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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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## The Rôle of the Co-operative Societies

We reprint below some passages from the Official Report of the Queensland Legislative Assembly meeting at Brisbane on September 11 last.

The passages will inform those who find it hard to oppose the subterranean workings of big business masquerading as a popular movement, even when their own interests are at stake, as in the case of the innumerable small shopkeepers now in unequal competition with the 'Co-ops', as well as those who doubt the existence of world-wide coordination in the war which is being waged by the collectivists, under one name or another. Presumably, what is being tried out in Australia is intended for home consumption in perhaps a more 'refined' form.

### Co-operative Societies' Bill

*Hon. D. A. Gledson* (Ipswich, Attorney-General): . . . Another provision contained in Clause 6 will be welcomed by the Committee. It gives power to the Secretary for Public Lands, subject to the approval of the Governor in Council, to acquire land on behalf of a society under the Public Works Land Resumption Acts so long as the resumption is for the purpose of enabling the society to carry on its business and the resumption is in the public interest. The society, of course, must pay all costs, charges and expenses including compensation. Some difficulty has existed under the Primary Producers' Organisation Act in obtaining lands necessary for business registered under them. The power to acquire will not be extended to those bodies under this Act.

*Mr. Wanstall*: Who will decide whether the resumption is in the public interests?

*Mr. Gledson*: The decision will rest with the Governor in Council.

*Mr. Wanstall*: There will be no appeal?

*Mr. Gledson*: No. There will be an appeal in the usual manner against land resumptions.

*Mr. Wanstall*: That is only in regard to the amount of compensation.

*Mr. Gledson*: That is so. If the Governor in Council makes a decision on any matter there is no appeal against it.

*Mr. Pie*: That is, you can acquire a businessman's property for a co-operative society.

*Mr. Gledson*: Yes. A co-operative society may find it necessary to take over a business. It would then ask the Governor in Council to give it power to do so. Provided there is power to do it, the Governor in Council can do so. But it must be in the public interest. If the graziers formed

a society and decided to start in the textile business in order to make knitted garments and if the Governor in Council thinks it is in the public interest, power is given to acquire . . .

*Mr. Wanstall*: The next point I wish to deal with that was referred to by the Attorney-General is the clause that gives the Governor in Council the right, where he considers it in the public interest, to resume land and make it available for the carrying on of a co-operative business. That is a drastic new principle. We are used to, and none of us will argue against the principle, that the Governor in Council should have power to resume land for public purposes, such as the erection of a bridge or the construction of a road or a school, but when you extend that power to permit the Governor in Council to resume the freehold property of any citizen and expropriate it and give it to some other citizen, whether a co-operative concern or otherwise, you are going a long way in interfering with the right of the subject and much farther than we have ever travelled along that road in the past. I asked the hon. gentleman whether the Bill contained any right of appeal against such a resumption of land, and the Attorney-General assured me that there was going to be no appeal. The mere payment of compensation is not sufficient for the expropriation of a piece of land of a private citizen when that piece of land may be turned over to someone else, possibly his competitor in business.

*Mr. Pie*: . . . I analysed the co-operative movement in Great Britain last year, and when it is compared with the value of Great Britain's production as a whole we find that the co-operative movement produces just one-half of one-half *per cent.* When you go into industry in Manchester and Leicester where the Attorney-General said the great co-operative movement was getting into the textile industry of Great Britain, you find that there the co-operative movement's production of the essential goods of the nation is not even one-half of one-half *per cent.* . . . The Attorney General said this morning, that the co-operative movement can distribute dividends to its shareholders free of tax. Private enterprise, on the other hand, has to pay tax before the dividends are distributed and again when the dividends go to the shareholders. Surely that proves that there is in this community a law that does not apply equally to all people? If the co-operative movement distributes profits to shareholders as bonuses there is no taxation, whereas in private enterprise the profit is first taxed in the company before distribution, and taxed again when it reaches the hands of the shareholders. . . . Look at what he (the Attorney-General) said next—"It will give power to acquire businesses." Right. A man puts everything into his business. He builds it up from nothing into a big show. The Attorney-General then says "Subject to the Executive Council we will give power to a co-operative company to acquire that business," that is, to acquire a business that has been the lifeblood of a man. Then he said that the Bill

contained power to acquire land even though it might be the land that a firm has owned for years and on which it has been operating. That man might be running an efficient business. According to the Attorney-General the Governor in Council could then step in and say: "I want that land to put in a competitor, to take that business." (Government interjections). He said it. Everyone in this Committee heard it.

