money Units by R. Gaudin	4d. ea.; 3/6 doz.
Large versus Small Scale Electrical Production: The Grid by W. A. Barratt	3d.
Lectures and Studies Section: Syllabus	3d.
The Attack on Local Government by John Mitchell	9d. doz.; 50 for 2/6
The Voters' Policy as applied to the Beveridge Report (Bristol Voters' Policy Association leaflet)	2d.
World Review; The Jeffrey Professor of Political Economy, Etc., (containing Financing of a Long- Term Production Cycle, reprinted from <i>The Social Crediter</i> of November 28, 1942.)	1d.
Cross-section of Bristol discusses Work (Bristol Voters' Policy Association leaflet)	1d.
The Representative's Job	1d.

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From K.R.P. PUBLICATIONS LIMITED

49, PRINCE ALFRED ROAD, LIVERPOOL, 15.

CORRESPONDENCE**Honest Money**

Dear Sir,

Some references to me and to the proposal by Mr. Norman Thompson and myself to form an Honest-Money Association occur in your issue of 2nd inst. It is beyond me why the "Legalistic"—in contradistinction I presume to "Anarchistic"—working of my mind should be curious. I certainly have the most healthy respect for laws such as the conservation of matter and energy, the humanly useful forms of which constitute real wealth. Whereas one sometimes wonders whether this is the case with the more dogmatic and doctrinaire among Social Crediters.

But it is curious to be told that no one has ever been able to get into my head that it is the registration by the price-system, and not whether the money is honest or not, that is important, since to me the two things are the same thing. By honest money we mean money that stays put as to what it will buy, the mechanism whereby people obtain it leaving the price-level unchanged. There are 20,000 schemes recorded of giving it away which ignore both the laws of conservation of wealth and the effect of premature and excessive new money issues in raising the price-level.

How can a private bank give money away without becoming insolvent unless it is, or is guaranteed by, the State, and why should the State guarantee the solvency of firms robbing it? Since when has it been true that the State has no more right to create money than the banks?

Your three statements (a), (b) and (c) preceded by "if monetary reformers would only recognise that," as though they did not, contain as a corollary to (c), in what you term the "spectacular success by the use of the Compensated Price" an apparent confusion between subsidising goods to enable them to be sold below cost *out of the taxes* and the Social Credit proposals out of new money, taxation according to them being robbery. I would submit anyone who could make such a mistake in economics, old or new, is but a blind leader of the blind.

Confusions of the above nature allow Social Crediters to support forms of technique which can only prevent the realisation of the aims of their philosophy, with which both Mr. Norman Thompson and I are and have always been in the heartiest agreement, and desire quite as much as the Social Crediters to render actual.

Yours sincerely,

FREDERICK SODDY.

Knapp, Enstone, Oxon: October 11, 1943.

In deference to our high personal respect for Professor

RECONSTRUCTION

The "Glasgow Evening Times"
Articles of May 1932

By Major C. H. DOUGLAS

Price 6d. (Postage extra)

From K.R.P. PUBLICATIONS LIMITED,
49, PRINCE ALFRED ROAD, LIVERPOOL, 15.

Soddy, we publish the foregoing. The only comments we wish to make are (1) Legalistic is not the antithesis of anarchistic; (2) Compensated prices at present are no more paid out of taxation than the war is being paid for out of taxation; (3) Professor Soddy's definition of honest money is one which every banker would echo, but we know Professor Soddy won't believe it, and we must be excused from arguing monetary matters with him.—EDITOR T.S.C.

Social Credit "Proposals"

Sir,

I have before me a copy of *Reality* criticising a book by Congressman Jerry Voorhis. The writer of the article says that Mr. Voorhis "talks much like Social Credit advocates did in 1920. But in 1943 it is necessary to talk exactly like Social Credit advocates are talking." He refers also to "up-to-date proposals of Social Credit." May I remark that while I am in full agreement with the view that some Social Crediters (not the abstract entity "Social Credit") are talking in 1943 "exactly" as meets the requirements of the time, it is manifestly untrue that they have progressed to this position from one corresponding to that occupied by Mr. Voorhis, or that a distinction can properly be drawn between "out-of-date" and "up-to-date" proposals put forward by Major Douglas?

