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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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From Week to Week

"BRITAIN" (1948)

"... life is now so shortened and hemmed in, that the things one ought to do accumulates like a Sisyphus ball... the difficulty of petrol, the way in which no day, however long, had enough hours in it, and the increasing fatigue of life... behaving like most other people who had taken six years of war with uncomplaining courage, and were now being starved, regimented and generally ground down by their present rulers; besides the hidden shame that England's name had been lowered in the eyes of the lesser breeds.

"This condition was so widespread in England that people had to recognise it... Sleep that did not refresh, the endless struggle to get food and clothes, the nastiness of the food and the clothes when you got them, the gradual disappearance from the shops of everything except horrible fancy articles made of plastics; the surging crowds of foreigners everywhere, the endless waits at the Food Office and the Fuel Office; the overcrowded buses and trains, the daily humiliations of one's country and oneself, the gradual decay of houses and gardens for want of labour and materials, the increasing difficulty of finding anywhere to live when the Government blocked building plans, the increasing inquisitioned prying of officials into private affairs, were all bringing people into a state of dull resentful apathy with no hope of relief."

—Angela Thirkell, *Love among the Ruins*.

Why, my dear fellow, it's succeeding beyond our wildest hopes.

Some of the many admirers of the late A. R. Orage do his memory a disservice in attributing to him virtues (if they are virtues) which he did not possess, as for instance, in the *Evening Standard* of September 18 which stated that "he worked out the principles of Social Credit with Major C. H. Douglas."

Orage had no more to do with "working out the principles of Social Credit" than Major Douglas had with National Guild Socialism, and anyone who knew Orage well would recognise that the suggestion was inherently improbable. Orage was not an original thinker; he was quite probably the finest editor and expositor of his day and time, and his services to Social Credit in those capacities are historic and incalculable.

The present generation, either of Social Crediters or the general public has little or no conception of the background against which the ideas now known as Social Credit had to be presented. The very vocabulary was strange and novel; Fabian propaganda had completely misled reformist opinion as to the nature and functions of money; and the clamant need, which Orage supplied, was to direct opinion away from institutionalism to policy, a word which in itself meant almost nothing but fire insurance to the great majority. That the

present public awareness of many things which were completely occult thirty years ago is appreciable, is a fact deriving from a superstructure wrought in great part by Orage in the years 1919 to 1923.

We return to our golf allegory of the previous week, because, for want of a better, it serves to illustrate the world's problem; and, in the words of the toastmasters at the formal dinners of bygone days, we couple with it the names, "Objective" and "Incentive."

The objective of golf is to get the ball into the hole in a minimum number of strokes, but that is not the incentive. The objective is simple, but the incentive is complex. Part of it is the exercise of skill, and skill involves self-discipline. Part of it is environment, the open air, and Nature. Part of it is the inducement of physical wellbeing from healthful exercise, and of mental wellbeing from a sane companionship.

The first point to be made is that *the incentives are much more long-term than the objective*. Imagine someone who had never seen or heard of golf, being taken to an empty golf links, given a bag of clubs and a ball, and told to hit the ball into the nearest hole. It is long odds that he would regard the whole procedure as wearisome and fatuous. He would understand the objective, but for him, the incentives would be non-existent.

The next point to notice is that the incentive does not arise out of the objective, which is to put a ball into a hole; it arises out of the circumstances and limitations which condition the putting of the ball into the hole. The incentive is part of the conditions; and if you modify the incentive, say by the introduction of a money incentive, you introduce a new factor which does not arise out of the natural conditions. Thus if the Royal and Antient Club of St. Andrews refuses to allow competitions for money, and Fuzby-on-the-Slag-Heap offers weekly prizes of £5,000, you will get an entirely different type of golfer at each of the two places. The subject is far from exhaustion.

The conscious pressure by our alien Masters, through our impotent politicians, to degrade the British in every possible way, reaches far beyond industrial matters. But, for the moment, these are basic, and a significant warning that the wholesale adoption of American methods might be "disastrous" was voiced by Mr. D. Sharpe, a prominent Glasgow ironfounder, to the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce recently. Mr. Sharpe, who has actual experience in introducing American methods, said that the standard of British workmanship was so much higher than the skill evinced by the average American workman, that in many cases the methods were unsuitable to our conditions. He might have added that many American methods would never have been tolerated if reasonable craftsmanship had been available.

PARLIAMENT

House of Commons: September 21, 1948.

Parliament Bill

Considered in Committee.