## PARLIAMENT

*House of Lords: October 15, 1946.*

### **Trials in the British Zone of Germany**

*Lord De L'Isle and Dudley:* . . . This year, between May 28 and June 1, there took place at Wuppertal in Germany the trial of some ten Germans who were charged with being concerned in the killing of four British women. Those brave women had been parachuted into France and had been captured. After a good deal of preliminary investigation, I understand that ten Germans were brought to trial on the charge which I have just enumerated.

What actually took place I think can best be brought to your Lordships' notice in the words of a letter written to *The Times* by a member of that court—Mr. Marlowe. These words are extracted from that letter:

"The simple facts proved to the satisfaction of the court were that these women were put to death and subsequently cremated. The only issue before the court was whether the unfortunate women had suffered 'judicial execution' after trial and sentence as spies or not. The court being satisfied that there had been no trial or sentence, the executioner or executioners could be condemned for murder.

"The evidence was clear that some four people were the executioners. Only one of these was before the court; he was duly condemned to death. Of the others, one had committed suicide and the other two had not been apprehended. The remaining accused were proved only to have played minor roles of complicity and (except for three who had clearly not been implicated and were therefore acquitted) were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment."

My reason in raising the question of this trial concerns the reporting of the trial in certain sections of the Press. It seems clear, according to my information, that the Press had some foreknowledge of the trial before it actually took place, and it appears, to put it at the lowest, very likely that some branch of the War Office dealing with public relations had given the Press some information about the prosecution's case. The report of that case was undoubtedly couched in rather lurid and horrific terms and made very glaring headlines in the paper. The court sat, with the result that I have just read out, as stated by Mr. Marlowe, a member of the court. But it appears that the Press was not present during the defence, or at any rate, did not report the defence, with the consequence that on Sunday, June 2, there were articles in the Press of which I will, with your Lordships' permission read an extract.

This is from the *Sunday Dispatch* of June 2. The article is headed: "Oven Murder: Only 1 to die." It says:

"Six men who murdered by burning alive four British girl Service parachutists at Natzweiler concentration camp, Alsace, were sentenced by a Military Court at Wuppertal yesterday. Werner Rhode, the camp doctor, who gave the girls drug injections before they were put into red-hot ovens, was sentenced to death by hanging. The camp commandant, Fritz Hartjenstern, received a life sentence, and the chief crematorium executioner, Peter Straub, whom one of the girls fought as he forced her into the oven, was sent to gaol for 13 years."

Then it goes on:

"Straub, who had 'seen 4,000,000 go in smoke up the chimney at Auschwitz,' broke down when his victim fought for her life, as her killers forced her into the oven, the court was told."

The following editorial comment appeared at the foot of the article, of which I have read a part:

"The *Sunday Dispatch* reports this decision of the Wuppertal Court to the fullest extent made available by agency messages. In the absence of possible further detail, the *Sunday Dispatch* makes this comment, which it feels will express the opinion of the great majority of British people:

That mere sentence of imprisonment for this horrific crime is an outrage against justice. That there can be no degree of guilt such as is inferred in the varying sentences. That the decision of the Court should immediately be reviewed by an appropriate authority."

In the light of what Mr. Marlowe afterwards wrote, that can hardly be regarded as a satisfactory state of affairs. It may be that the Press used the information, and the only information, that was available to them. But it does raise this question in my mind. How came it about that the Press knew, first of all, beforehand only the prosecution's case? How came it about that they reported only the prosecution's case, that the defence was apparently neglected, and then the wrong conclusions drawn? It seems that there was some lack of liaison in the public relations branch, or whatever branch of the War Office was concerned, and that the good name of British justice in Germany has suffered. . . .

*House of Commons: October 11, 1946.*

### **Atomic Energy Bill.**

*Major Bruce* (Portsmouth, North): . . . What we on these benches would like to know is, how are these mild forms of atomic energy or radiation, whichever one prefers to call them for the moment—and one does require a rather firmer definition, if one could get it from the Law Officers of the Crown—how are these radioactive bye-products being disposed of at the present time? I am advised that the Minister's exclusive agency for the disposal of these radioactive elements at present is Messrs. Thorium Ltd., a private limited company which, I think it should be known, is a subsidiary of Imperial Chemical Industries. I feel that we should know, first, the financial terms on which this has been accomplished, because, after all, as was stated during the Second Reading Debate, this industry is to become nationalised, and, therefore, Parliament and the people should be able to know some of the terms on which this disposal is taking place. Secondly, we should like to know the duration of the contract, and thirdly, what rights the Minister has reserved to himself to determine the contract.