Yours faithfully,

1920.

London, October 17, 1943.

MORE PYRAMIDS?

An Australian Sunday newspaper during September, a correspondent writes, contained the following:—

"Dr. Coombes, Director-General of Post-war Reconstruction said 'In the post-war world, employment should be the objective of economic activity, not a by-product.' That is what Cheops realised when he built the world's greatest pyramid. Owing to its advanced production methods Egypt had surplus labour. Having no war at hand, Cheops put them to Pyramid building. This gave full-scale employment. Egypt's other economic activities provided those minimum standards of living (barley-bread, beer and loin-cloths) which the common social consciousness of the day considered as irreducible. . . . Our wants are more complex. Besides, the Egyptians had not a continent to develop and an ocean to control. Perhaps we can rub along without pyramids. And peace may not prove as awful as it looks. There will, to start with, be a lot of tapering off. It does not look as if we will do much disarming for a while. Policing the Pacific and enforcing exclusion may employ large forces and keep many munition works busy between wars. Ship-building is to run full blast even if there is a world surplus of ships. Reconditioning run-down farms and derelict industries will mean much activity, unless we decide they are no longer economic. Are we to cease equipping the continent just because the war is over?"

"At least," says our correspondent, "the Labour gang seem to understand their own policy, and state it. Curtin has said that bank credit will certainly be made available to provide employment."

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Saturday, October 23, 1943.

COAL, etc.

In a cautious paragraph, the political correspondent of the *Sunday Times* at the beginning of the present week envisaged the break-up of the present national government as a possibility before the end of the war. True the correspondent interpreted the Prime Minister's reference as, among other things, a "reassurance"—presumably that such an event would not occur. It is apparent that either divergence of policy is now so wide that a mere formula will no longer hide it from parliamentary view, or policy is now so set and prepared in higher quarters that it is deemed safe to throw it to the wolves for mastication before they are obliged, by operation of a reflex action of physiological democracy, to swallow it.

The latter alternative would call for fortitude, as well as resource, from Social Crediters; although it would not necessarily be disconcerting, and much less demoralising. However, there are signs that it need not be contemplated; and, in that connection, perhaps the present is the place to respond to a desire, expressed by a recent caller on the Secretariat, that we should, on occasion, perform a modest ceremony of confirmation, lest the weaker brethren should infer from studious avoidance of self-congratulation that we are progressing more slowly than we are.

We might, of course, go faster and farther. It has always seemed conclusive on this point that wherever the strategy enjoined under the advice of Major Douglas is promptly, persistently and intelligently carried out, the dark surface of the stagnant pool of political life breaks instantly, and concentric and ever widening waves of action spread from the active centre. Of major instances, how many have there been? Shall we say between five and ten? In every case the disturbing force was exerted voluntarily by an individual: one grain of mustard seed. We leave things lying about, almost as mountains are left lying about, and someone comes along and roots himself in the spot available. A lot of things are still lying about. There are the coal-fields and the engineering shops.

What are the salient features? Not parliamentary debate. If parliament did not touch its lowest level of fatuity in the debate on tax-gathering, it touched and held firmly to it in the debate on the coal situation. It need not be discussed whether or not implementation of the Draft Scheme for the Mining Industry would lead to a larger or smaller, a sooner or a later, increase in output of coal

than whatever it is does or does not secure this allegedly essential end. It does not matter that men are still in the pits, sceptical and affronted by a new race of disgruntled diluents, forced labour *versus* experienced and skilled labour, who once put forward the proposition:—"Some of us are not prepared as yet to endorse all Major Douglas's views; but we are convinced that bank credits are one of the main constituents—if not indeed the main constituent—of selling prices; and that no final solution of the problem is possible that does not bring the issue of credit and the fixing of selling prices under the community's control..." (notice, not 'that does not bring the managers and the men under Major Lloyd George's and Mr. Bevin's control'). "We recommend that the Executive of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain be asked to investigate Major Douglas's scheme for introducing credit reform *via* the mining industry."