[Major MILNER in the Chair]

The CHAIRMAN proceeded, pursuant to the Order of the House this day, to put the Question, "That the Chairman do report the Bill, without Amendment, to the House."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 281; Noes, 156.

Bill reported without Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the Third time."—[*Mr. Ede.*]

Mr. Quintin Hogg (Oxford): . . . It is thus the case that when all the constitutional arguments are examined, and they must and ought to be examined in a matter of this importance, the issue between the parties is fundamentally a simple one. The right hon. Gentleman and certain of his colleagues has suggested again and again during the course of these Debates that this House of Commons is always, at all times and in all circumstances, the only body which is ever fit to interpret the will of the people. That is the claim underlying this Bill, and that is the only principle upon which it can be justified. It is a principle from which I must say we profoundly differ.

Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite pay lip service to the principle of popular sovereignty. "The people's will," they say, "must be law, but we are always the only people to tell the world what the people's will is." There is ample precedent for such an attitude. It was the view of Hitler: "Das ist Recht was dem Führer gefällt." [*Interruption.*] The hon. Gentleman below the gangway evidently believes that two wrongs make a right. I hope the right hon. Gentleman opposite will try to answer my argument. I will not yield to the right hon. Gentleman in my respect for and devotion to this House or the principles of the British Constitution . . .

I must say this in all sincerity. I have been a student of public affairs in this country all my adult life. I have never known a Government, a party majority or even a Member of Parliament that was fitted to decide when he or they had lost the confidence of their constituents. No one is a good judge in his own cause. No one is less fitted than a Government to decide when it is no longer popular; no one is less fitted than a Member of Parliament to decide when he is no longer loved by his constituents. In this land, we have many features of our constitution to which I am devoted. One is the electoral system, the system which gives the party which wins the election a greater power than is given in any other civilised land. Another is the unlimited power of this House to alter the law in whatever direction it pleases. I approve of these things, but, if the law be such that this House of Commons and this Parliament has the right to alter the Constitution after being elected on an electoral system which gives that power to a majority then we on this side claim that it follows, as surely as night follows day, that we must put into the Constitution some compensating factor which will prevent that majority and that House from being a despotism of elected dictators.

That, it seems to me, is the issue raised by this Bill. Which of the two views of this House of Commons and of the two views of the sovereignty of the people is ultimately

going to be accepted here—the view put forward in support of this Bill by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, or the view put forward against this Bill by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House?

Are we to accept that view about this House which has been traditional, which has been upheld through the centuries, under which it has never been allowed to become an assembly of elected dictators, with untrammelled powers, and under which our affairs have gradually developed until it has become the established doctrine that it is the people and not Parliament which is sovereign in this country—not sovereign only at stated intervals, but sovereign really, and all the time? Or are we to reject that view and to choose in its stead the view now put forward by the right hon. Gentleman, the view of Hitler, the view against which Burke in his time fulminated to such effect, that the elected Chamber is nothing but a body of elected dictators, that the power of the people is limited to occasional interventions at stated intervals, when after a discussion for a few weeks it is permitted to elect a new House, the Members of which will become not the representatives of the people, but, to use the phrase of the Attorney-General of England, the new masters of the people who will then be free to do, without control from any other organ of the Constitution, whatever they will to decide what is right, to decide what the people want, and above all to decide what they think is good for the people?

I fear too greatly that it is the latter theory which is enshrined in the provisions of this Bill. If it is, it will not be for the first time that it has been put forward in this Parliament. Actually, it emerged first in 1945 when we were greeted with the proposition that no old-fashioned rules of procedure were to permit a minority to delay what was described as the mandate of the people. It emerged again when we were told that whatever was contained in the election programme must be passed without discussion according to the timetable. Somewhat inconsistently it has emerged again in support of this Bill—

. . . That theory has emerged again during the Debates in this House, somewhat inconsistently I think, when we were told that Measures may now be proposed which were not contained in the election programme. . . .

. . . during these Debates as the whole issue between the parties on this Bill, for instance, by the hon. and learned Member for Llandaff and Barry (*Mr. Ungoes-Thomas*) in his speech last night—that it is the House of Commons, in all circumstances, which is the only proper interpreter of the will of the people. That is what they claim by the principle on which this Bill is founded, and it is that view which I challenge.