These questions are to be asked for two principal reasons. The first reason is, of course, an international reason, and here I desire to measure my words very carefully because in this House one must be conscious that one's words, on occasion, may be capable of misinterpretation in countries other than our own. But, if I can put it mildly, the reputation of Imperial Chemical Industries in the years between the wars, in the armaments field, makes it very necessary indeed for the Minister to explain exactly the present relationship with that company. We know that before the war Imperial Chemical Industries supplied both sides in the Japanese-Chinese war, and we know that that was done, as Lord McGowan said at the time, without any particular delicacy of feeling.

I do not wish to attack this particular private company in this House, although experience has always shown that it has never lacked its supporters on the other side of the House if it has ever come to a question of argument. . . .

*Mr. Blackburn* (Birmingham, King's Norton): I wish to speak for only a few moments in support of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Portsmouth (Major Bruce), and to put three specific points. Firstly, it is quite obvious that radioactive by-products come under Subsection (1, b)—

"to dispose of any articles manufactured, produced, bought or acquired by him;"

Radioactive by-products are obviously such articles. The second point I wish to make is in connection with my hon. and gallant Friend's reference to Thorium Ltd., being a subsidiary of I.C.I. I am sure that no one is trying to suggest anything improper has been done. We are merely trying to elicit information. The Minister has stated in the House on many occasions, and it is a recognised fact, that radio-active by-products are the first and greatest immediate benefits to be derived from nuclear physics. They are in fact available on a colossal scale. Elaborate machinery has been devised in the United States to see that these radioactive by-products are allocated in accordance with need. If I.C.I. are given exclusive management, as I understand they have been, of the sales and disposal of these radioactive by-products, I hope that the Minister will indicate on what terms I.C.I. have these exclusive rights. I hope that he will indicate that no profit is being made out of it, and that appropriate machinery has been devised to allocate these substances in accordance with need. I hope that liaison has already been obtained with the Medical Research Council, and that as a result, a proper plan has been devised to see that research into the metabolism of the human body is to proceed at the greatest possible speed.

*Mr. Wilmot* (*Minister of Supply*) . . . Far from granting a monopoly to I.C.I. or Thorium Limited, or anybody else, the Government on the contrary are acquiring the business of Thorium Limited, whose premises are at Amersham, for the purpose of acquiring the plant that exists for doing the job. This company is owned as to 50 per cent. by Imperial Chemical Industries Limited, and as to 50 per cent. by the firm of Messrs. Howards, who are fine chemical manufacturers. The main business of the plant is the extraction, from the monosite, of the Thorium nitrate which is used in a manufacture of gas mantles. The firm has for some time been engaged at Amersham in the refining of radium, and has specialised in the study of the medical precautions necessary for the handling of radium and other radioactive substances. The terms of the acquisition provide for the purchase of the freehold property, furniture, and stock-in-trade at an agreed valuation, together with the acquisition by His Majesty's Government of the good will of that part of the company's business which we are now completely taking over. . . .

*Mr. John Edwards* (Blackburn): . . . In my view, civilisation is beginning to reach maturity, when the members of any community are intelligent enough to order their affairs and to compel the recalcitrant man, the ignorant man or the wicked man to submit to compulsory rules for the common good of all men.\* I put it quite like that. . . .

As I understand the Motion which we have in front of us, it would make possible either a closed shop in the sense that the employer could say he would only take men from a union or a number of unions, or it would permit a union shop, in the sense that it would be possible to make arrangements so that when men entered employment in a particular undertaking they were obliged to join a union, or it might be in certain cases one of several unions. It does not, as I understand it, make either obligatory, but it makes them possible. As far as I know, the trade union movement—and I have some right to speak on this matter—would be content to leave it there. We do not mind particularly whether the Government declare themselves on this point, although we would mind if they declared themselves against any arrangements made which did permit, either the closed shop or the union shop in the sense that I have defined them. We trade unionists are quite prepared to rely on our own strength. We know it is nonsense in any contractor's undertaking, to talk of having a closed shop unless we have the majority of people in that shop already organised. We are content to use our own industrial strength and not to ask Parliament, or anybody else, for any particular authority to do what we have been doing, and intend to go on doing.