What happened? The resolution was the work of the Scottish Labour Advisory Committee. The Central Executive of the Miners' Federation, disregarding the opinion and the recommendation embodied in it, passed it to the Central Labour Party Executive, and Messrs. Sidney Webb, R. J. Davies, Frank Hodges, F. B. Varley, G. D. H. Cole, Hugh Dalton, J. A. Hobson, C. M. Lloyd, Sir Leo Chiozza Money, R. H. Tawney, and Arthur Greenwood, with the assistance of that "experienced bank official," Mr. Emit Davies (for long anonymous), reported, after long delay that a scheme which would give the worker higher wages, cheaper living, real control of both policy and conditions, and an incomparably wider outlook on life, and these both at once and progressively, was "fundamentally opposed to the principles for which the Labour Party stands." But they were what the Scots miners wanted, and they are what the 'public' thinks the planners want the miners everywhere to have! The time and the result (not merely the electoral result) is at the determination of the electorate whenever they like to exercise it.

T. J.

ASSOCIATION

"For a hundred years Tories have been catching Whigs bathing and have been using their clothes for their own political practices. . . . The Conservative party is the most Catholic and adaptable of political organisations, and invariably keeps within its ranks, somewhat removed from the seat of power, a group of earnest and active reformers, crying the names of Disraeli, Randolph Churchill, Joseph Chamberlain or Viscount Hinchinbrooke."—*The Economist*, October 16.

LOCATION OF RETAIL BUSINESSES ORDER

Mr. Dalton stated recently in the House of Commons that between January 1, 1942, when the Location of Retail Businesses Order came into force, and June 30, 1943, 2,969 licences were granted for new shops. Of these 2,796 were granted to individual traders, 122 to multiple concerns, 34 to co-operative societies, 11 to variety chain stores and six to departmental stores, and inquiries made from local price regulation committees indicated that about 30 were issued to aliens.

The opening of new food shops is not controlled under the Location of Retail Businesses Order.

MODERN SCIENCE (I)

By TUDOR JONES, Sc.D., M.D., F.R.S.E.

A Bulletin just issued by the Medical Policy Association, London, a body doubtless referred to by *The Times* when it complained of 'irresponsible pamphleteering' (*The Times* is responsible to 'the Right Hands,' in which it more and more uncomfortably and irascibly reposes) connects the present movement in and out of Parliament for 100 per cent. enforcement of 'health' on the insurable public (*i.e.*, in intention, all of it) and 'service' on the doctors, with the institution of civil sick parades on 'service' lines and consequent loss of property rights in instruments, premises, *etc.*, *etc.*, by doctors. Thus the 'professional revolution' is to complete the industrial revolution; the doctor is to take his place beside the weaver as a factory hand, and the 'product' becomes a machine-made mass product, in which the 'machinery' is part by-product of 'big' chemicals and part bureaucracy. The criticism is quite sound, like most other things coming from a remarkable body, whose success, up to the present, has been phenomenal, and specially interesting to readers of this paper because it confirms the technique employed as being the only one available to deal with the prevailing situation. So much is demonstrated, even in the absence of a final victory over the planners, who, although shaken, believe themselves to have 'the situation well in hand.'

When last the money power voiced a like confidence in its resources (during the inter-war depression), it was right. There was at that time no world-wide body of informed and equipped opinion deriving its inspiration and knowledge from Douglas. The M.P.A. is, however, not a body of Social Crediters: it is merely a body of doctors equipped with a correct technique in social dynamics. Dangers confront it, and the larger and more powerful its agency becomes, the more complex and difficult these dangers may become, not from anything inherent in the situation, excepting the natural fact that quality and quantity usually coexist in accordance with an inverse rule of proportion. The lines of attack upon the freedom-loving doctors can be foreseen to some extent, and should be provided for.