Let us test it by experience and in theory. When this view is challenged in the Press, as it sometimes is, the Press is assailed and subjected to obloquy as the most prostituted in the world. When it was apparent that some Measure was proposed, which was objected to by public opinion, we were told by the hon. and learned Member for Northampton (*Mr. Paget*) that public opinion was not the test, that we were representatives and not delegates. When the Archbishops of the Church of England begged the Government to withdraw this very Measure because of the evil it would cause, they were told that the Church must not meddle with politics. When, not very long ago, the judges made intervention—

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. Gentleman is certainly

out of Order now. I must ask him to confine himself to the contents of the Bill.

Mr. Hogg: . . . I would remind the House of a warning which I gave in the earliest meeting that we had. I say that if democracy is destroyed in this country it will not come by any violent overthrow of our Constitution, it will not come by marches of storm troopers in the streets. It will come by a back door, when a party majority learns to use its power as a means of suppressing opposition and when a party boss, weeping crocodile tears over what he proposes to do and mouthing hypocritical compliments on the traditions which he is in the process of destroying, decides to pervert the procedure of Parliament and undermine its authority in such a way that towards the Government it becomes a servile Reichstag but towards the people an uncontrolled and despotic master. . . .

Mr. Wingfield Digby (Dorset, Western): . . . It is not simply a question of adjusting the balance between the two parties, as he [Sir Richard Acland (Gravesend)] seems to suggest. This is a question of the greatest constitutional importance for the future of this country, unless of course he takes the view that the Constitution of this country is of no importance.

I think one of the objections which can be put forward to this Bill can be summed up in words used as long ago as 1910 by Lord Balfour, when he complained of the Parliament Act, 1911, that the Bill "neither ends nor mends." I think in those words we have a summary of the objections of many of us on this side of the House today. The Bill neither ends the old House of Lords in favour of another type of Second Chamber, nor does it make any attempt to mend the existing relationship between the two Houses, which hon. Members opposite complain are unsatisfactory.

The question of the suspensory veto is not one which can be judged by the mere alteration of the length of time, by quoting two years against one year or one and a half years against six months, because I believe the implications of this suspensory veto go very much further than that. The composition of the House of Lords remains thoroughly unsatisfactory, we are told by hon. Members opposite, and yet last night we heard the Home Secretary say, in effect, "We do not think the present composition is good; we think it is bad; but we will entrust to the bad composition powers as full as those we are prepared to give to any Second Chamber, however good." That would be a most amazing proposition if it had not come from the present Government. That you are prepared to give as wide a power to something you conceive to be bad as to something you conceive to be the best, is to my mind a most extraordinary way of approaching any problem of Government, and especially a constitutional problem.

There is no doubt that there is here a big issue which the Government have refused to face. In those Debates of 1910 and 1911, Mr. Asquith never attempted to deny that the question was one which was not finally solved by the Parliament Act of 1911. If I may quote his words, he said:

"The problem, therefore, will still remain a problem calling for a complete settlement, and in our opinion that settlement does not brook delay."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, March 29, 1910; Vol. 15, c. 1166].

He spoke those words in the same year as that in which I was born, and still we are no nearer a settlement today. I know there may be some criticism of Governments between the

wars for not bringing about reforms, but those reforms which were suggested were bitterly opposed by those on the benches opposite. What we are discussing now is the attempt by the benches opposite, now that they have the opportunity, to provide that reform. They have completely failed to provide it.

In my view the issues before us are even graver than some hon. Members appear to have appreciated. This evening we are not only changing the Constitution, but in addition we are changing the way in which the Constitution is changed, because we are a sovereign Parliament—we have a sovereign Parliament in this country—and that Parliament has the right to make future changes. What we are, in effect, doing is cutting down the length of time in which our Constitution can be changed, however fundamentally, from a period of a year and a half to a period of only six months.

We know that the Government is not very picky about this kind of constitutional question. They seem to imagine that this country is proof finally and for ever—I hope they are right—against the kind of extremes which are so prevalent in the world today. In fact, some of the Members of the Government have themselves, in their more irresponsible days, before they took office, used words which suggest that they had in mind very fundamental changes in our Constitution, some of which would have the effect of diminishing the liberties of the people. The Prime Minister once wrote something about "local commissars." He said he was not frightened of the Russian analogy. I believe the bulk of the people of this country would be frightened of the Russian analogy in that connection.