Let us be clear, too, that if we talk of compulsion we are not talking of something that is inherently bad. I imagine most hon. Members opposite would agree that the whole business of collective bargaining involves compulsion. We do not allow people to work as long as they like; we do not allow them to work for as little as they like. There is an element of compulsion which is inherent in any advanced stage of economic or social life. . . . Let me tell him [the Member for the Combined Universities, Mr. H. Strauss] a few things that would be true, I am quite sure, of the men in the undertakings to which Government contracts have been given. They will belong to their union; that union will have its own life, its own group life, its own system of discipline and its own internal rules and regulations. It will have a spirit which makes it quite unavoidable that the men in the union will regard the non-union man, the disruptionist and the secessionist as anathema—as quite outside the pale. This is not a matter merely of trade union experience. It is a matter of human nature, and we would be silly if we did not take it into account. The men in these workshops will belong to unions that have made their collective bargains; they will belong to unions that have accepted obligations—for remember, trade unions do not just go and get things from employers without accepting obligations. Also, they have to face their members from time to time, and to say to their members in the interests of good business, "If we make an agreement we have got to stick to it."

*House of Commons: October 14, 1946.*

### Fair Wages

*Mr. Speaker:* . . . This Motion deals with the Fair Wages Clause in Government contracts, and therefore anything outside a Government contract is out of Order in this Debate . . .

\*Compare the report in the *Sunday Times* (October 20, 1946) of an interview given by President Bierut, President of the Provisional Government in Poland, to foreign journalists:

"It was then, when questioned about the censorship of home news, that he made the remark which has since become famous in Warsaw—that truth is the opinion of the majority and the public should be protected from the opinion of the minority."—Editor, *T.S.C.*

(continued on page 6)

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### From Week to Week

Yes, Clarence, when dear Sir Stafford says the standard of living in this country is 40 per cent. below pre-war, he is speaking quite objectively and his thoughts are, as usual, for the 'Cahmon Man.' He doesn't mean that Honourable Members of the House of Cahmons (salaries raised from £600 to £1,000 and expenses, free travelling, the best meals in London at pre-war prices, Government entertaining, etc.) or Cabinet Ministers (salaries doubled, Food Talks, Tours of Investigation, Priority Travel, etc., etc.) are really losing weight, or thinking of doing a little work. It hasn't really come to that. But it means we have to appoint hundreds of thousands of non-producing bureaucrats to keep the 'cahmon man' where he belongs, and we have to decrease the purchasing power of the pound as well as take it away from the cahmon man as soon as he gets it. In fact the outstanding feature of the post-war period is that it is the period of the cahmon man.

"Not even Russia, despite her widely publicised deal with Peron, has been able to get any linseed oil from Buenos Aires."—*World Report*, U.S.A., August 8.

You may have noticed that you can't buy any glycerine for anti-freeze or even medicinal purposes. Glycerine, the basis of high-explosive, is controlled by I.C.I. Where is it going?

We are not seriously concerned in regard to the arguments which attend any mention of the Protocols of Zion since it is their correspondence with events, and not their alleged origin, which gives them significance. But not for the first time, we feel bound to protest against the word "forgery" which is constantly used by those who wish to discredit them. There is no question but that portions of them can be found elsewhere, notably in the *Dialogues* of Maurice Joly. It is improbable that they were the work of Joly, and if they were, they would be a plagiarism, not a forgery. If, as the Jews, in dealing with this matter contend, there is no body corresponding to the Learned Elders of Zion and, at the same time, the Protocols cannot be shown to be claimed as the work of anyone else, the term "forgery" seems to be rather like the use of the word "murder" when there is no body, and no one is known to have disappeared.

The purring of Mr. Winston Churchill as he compliments Mr. Attlee and his Administration on their break with the Communist Party ought to convince anyone who still requires convincing that principles (in the modern jargon, "ideologies") are now merely traps set by knaves to catch fools. That, of course, does not mean that principles are not as, or more, vital than ever they were; it merely means that collectivist ("majority") organisation is just as fundamentally unsuitable

to their incarnation as a bicycle club would be for deep-sea diving. Mr. Israel Zangwill, in one of those bursts of expansiveness which seem to dog the secretiveness of his race, said shortly after the onset of the First Armistice "The British Government is merely Bolshevism in embryo, and Bolshevism is only Socialism in a hurry." Obviously, he knew.

Simply considered as a theory, there is no more difference between Communism and Socialism than between the Guild Socialism of Mr. S. G. Hobson and that of Mr. G. D. H. Cole. Surveying the field of baits for the Cahmon Man, Wall-and-Pine St. picked on Lenin-and-Trotzky-cum-Marx, and Counts Pirelli-and-Volpi chose Mussolini-cum-Odon Por. Where the scheme miscarried, apparently, was that in both cases the "chosen instruments" kicked away the ladder on which they rose to power. We have seen what happened ultimately to Mussolini and Trotzky. It is fairly evident that Stalin is headed for the same fate. If a few million more dupes are killed, maimed and driven insane, in teaching him who's master, that will be just too bad. After all, they're God's Chosen People, aren't they?