The more obvious need not be mentioned; they are well-known gambits. The less obvious derive their usefulness from the fact that the opposition to a free order of society habitually charge the circumstances they have themselves created to the account of the injured party. The Beveridge idea is characterised by complete detachment from reality in that it only brings the individual in in order to subordinate him to an abstraction. This detachment from reality is nowhere clearer than in Sir William Beveridge's attitude to the commodity (or whatever it is: he does not know what it is, and quite possibly he does not care) 'purveyed' by doctors: to him it's just so much 'health' as measured by insurance company standards!

If anyone should ask me for my opinion concerning the present position of medical education, practice and research, I should say, with, I hope, a due sense of responsibility, that, in my opinion, and generally, excepting a few particulars affecting the practice of surgery, in which a very high level of skill attained fairly recently is already showing signs of waning, the art and practice of medicine had rarely, in its long history, been at a lower ebb than at present. When you are really in trouble and want the services

of a doctor in any other capacity than that of an exceptionally highly-skilled and successful carpenter and joiner of human tissues, it is very hard to find one to suit your purpose. That an attempt is afoot to make it still harder is also my opinion. I need not pursue the topic: it has, I am sure, some aspects which are important beyond estimation for Social Credit, and others the public exhibition of which is merely an invitation to blind prejudice. The point is that there is something here which can definitely be labelled 'wrong,' and that something is the notion that medical knowledge and skill are things which increase automatically, go on increasing, and constitute, at any given moment, a fixed and certain quantity which only awaits the issue of a government white paper, or some other piece of paper by another office boy in 'authority,' to secure the 'right' quantity of 'health' to every member of the community. This notion is false, and everything built upon this foundation is false too. If the sound elements of the medical profession should win their victory over P.E.P. and the British Medical Association (and Mr. Brown if he is with them) they will go far to remove this false foundation, not for themselves alone, but for their patients—*i.e.*, at one time or another the entire community.

Now it is true too, in my estimation, that this underlying error of conception does not concern medicine alone but the whole of what is termed 'science' in our time. Not merely to disengage a contentious topic from an embarrassing connection, therefore, but to secure a wider application, I propose to deal in a brief series of articles with the existing *organisation* of 'science,' and to record, in a setting in which something practical may come of them, observations by competent observers which have not reached, and are not likely to reach, the general public primarily concerned through any other channel.

The Tasmanian Scene

A correspondent in Tasmania writes:

"This last year we have found a revival of interest, coming from all quarters, in what we have to say. The anti-British campaign has completely subsided, except for its underground ramifications. The Labour Party holds sway here because of the utter incompetence of the United Australia Party leaders. . . .

"We had a milk enquiry here, carried on by Government officials. We attended the enquiry and found that it was merely a cloak to introduce centralised control through pasteurisation. We gave two broadcast talks on it, and the dairymen of Tasmania paid for the printing and distribution of them; these have been sent herewith. . . .

"I cannot imagine any worse example of bureaucracy run mad than the State Education Department here affords; head masters are treated worse than wharf labourers, and suffer every type of humiliation and degradation. The spirit of culture and learning is about as capable of existence as the proverbial snowball in Hell. The teachers seem as helpless as lambs under the ruthless dictatorial regime. Some of those who have suffered most are ardent Socialists. If I should ever require any help in our struggle for freedom, the last place I would ever go to find it would be amongst the State School Teachers. It is almost impossible to believe that any body of men could be so completely ignorant of fundamentals and so lacking in initiative as they are."

Points From Parliament

House of Commons: September 23, 1943.