As a result of this Bill we have reached the position whereby a bare House of Commons majority is able, at the end of six months, fundamentally to alter the laws under which we live, to alter the Constitution under which we live. I think I can go even further than that. Times have changed very much since the days when hon. Members of the House of Commons voted without considering their party allegiance. The days are now long forgotten when Pitt, then Prime Minister, could come down and deliver a strong speech in favour of the abolition of the slave trade, could be voted down without any question of resignation—

. . . It is undoubtedly the case that under this Bill after six months this House will be able to bring about fundamental changes in our Constitution—changes which in countries abroad can only be brought about with the most complicated safeguards of machinery. For example, in the United States of America no change in the Constitution is possible unless initiated by two-thirds of both Houses of Congress or three-quarters of the legislatures of the States. The provision in the case of Norway is even more stringent. In that case the Storting must not only publish the Amendment proposed to the Constitution but it must then hold a general election. Even then, a two-thirds majority is needed after the general election and, finally, the principles of the Constitution must not be contravened. That is a very different operation from the mere securing of a party majority in this House, with the aid of the party whip. The decision may be that of a majority which is only a small one and which may not, even at the time the decision is taken, still represent the opinion of the people.

(continued on page 7.)

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Saturday, October 9, 1948

A Monarchical Constitution

Not a little interest attaches to some opinions expressed in an interview given by Henri, Comte de Paris, to an English journalist. The Count is a descendant of Louis-Philippe, the last King of France. He became the legitimate Pretender to the French Throne in 1940, on the death of his father, the Duc de Guise.

We quote the report published by the *Catholic Herald* for October 1:—

“... he has thought out a very simple, but effective plan for a monarchical constitution, the essence of which is simply that the country and the people must be afforded protection from the antics of the careerists and politicians. Let representative democracy remain fundamentally as it is, but let there be three authorities for the exercise of that protective function. First, a truly popular one, the Delegates of the People, elected by universal suffrage in small constituencies, never meeting as an Assembly, but representing the people as a kind of delegated referendum to test whether the Assembly's acts are always in conformity with the wishes of the people. Second, a Great Council of 30 members nominated for life by the Monarch, by the Delegates of the People and the Assembly, and by the great corporations of the country. These Privy Councillors would be a liason between the political life of the country and the third protective force which is the Monarch himself.”

We note that the first element in this mechanism seems to be better adapted to the expression of a negative “vote”: there is no suggestion of positive initiative. The emphasis on the small size of constituencies reflects recognition of the desire to favour individual judgment and to avoid mass phenomena. The second element appears to combine executive functions in a non-hereditary House of Legislators or Lords. The Monarchical function is undefined except that it (as, indeed the others, if the sketch is to be taken literally) is “protective.”

The journalist records that “naturally we talked a great deal about the need for a return to Christianity and the role of the Church in France and the Continent.

“With great emphasis, the Comte said: ‘I believe what is needed above all is the apostolate of personal example. I fear that there has been an excess of theorising and philosophising, especially in my country.

“The application in personal life of Christian doctrine to political and social questions is the immediate need.

“In the past Christianity may have been too political

in the sense of taking a party or class line; today the Christian in his life and attitude must be above such politics and show by example how Christian teaching demands a public life based on the spiritual foundations of the Gospel.’

“We talked, too, about the practical difficulties of the relations of Church and State in the modern secularised world. France, the Comte insisted, was a Catholic nation, but while everything must be done by better social and housing arrangements to stop the evils of depopulation and broken marriages, great tact, understanding and wisdom are needed, for the protection of Church as well as State, to avoid any taint or accusation of clericalism in a modern country with a predominantly Catholic population.

“The future of France, like the future of Europe and the world, is veiled; but I think there is little doubt that if France, taught by so many hard lessons, has the sense to look again to the best traditions of her history she will find in the Pretender to the French Throne a prince wise enough and strong enough to lead her out of political chaos along a truly democratic and truly progressive path.”

The National Review

An announcement embodied in a review of the fifty-five years during which *The National Review* has been in the hands of her family, discloses that, with the October issue, the editorship passes from the kindly and enlightened Lady Milner, who inherited control of the review from her brother, the late Leo Maxse, at the beginning of his fatal illness in 1929, to Lord Altrincham.

The ‘historical note’ which she has written for the current issue, is, in itself of great interest. In 1893, “There were no shorthand typists or typewriters, no motor cars or telephones and only penny-farthing bicycles. If you worked after dark there was no electric light, only a lamp or candles. We lived four miles from the station (Dorking) and our copy, all written by hand, and the return proofs had to go backwards and forwards in a dog-cart. On the other hand, printers worked much faster and the *Review*—then more than double the size of this issue—took much less time to come out than nowadays, and the post was far quicker and more reliable.”

“Since 1940,” relates a later paragraph, “I have carried on the work without a private secretary and I am too tired to go on. Besides, such work as this should be done by the young.”