The choice of New York as headquarters for the U.N.O. (we refrain from the pun) seems to be justified on every ground, if enough space was not available at Hollywood. We could have guessed many gambits for the "first business"; but that the Secretary-General, who is presumably an administrative official, should lead off with an unprovoked attack on one of the few nations which kept out of war, which U.N.O. professes to regard as its primary aversion, can only mean that his Directors have no time to "waste."

### Idolisation of Learning

"... the newer universities have tended to teach their students too much and not well enough; and the result, especially in the first year of study, has been the wastage of much potentially good material.

"This seems to me to be the solid truth behind much recent talk about a public inquiry into university education. The world has seen too much in recent years of *la trahison des clercs* to be complacent about such education. But the talk may easily make things worse. . . .

"There is still more danger in the more ambitious demand that universities should take charge of the future spiritual welfare of civilisation. Much of the modern betrayal of humanity by its intellectual leaders may have sprung precisely from this modern tendency to idolise university learning. There was wisdom in John Knox's dying exhortation to the Kirk of Scotland to preserve itself from the bondage of the universities. A civilisation which has lost its philosophy of life must sweep other chambers than university lecture rooms to find it. Hence the ineffectiveness of much recent discussion about curriculum reform, even of the imposing report on the requirements of a general education published by the University of Harvard.

"... Students pay for a university education in order that they may be trained for a socially useful profession. . . . A university is, of course, bound in honour to offer its students more than this. It must offer them, if it can, the salt without which professional training has no savour: a love of truth, a respectful understanding of their fellowmen, and a motive for their life's work. But, if it must offer them more, it must not offer them less. . . ."—Lord Eustace Percy.



## The Food Muddle

The Editor,  
The Social Crediter.  
Sir,

### Food Parcels from the Dominions

Your overseas readers, who have either sent or have friends who have sent parcels of food to people in this country, may be interested in the following letter and its result.

September 5, 1946.

The Controller, Import Licensing Department,  
Board of Trade (London).

Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter 082861/7 of the 2nd inst.

I beg to remark that neither it nor its two enclosures answer the question in my letter of the 23rd ultimo, namely whether a register is kept of the "approved charitable organisations" to which "stopped" parcels are handed over; whether receipts for such parcels are taken from such organisations and filed; and whether the record or register comes in due course before the Auditor General.

If only 125 parcels have been seized during the 5 months of this financial year and handed over, the keeping of such a vouchered record cannot entail excessive (albeit necessary) work. But what was the number of parcels "seized" in the whole year 1945-46 from all overseas countries?

As one gift parcel per month of a weight and contents, as stated in the Press notice—copy of which you send me—is allowed to a recipient in this country, am I to understand that an official register or ledger of recipients is in existence and each parcel to each recipient is entered therein, so as to check and ensure that each recipient obtains no more than one gift parcel at the rate of one per month? That must entail an amount of official recording compared to which the keeping of "the approved charitable organisations" register (if any) must be a bagatelle.

In what way can the "fair share" theory apply logically and practically to the recipients who are fortunate enough to have friends overseas who send them gift parcels? In what way would it affect unfavourably my rations if anybody were to receive say 50 gift parcels a year? If it does not affect my rations what becomes of the "fair share" notion. That notion may sound very pretty in words, but in reality it seems to have only the substance of hot air. Perhaps the idea is only designed as the thin edge of a political wedge towards the introduction of a "fair share" policy in relation to food all over the world in perpetuity? Is that so? . . .

After a month, having received no reply, I sent a reminder on October 4, 1946, to the Controller, Import Licensing Department of the Board of Trade.

Dated October 12, the official reply contained no answer to my questions.

Such an unbusinesslike state of affairs is implied by the official silence that the Auditor General's attention should be drawn to the matter. To confiscate other persons' property without a proper record of what becomes of that

property being kept by the confiscating officials points to a public scandal, which should be investigated thoroughly.

Unless a record or ledger is kept, what check can there be on the one parcel per month to one recipient? Is that official labour (paid out of taxes) fundamentally "really necessary," seeing what rubbish the "one parcel per month" is.

Yours truly,

W. B. LAURENCE.

London, October 12.

It is clear from newspaper reports of Sir Stafford Cripps's meeting at Bristol on October 26 that the Minister was severely questioned concerning, among other matters, the advantages in being an administrator in a Socialist State; but the reports are scrappy, and it does not yet appear that the intensely irritated public knows what questions to ask, or what inferences to draw from such replies as are forthcoming.