SYNTHETIC RUBBER

Mr. Shinnwell asked the Minister of Production what progress has been made in the production of synthetic rubber in this country; what steps have been taken either by the Government or by any company or firm to proceed with the installation of plant for producing synthetic rubber; and whether he has any statement to make on the matter?

Mr. Garro Jones: My right hon. Friend has asked me to reply. No steps have been taken to produce synthetic rubber in bulk in this country, but as the hon. Member was informed on July 20, discussions are proceeding with a company regarding their plans for its production, and my right hon. Friend is not yet in a position to make a further statement on the matter.

House of Commons: October 12, 1943.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr. De la Bère asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, with a view to safeguarding this country against a repetition of the unemployment which existed prior to 1939 the Government is now in a position to make a pronouncement indicating the policy they intend to adopt, with a view to maintaining the correct balance in this country between the productive capacity and purchasing power?

Sir J. Anderson: For the present I do not think it necessary to add to the statements made by my predecessor and by my right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, in the Debates of February 2 and 3 last on the motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton).

MORALE IN THE MINES

Described by Mr. Ness Edwards (Lab., Caerphilly), as a "very libellous speech" and by Mr. Tom Brown (Lab., Ince) as "one of the most provocative speeches that has ever been delivered on the Mining Situation," the speech of Mr. Keeling (C., Twickenham) during the first day's debate in Parliament on the coalmining situation (Oct. 12), contained a number of allegations of a factual nature. Since these, and particularly those bearing upon the responsibility of managers for morale under "dual" control, do not appear to have been widely reported, we give the major part of Mr. Keeling's speech:—

After referring to his disappointment with the speech of the Minister for Fuel and Power, Mr. Keeling said:—

... Does he not realise that there was not a single four-weekly period since he took over control in which the output did not decline in comparison with the corresponding period of the previous year?

To what is this lamentable decline due? The pits are the same, the seams are more or less the same, and the managers are the same. How does it happen that production, so vital to victory, has declined?

Mr. MacLaren (Burslem): Income Tax has gone on.

Mr. Keeling: That is certainly the case. In the

meeting which my right hon. and gallant Friend recently had with representatives of the miners, they advanced reasons for the decline, and suggested remedies, and one remedy that they put forward was that the minimum wage should be increased by something like 50 per cent. Now it is over a year since the Greene award gave a large increase in wages. We were then assured by the miners' leaders that there would be an increase in output. Hon. Members will find it recalled in *The Times* this morning that Mr. Will Lawther then said:

"This increase in wages, a national minimum and the National Wages Board, bring us definite rights, but also new duties and responsibilities, and we have to accept the task and give the nation all the coal it needs. If we fail, it will be a long time before the nation again listens to our proposals."

The Greene award has affected output, but downwards and not upwards. In consequence I am sure that, as Mr. Lawther prophesied, the sympathies of this country with the miners are very much less than they were a year ago. The figures show without a shadow of doubt that there are two main reasons for the fall in output. The first reason is the very high degree of absence, especially at week-ends and after holidays. The second reason is that output per man-shift has declined. The Mineworkers' Federation themselves recognise this, because in a poster, or a message, sent out a few weeks ago to the men they said:

"The output is falling per man employed. Absence without reason is increasing."

I want to say a few words on the question of absenteeism. The House will remember that when my right hon. and gallant Friend spoke last June he estimated that if the 4½ per cent, who were guilty of voluntary absenteeism—I use his own expression—would reduce their absence by half, the gain would be 4,000,000 tons per annum. His estimate was far too low. His is purely an arithmetical calculation. The number of men "guilty," as he called it, was far greater than 4½ per cent, and the Minister's over-all figure conceals the fact that absence at week-ends and after holidays is far greater than at other times. Modern machinery demands the completion of a cycle of work. When the week begins, as it often does, with absences of 30 per cent. or more, the whole cycle of work is deranged. The same is true of absences after a holiday, when the proportion has been as high as 50 per cent. There is the further fact that absences of 10 per cent. can cause a fall of output of 20 per cent., when men have to be taken off the coal face in order to man essential ancillary points.