It should.

“Spy” Ring in U.S.A.

An Associated Press message from Washington dated September 25 and published in the European edition of the *New York Herald-Tribune* says:—

“An official close to the House Un-American Activities Committee said the committee’s report on atomic espionage ‘will shock the public when it is published.’

“The official said the report will state that Presidents Roosevelt and Truman and Attorney General Tom C. Clark ‘had all the facts’ on the Russian spy ring that got atomic secrets, but that they did nothing about it.”

COMMITTING AUSTRALIA

A Speech by Mr. Fadden

The leader of the Australian Country Party, Mr. Fadden, in a speech practically ignored by the Australian daily newspapers, has commented on Australia's international commitments. His remarks, although made as long ago as last April, are relevant to discussions now brought to prominence by the conference of Imperial premiers. The *New Times* of Melbourne gives the following extracts:—

... It is impossible to traverse even a small part of the ground in a debate of this nature. There is need for much more frequent debates on this and kindred subjects, so that current international affairs, and Australia's participation in world organisations, can be more quickly and more closely scrutinised by the Parliament.

The index to the statement on international affairs contains various sub-divisions of the United Nations organisation, such as the Interim Committee of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, regional economic commissions, the Economic and Employment Commission, the Trusteeship Council, the Atomic Energy Commission, the Commission for Conventional Armaments, the International Refugee Organisation, as well as several alphabetical word-puzzles such as the I.L.O., the F.A.O., the I.T.O., U.N.E.S.C.O., U.N.R.R.A., and I.C.E.F., Benelux, and so on, almost without number.

Each of those organisations holds committee and sub-committee meetings, and the difficulty of keeping track of and co-ordinating, their discussions is almost insurmountable.

However, Unesco has held three specialised meetings.

The first conference dealt with some sort of Latin-American educational fundamentals, in which Australia was represented by observers.

The second conference concerned itself with museums, whilst the third conference discussed the role of philosophers in the modern world.

Again, the Economic Commission for Europe, after conducting negotiations with the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agricultural Organisation, the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, secured a satisfactory division of responsibility in the fields of timber and fertilisers. . .

It is unfortunately true that the relief of starvation in many European countries through Russian aid was obtained only at the price of embracing Communism.

We should be wary of unconsciously assisting Russia in its plan for European domination through economic aid.

For instance, Australian food to the value of £1,000,000,000 was given recently as additional post-U.N.R.R.A. relief.

I should like to be assured that none of this Australian food will be used merely for the purpose of relieving Russian satellites of some of their economic problems, thereby releasing Soviet grain for propaganda purposes elsewhere in Europe.

This matter will need careful investigation, because Poland is apparently one of the nations to participate in the distribution of this Australian food. . . .

All nations which abide by United Nations decisions, automatically lose some of their independence of action; in other words, participation by sovereign States in the United Nations Assembly must result, in some measure, in the transference or division of certain of their sovereign rights.

I fear that Australia may already be committed to a splitting of its sovereignty with the international organisation to a degree which is not generally required.

At the Second Session of the General Assembly, members were called upon to carry out its recommendations on economic and social matters. The Minister admits that these recommendations gave the Council and the Assembly a more direct influence on the economic policies of national governments, and for that reason they received the full support of the Australian Delegation.

I should like to know to what degree these recommendations have mortgaged Australia's freedom of action by compelling future Australian Governments either to abide by the United Nations decisions or to break faith. . . .

Again, Australia is represented on a sub-committee on employment, which considers international action in the field of full employment and economic stability.

What will be the extent of our obligation under these headings?

Will it mean the establishment of a super-bureaucracy which will regulate what we shall grow and how much we shall produce in Australia?

Will it mean international industrial conscription?

Will the redundant, overlapping Commonwealth Employment Offices scattered throughout the States be absorbed as agents within its structure?

We have had more than enough of restrictive regulations on a national scale during wartime, and it will be a poor look-out for us if super economists on the international scale are to be given the regulation and control of our national economic life. . . .

Faced with unprecedented Government spending at home, we should carefully weigh any increased dollar commitments abroad.

The United Nations budget for 1947 was 28,000,000 dollars. This year it jumped to 39,000,000 dollars, which was subsequently reduced to approximately 35,000,000 dollars.

If the specialised agencies are included, the total will be approximately 60,000,000 dollars.

Added to this, the United Nations is pledging its credit to the United States of America to the amount of 65,000,000 dollars for a building loan.