A statement issued by the Cunard-White Star Line defending itself from criticisms concerning the catering arrangements on the liner *Queen Elizabeth* during its first civilian trip does not, at all events, indicate a shortage of good things in the United States. It says:—

"Apart from one or two small and unimportant unrationed items, such as potatoes, all the foodstuffs consumed in the ship were purchased abroad and imported with Government authority, the bulk being from the United States.

"There is no question of such supplies having been taken from the general stocks in this country, and the same arrangement will apply in the future.

"The passengers in the *Queen Elizabeth* are largely being carried in competition with foreign steamship companies or air service, where there is no restriction on food supplies, and to subject them to austerity regulations would only result in seriously handicapping British business without in any way helping the people in this country.

"Dollar earnings of the company's ships are of considerable importance to the country, to say nothing of the sums spent here by visitors.

"The *Queen Elizabeth*, in her capacity as an ambassador of British trade, determined to set high standards in post-war travel, must offer service and food comparable with those of her competitors, all of whom are as anxious to obtain American dollars as ourselves."

We are glad to hear that the food served in our luxury liner is at all events 'comparable' with that which our competitors, untroubled by restrictions on supplies, are able to serve; there is no suggestion that it is any better.

Mr. John Strachey, speaking at Dundee, clung to the fiction that there was a real shortage of essential foods before the war. "Successive Tory Governments kept the people too poor to take the food out of the shops: the redistribution of income had not created a food shortage but revealed it." Successive Whig Governments did 'keep the people too poor' to take consumable goods including food off the market; and this Whig Government is keeping the goods off the market as well.

## PARLIAMENT

(Continued from page 3)

I say that anything which cuts at the authority of the unions in our present circumstances is a bad thing. I believe the effect of what hon. Members opposite are trying to do is to cut at the authority of the unions. You must take it from me that those of us who organise the unions know that our authority is never really complete until we have 100 per cent. membership. It is only then that we are in a position to carry to the full the responsibilities which are placed upon us. . . .

Finally, to those who talk in terms of a "Labour front" and a "Fatherland front," I want to draw a distinction between compulsion which is exercised by minorities and compulsion which is exercised by majorities. We have never suggested for one minute that compulsion—be it in the individual workshop or as between various unions—should ever rest on any other principle than the principle which we shall be accepting when we go into the Lobbies to vote on this Motion tonight, an inherent principle in our political democracy, and a principle which is quite essential to any proper functioning of an industrial democracy. . . .

*Mr. Hollis* (Devizes): . . . I entirely understand—I do not say I agree with it—the point of view which the hon. Member for Blackburn puts forward, that in certain circumstances the high rights of the majority may compel the minority. But, surely, there is a corollary to add—that if a trade union is to be allowed to take upon itself this Hegelian function to speak as the true self of the worker against the worker's own passing wishes, it must necessarily follow that anyone who indulges in an unofficial strike ought to be ostracised, barred out from his union, and, therefore, presumably, prevented from any further employment. That is the logical corollary. Hon. Members opposite are not willing to accept that corollary in its logical conclusion. And rightly so; and therefore to my mind, the whole argument must necessarily fall to the ground.

I entirely appreciate the general argument of people performing Government contracts, that they dislike unionists working with the non-unionist, and the general, common argument that the non-unionist gets for himself all the benefits that union has won, without paying union dues. I appreciate that argument in general, but it has little bearing on the present state of affairs between the rival unions, which is all we are discussing at the moment. The claim of the busmen or of the dockers against the Transport and General Workers' Union is not that they should be allowed to enjoy the benefits won by the Transport and General Workers' Union without paying its dues. Their complaint is exactly the opposite. Their complaint, and that of the small unions, is that the large, Uncle Tom Cobleigh union is doing nothing for them whatsoever, and that a small union is necessary to deal with their particular problems, and in order to win the particular rights of those workers. Whether that argument be a just argument or an unjust argument, we are not concerned at the moment to discuss. Anyone would be very foolish who would say dogmatically and in the abstract that big unions were better than small unions or that small unions were better than big unions. We are not concerned to discuss that.

We are concerned to say, simply, that there are two perfectly genuine points of view, and that, therefore, if this is to go on being a free society at all, it is only right that the worker should be allowed to choose between those two

genuine points of view. It is no good the hon. Member for Blackburn saying that the minority, because they are the minority, are ignorant and wicked and recalcitrant.

*Mr. J. Edwards*: I did not say that. . . .