To what is this absenteeism due? Sometimes it is attributed to the greater age of the miners, but the age, after all, has not increased much in the last 12 months. Moreover, there is definite evidence that absence is greater among the younger men than among the old. The fact is that absenteeism has become much worse since wages were increased, and there is no doubt at all in my mind that the bigger wages are largely responsible for the greater proportion of absences. One has only to look at the facts. It would appear as though, having earned enough money for his needs, and knowing that any further increase in income will attract Income Tax at a higher rate—

Mr. Sloan: Now the hon. Member is getting to it.

Mr. Keeling: —the miner stays away in many cases, oblivious of his country's need. The facts about the lower output per shift are very similar. I do not know whether the House is aware that before the war the only flat rate

to coalgetters was 1s. per shift and that, on the average, 93 per cent. of the coalgetter's wages was dependent upon his output. Since the Greene Award, the situation is very different, and now only 67 per cent. of the coalgetter's wages is dependent upon output. That means a reduction in incentive. Every time the flat rate has been increased in the last seven years, output has fallen. New proposals were made during the week-end by the Mineworkers' Federation, and they contained this most remarkable confession, that the maximum output which can be expected under present conditions is 2,750,000 tons per week. That works out at 276 tons per man per annum. Six years ago the figure was not 276 tons per man per annum but 310 tons, in spite of the fact that at that time there was a great deal of short-time working. Even two years ago the average output per annum per man was 296 tons. That seems to me a most lamentable admission that, despite all the pledges given last year, the average miner to-day is not working harder but less hard. I personally welcome the guaranteed week, because I know the misery of short-time working, but the Government and the country would be foolish indeed if they relied on any increase of output following on any increase in the minimum wage. I am also all for increased wages, but only if they are dependent on an increase in output. If the pit bonus, which apparently the Government has accepted, is found to be workable, well and good. It was turned down only last year by both sides, but when it is examined again I hope it will be found workable, and I think it is not desirable to say any more until the negotiations have been concluded.

Increased absenteeism and reduced output are only symptoms of a much deeper cause, and that is a decline in discipline. While there are very many men, perhaps the majority, who are patriotic and responsible, I assert that there are many others, especially younger men, who are out of hand. My right hon. and gallant Friend spoke rather optimistically of signs of unrest. Does he realise what is happening? There are a great many men in the mines to-day who are indifferent both to their own work and to their country's need. There are many men over whom their leaders have no control. Mr. Ebby Edwards has admitted that. Many agreements with the trade union leaders have been dishonoured. The machinery for conciliation is ignored. Every molehill of a grievance is magnified into a mountain. Under the Defence Regulations strikes without 21 days' notice have been made illegal; yet there have been over 400 such strikes in this year alone. Very many men arrive late and leave early. Many men disobey routine and even safety orders. Many decline co-operation. Many take advantage of the machinery of the Essential Work Order whenever they can. Many down tools on the slightest pretext and ignore the advice of their leaders. They do more. They flout the decisions of the National Service officers, the arbitration officers, the appeal boards, the Ministry of Labour and even the magistrates themselves. Under the umbrella of the Essential Work Order such men have no respect for authority, in some mines, I go so far as to say, there is something very much like mob rule. My right hon. and gallant Friend said he saw signs of unrest. Some of the Labour leaders have been more outspoken than that. The other day Mr. Abe Moffat said that unlawful strikes were a luxury of the minority at the expense of the majority. Mr. Lawther last Sunday said that the menace of strikes must be wiped from the face of the earth, and Mr. Frank Hughes, who has had some experience both as a miner and as a colliery director,

said, "There is a new element of anarchy creeping in."—*[Interruption.]* I was perfectly certain that what I said would arouse hostility and bitterness, but I think it is time that the public were informed of these things, because they have a really important bearing on the war effort.

My hon. Friend the Member for Chester-le-Street (Mr. Lawson) said there was a great obligation on all of us to support those who are fighting our battles. I suggest that there are some miners who have forgotten that obligation. I shall give a few examples, taken at random, that have come to me as a colliery director, though thank goodness they have not all happened in my colliery. I shall not give any names, but I am prepared to give full particulars to my right hon. and gallant Friend. First I will give a few examples of illegal strikes. At one colliery the brushers claimed extra money for handling coal. The trade union agent investigated the claim and found that it was groundless, but the men went on strike, and 3,000 tons of coal were lost. At a Yorkshire pit . . . an agreement was made on the price for the dirt above the seam. The men accepted it, but when they got their pay packets they were dissatisfied and went on strike for a whole week. At another Yorkshire pit all the men went on strike to demand the dismissal of a deputy. At one pit two men fought one another, and a lot of their comrades went on strike to bring pressure on the management to dismiss the man who they thought was the aggressor. The matter was, of course, in the hands of the police. Last week—and this is perhaps the most remarkable example I have come across—21 men went down a pit in South Wales and immediately came out and went home. They said the horses were underfed. A vet was called and said that the horses were in excellent condition. The next day the men went back to work without saying a word. That light-hearted frolic cost the country 200 tons of coal. So much for strikes.

I will now give a few examples of what I call non-co-operation. One example which is extremely widespread and causes a very large loss of coal is that men fail to maintain the regular cycle of work. This has already been mentioned. If coal produced in one cycle is not completely removed, that causes the next cycle to be thrown out of balance. It was the custom not very long ago for men to work such overtime as was necessary—of course, on payment—in order to get rid of the coal, but now it has very frequently happened that they refuse to work even five minutes. The effect of this is cumulative, and it means often that two days' work are required in order to get one day's normal output. At one Scottish colliery, I am informed, 10,000 tons of coal has been lost through this cause alone since January 1. Another example is that when a derailment occurs the haulage men do nothing to put it right; they say it is not their job. What would be said of a ship's crew which showed a similar detachment in comparable circumstances? I could give many similar cases, but I do not wish to detain the House unduly. . . .

[Here Mr. Keeling quoted a miner's letter to the press.]

. . . Non co-operation is not the worst of this matter. There have also been examples of sabotage. Plant has been wilfully damaged by malingerers who claim a guaranteed wage for the stoppage. Compressed air valves have been closed, signal wires have been tampered with, rubber hoses broken, horses' harnesses stolen, derailments deliberately

caused, anti-silicosis equipment damaged. I may be asked, Why do not the colliery officials enforce discipline? The short answer is that the Essential Work Order has removed a large part of the management's authority and has transferred it to civil servants outside the industry. . . . [Interruption.]

I am well aware that even under the Essential Work Order a man can be dismissed, but only for gross misconduct; he cannot be suspended. I am coming to that point in a moment. As I have said, the Essential Work Order has removed a large part of the management's authority and transferred it to civil servants outside the industry. When a breach of discipline occurs what action can be taken? If an official reprimands a man, I am sorry to say that very often he gets abuse in return. If he orders a man out of the mine, the man probably gets paid under the Essential Work Order.

Mr. G. Griffiths: That is wrong; he cannot do that.

Mr. Keeling: Suppose an official reports a man to the manager. The manager fills up a form and sends it to the local investigation officer, and it is physically impossible for the local officer to investigate anything like all the cases. I am told that a request has been received that only 12 cases a week shall be reported.

Mr. Davies: That statement is also inaccurate; the hon. Member should know.