*Mr. Hollis*: I naturally withdraw if I am misrepresenting the hon. Member. . . . Minorities are not necessarily always wrong or recalcitrant or wicked. I think the way of freedom is to allow the majority and minority to work it out between one another. It is quite clear that what we are moving to in this country today is the managerial State. We are not moving at all towards the classless State of Socialist idealism; but towards the managerial State. The Minister of Fuel and Power said the other day there was being created a new industrial aristocracy. On that there are but two comments to be made. First, one could not imagine anything truer, and secondly, one could not imagine anything in more flat contradiction with everything Keir Hardie had in mind when he founded the Labour Party 50 years ago.

There are two serious questions to be answered—to what extent is the coming of the managerial State inevitable, and how can we safeguard ourselves against the abuse of power by this new governing class, to see that it does not abuse power as the wielders of power have always abused it throughout history? The answer to the second of the problems is obviously that we must encourage all organisations in society that are independent of this managerial power, and there are few organisations more important to encourage than free and independent trade unions. I entirely agree with the hon. Member for Blackburn on that. My contention against him is precisely that he is not encouraging them, but is killing trade unions. A free and independent trade union is a trade union a man can choose for himself whether he belong to it. It is not free and independent if the State chooses it for him, and dictates to him what union he shall belong to. My whole argument is, that no greater mistake could possibly be made by trade union leaders or by the Government if, for some short-term advantage, they transform the whole nature of the trade union movement, if they make it close being something which a man chooses to join because he thinks it to his interest to do so, and transform it into something which he is compelled to join, and where his dues are collected in exactly the same way as his taxes are collected. My whole argument against the hon. Member for Blackburn, whose sincerity I deeply respect, is that, if he does this, and gets the Government to do this, he will not be strengthening the moral influence of the State, but on the contrary, will be weakening the moral influence of the trade unions.

#### Odlum v. Stratton (Defendant's Indemnity)

*Mr. N. Smith* asked the Minister of Agriculture to what extent his Department indemnified the defendant against costs and damages in the case of Odlum v. Stratton.

*Mr. T. Williams*: The indemnity given to the defendant in this case was in respect of damages and costs. The damages amounted to £500, which have been paid. The plaintiff's solicitors have not yet delivered their bill of costs so the amount cannot be stated, but the bill will be subject to taxation by a taxing master in the usual way.

*Sir W. Smithers* asked the Attorney-General the cost to the taxpayer of the guarantee in respect of cost and damages given by his Department to the farmer whose case was tried on July 29 before Mr. Justice Atkinson.

*Mr. T. Williams*: I have been asked to reply. I would refer the hon. Member to the first part of the answer which I gave to the hon. Member for London University (Sir E. Graham-Little) on October 10.

### Aliens' (Naturalisation Certificates)

*Mr. Hurd* asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many aliens were granted naturalisation in 1943, 1944 and in 1945.

*Mr. Ede*: The number of aliens granted certificates of naturalisation who took the Oath of Allegiance were:

In 1943, 541 aliens, of whom 447 were British-born women.

In 1944, 549 aliens, of whom 456 were British-born women.

In 1945, 604 aliens of whom 371 were British-born women.

*House of Commons: October 15, 1946.*

### Pound Sterling (Purchasing Value)

*Lieut.-Colonel Bromley-Davenport* asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the purchasing value of the £ relative to 1914 on July 1, 1945, and October 1, 1946, respectively.

*Mr. Dalton*: Forty-eight *per cent.* at July 1, 1945, and 49 *per cent.* at September 1, 1946, the latest date for which a figure is available.

*House of Commons, October 16, 1946.*

### Coal Situation

*The Minister of Fuel and Power (Mr. Shinwell)*: . . . In 1943, 43,000 Bevin boys were introduced into the industry. . . . the introduction of Bevin boys untrained, frustrated from the beginning, discontented, capable of causing serious trouble in the pits, was perhaps the most serious aspect of the deterioration to which I am referring. . . . Are hon. Members aware . . . the absenteeism among Bevin Boys has been more than twice as high as the absenteeism among regular miners? Some time ago I made a speech in connection with the Bevin boys' position, and said how glad I would be to release them. Even now, it is not possible to release them all. . . .

However the position has been so bad that we are now engaged in the process of shaking out the undesirable elements, and I beg hon. Members to note this. In the last five weeks we have lost nearly 5,000 men from the coalmining industry. Many of them have been dismissed because of the modification of the Essential Work Order, as incorrigibles, that is to

say regular absentees. One would suppose with this declining manpower, due to the shake-out of these undesirable elements, that production was declining. On the contrary, in those five weeks, although the manpower was less, production increased. . . . In the week ended September 14, the output was 3,440,000 tons; in the week ended September 21 it was 3,538,000 tons; in the week ended September 28, 3,631,000 tons; in the week ended October 5, 3,657,000 tons, and in the week ended October 12, with actually 5,000 fewer men than for the comparable week of 1945, 3,687,000 tons. Some 100,000 tons more than last year were produced. The output per man shift has gone up, absenteeism has declined.