Mr. Keeling: How could order be maintained in this country if the police were so rationed? The result is that action can only be taken in a small number of cases, and the decay of discipline is accelerated. The hon. Member for Chester-le-Street rightly spoke of the great responsibility which falls on the managers and of the very great strain which working under these conditions imposes. Early this year a questionnaire was sent out in South Wales to 119 colliery managements, and the replies were summarised like this:

"The fall in discipline is general. . . . The companies' officials are powerless, as they are deprived of control. . . . Their position has become intolerable, and some have expressed a desire to relinquish their posts. The unruly section of the men and boys show open resentment at being directed to their work. . . . they are defiant, and generally make replies in the most foul language. The offenders gloat over the fact that. . . they are immune from dismissal. They feel secure in the knowledge that the greater the nation's need for coal, the firmer established become their jobs and the brighter the prospect of extorting additional unearned money."

Mr. G. Griffiths: Does the hon. Member desire the Essential Work Order to be abolished now?

Mr. Keeling: I certainly do not. I am coming to my concrete proposals in a few seconds. From another district in South Yorkshire the same view is, more tersely, expressed as follows:

"The system of control introduced last year has reduced output, increased absenteeism, increased accidents, and immeasurably increased labour difficulties."

What is the remedy for this appalling state of affairs? It is vital to restore the authority of the managements. Before the war, and even up to last year, the managements were respected, because they had both knowledge and authority. I suggest that they should have the same power to enforce discipline, and to enforce it promptly, as they had 18 months ago. If the authority of Merchant Service officers is not weakened in war, why should the authority of mining officials be weakened? No industry can be operated effectively without

discipline. Indiscipline in a mine is just as dangerous as indiscipline in a ship. My right hon. and gallant Friend said that changes were necessary in operational control, and that that matter is now being considered. Will he arrange that the following suggestions are considered?

Firstly, an amendment of the Essential Work Order by restoring the power of suspension for three days for misconduct or disobedience. This power is enjoyed in other industries. The Union officials would see that it was not abused, and if you liked you could have the right of appeal. It is very important that that appeal, if allowed, should be heard without delay. It should not be submitted to the existing Appeals Board, with its cumbersome procedure. In the second place, I am opposed to police-court prosecutions, except in extreme cases, because of the delay they cause, and suggest that the voluntary system which has been set up in some areas should be developed and made universal. This is a system by which the regional investigating officer, assisted by two assessors, has the power to fine. Perhaps this tribunal might also hear appeals against suspension. My third suggestion is that there should be an automatic penalty for the loss of more than a certain number of shifts without good reason, of which the regional investigating officer should be the judge. Fourthly, I suggest that the law against illegal strikes should be firmly enforced. What is the good of having a law if you do not enforce it? When my right hon. and gallant Friend says that he does not apportion blame for illegal strikes, I ask, Why, then, does he not annul the law? Fifthly, let it be made obligatory upon men to work a full shift and a reasonable amount of overtime if necessary in order to complete a cycle of work. That was the custom until a very short time ago. . . .

All the evidence goes to show that this is a very important factor in the decline of output. Lastly, I would abolish the dual control of the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Fuel and Power, which causes long delays. I would leave the Ministry of Labour to provide the men, but transfer all other powers to the Ministry of Fuel and Power. Here are six constructive proposals, and I hope they will be carefully considered. One more thing is necessary—that everybody, including officials and politicians, and not least the hon. Member for Broxtowe (Mr. Cocks), should give up the practice of blackening the industry. I very much agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Chester-le-Street about that. The truth is that it is a fine and outstanding profession, with a good future.

I cannot conclude without suggesting respectfully to my right hon. and gallant Friend that he should consider his own position. Last year he had two tasks to undertake. The first was to reduce consumption. He succeeded to a large extent in that, and we all congratulate him. The second was to increase output. So far output has been reduced under his régime, and he cannot escape responsibility. . . .

Mr. Morrison, replying to Sir L. Lyle on October 14, who asked what evidence the Home Secretary had that recent strikes had been the result of subversive propaganda, said:—
"Persons who are hostile to the war effort are so few in number and their influence is so small that it would be misleading to suggest that strikes have been the result of their propaganda. . . ."