. . . The other night I attended a function at Nottingham . . . to celebrate the production of the millionth ton of coal by the Meco-Moore machine, the most modern piece of machinery in the mining industry, and a British machine, be it noted, probably the best in the world. Those machines are coming along at the rate of about three a month. . . . Where the Mecco-Moore machine is in operation output has gone up to 13 tons per manshift, as against an average of six tons per manshift. It has doubled the output and it can do better still. It has yet to be utilised in the thin seams of which there are far too many in this country. I am informed on the highest authority that before long, a machine will be produced capable of tackling the thin seams, and we shall get a much higher output. . . .

*Major Lloyd-George (Pembroke)*: . . . The domestic consumer before the war had 45 million tons of coal. That includes coal for offices and for other purposes below 100 tons. For our purpose of comparison, 45 million tons is the figure. By the end of 1945, that figure was down to 32 million tons. That is a cut of 30 *per cent.* . . .

*Mr. Bowen (Cardigan)*: . . . The present absentee figures of something like 15 or 16 *per cent.* are largely contributed to by men under 30 years of age. I am informed that absenteeism is three times as high among men under 30, as it is among those of 30 and over. . . .

*Mr. Timmons (Bothwell)*: . . . Do hon. Members think that young miners, who are called upon to work overtime, possibly at night in order to clear the coal-face and secure the complete cycle of work the next day, or, probably, have to go on duty on Sundays, should be taxed to the extent of about 50 *per cent.* of what they get? . . . I believe that, if some consideration was given by the Chancellor to the question of relieving these lads from the tax on their overtime, it would stimulate and inspire them to do their very best.

*Mr. Osborne*: Is the hon. Member pleading that this should be given only to young miners and not to everybody?

*Mr. Timmons*: No, generally, but coal is the life-blood of this nation, and we have got to deal with first things first. . . .

*Mr. D. J. Williams (Neath)*: . . . Only the other day, the secretary of the miners' union warned us that the whole of British economy is delicately poised on the razor edge of the coal crisis. A fortnight's stoppage in the British mining industry from any cause—an epidemic, a breakdown in transport, or climatic conditions—will bring the whole of British industry to a standstill. . . .

### Government Borrowings

Sir W. Smithers asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state to the nearest £1,000,000 the amount of debt held by Government Departments on March 31, 1946, under the separate headings of floating debt and other internal debt, excluding bonds intended for Death Duties.

Mr. Dalton: The figures are as follows:

	On March 31, 1946 £ millions
Floating debt .....	618
Other Internal debt (excluding Bonds tendered for Death Duties) .....	2,580
	<hr/> 3,198

### "Life is Real; Life is Earnest"

A long-term programme of training in the economic and efficient use of the country's fuel resources is to be developed as one of the steps to meet the grave shortage of fuel.

Local Education Authorities are being asked by the Ministry of Education to provide appropriate courses leading to professional qualifications and also courses for stokers, boiler house attendants, etc. Education in the economics of fuel utilization will be a feature of those and other courses of training.

Examinations leading to professional qualifications have been framed, and agreed syllabuses drawn up. The Ministry of Fuel and Power will help with the provision of lectures and demonstrators.—*Ministry of Education Press "Hand-out,"* October 13.

### Recall of U.S. Army Officers?

Washington, October 7.

Forty thousand reserve officers who were recently retired have been recalled to the colours. The impression is abroad that Russia has already declared war on the American economic system, and through her agents here is promoting labour strife and industrial chaos. Five million dollars has been made available, according to reliable sources of information, to Henry Wallace for the formation of a new political party, pro-Soviet, pro-Communist, and subordinate to the P.A.C.—N. N. S.

### Two Bureaucrats to Find Work for Five

Tables published in the Official Report of the House of Commons (October 15 and 16) show that six months work of the 2,000 odd employees of the Regional Appointments Offices found work for less than 10,000 people—supposing each did some appointing, less than one appointment per employee per month. This costs the Government over £600,000 a year, and illustrates its *Really-Full-Employment Policy*—full employment finding full employment for others.

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Twenty-two Ministers of His Majesty's Government found occasion for visits abroad in the summer vacation; six of them reached the United States with varying constellations of officials, and Mr. Bevin went to Paris with Mrs. Bevin. This doesn't count Mr. Morrison who went to Ireland with his car.

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