As the Minister said, it may be that the expenditure of these vast sums is a wise investment.

However, these international conferences have a habit of getting out of hand financially, and I should like to pass an accountant's eye over the detailed accounts before deciding whether we are getting the most for our money.

Before the next budget of the United Nations is placed before us, we should be given the opportunity to debate the specific expenditure involved.

The Australian nation should not be committed without such consideration to an annual expenditure of nearly 700,000 dollars.

We are obliged to meet 80 *per cent.* of our contributions in hard currency, and to pay further large sums in dollars in order to send our numerous representatives and their advisers overseas.

In keeping with the democratic principle that Parlia-

ment should have full control of every penny of public expenditure, the United Nations' budget should be presented specifically to this House, so that every member could express his views on Australia's proposed commitments. . . .

Over to China!

The interest of Social Crediters in Dr. Arnold Toynbee dates from the unearthing of an address, now fourteen years old, which he delivered at Copenhagen. Internationalism was at that time understood thoroughly by Dr. Toynbee, in relation to both the policy which inspired it as a political movement and the acceptability—or, rather, non-acceptability—of that policy to the people concerned. His argument in 1934 betrayed this thoroughness of understanding with perfect clearness. The British taxpayer was in quite a different position. He did not understand the policy, and was, in consequence, totally incapacitated from the formulation of any opinion in its favour or disfavour based upon a just assessment of its consequences to himself. Dr. Toynbee understood that so thoroughly that it was the ground for his acknowledgment of discretion as a characteristic of the propaganda he and his friends of what has since become the "Royal" Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) were distributing. He called the motive force behind what he knew would be the popular reaction to his views "prejudice"; but he evidently recognised its deep-rootedness in what remained of sound national instinct, for he pictured the results of popular understanding of his objective almost melodramatically. The connected notions of High Treason and the gallows were close to his mind. "We" were working "discreetly but with all our might" to undermine the sovereignty of "our" respective nations, and were "denying with our lips what we are doing with our hands." The justification, or pretended justification, was the instinctive prejudice of loyal citizens, not only in England but in other countries where, as Douglas has pointed out, property rights had been transferred from individuals to "the nation." The phrase "our respective nations" disclosed the supernatural character of "we," the beneficiaries, otherwise studiously unspecified.

During the last fourteen years, the situation cannot be said to have changed very materially. Dr. Toynbee still understands what he understood at the beginning. National sovereignty has, in some cases now been "undermined." "We" have become the receivers of more and more stolen property. The British taxpayer has been cozened by propaganda into a sort of bemused compliance, without, however, tracing results sufficiently far towards their origins to make it arguable that his compliance is consent. The instinctive repugnance which Dr. Toynbee attributed to "prejudice" is still existent, and is, indeed, the root, though the unrecognised, cause of all major social discontents. Dr. Toynbee's objective is nearer than it was even at the close of the war, during which it became possible for those who entertained it in relative secrecy before to march openly, with official sanction and assistance, towards its full attainment.

In the light of Dr. Toynbee's own confessions, our knowledge of Chatham House and our understanding, unhappily not shared with the majority of British taxpayers, of the mainsprings of the movement upon which such enormous effort has been lavished, so much wealth and so much deep purpose, we note with considerable misgiving that Dr. Toynbee has now assumed the rôle of propagandist for a Christian

order of society, and has thrown in his lot with Canon Demant (*inter alios*) as an apostle of the Christian tradition with which "an incompatible pagan tradition has been fighting for dominion over western souls."

The circumstances are as follows:—

A little over a year ago, a university professor whose pronouncements are under review, *cum notis variorum*, from time to time in the office of this journal, Professor Barraclough, initiated a series of broadcasts in the Third Programme of the "B".B.C. with a talk, "Is there a Western Tradition?" We need not further refer to Professor Barraclough's views at the moment. The *Listener* refers to him twice in an editorial; Dr. Toynbee, who is the second and last of two summarisers of the series does not mention him. What he does say, nevertheless, throws into relief the remark of Major Douglas on an early page of *The Brief for the Prosecution*, arising from a consideration of Dr. Toynbee's position, that "all this renders the deductive or idealistic method very complex and difficult to understand." It is not improbable that it is this difficulty, that of disentangling a policy from a statement of abstract beliefs, which makes it so easy for politicians to get the better of us.

"The speakers," says Dr. Toynbee, "agreed on the value of the individual soul, but there was not the same agreement on the part played by individual liberty in the western tradition." So, quite early in his review, Dr. Toynbee gives expression to Canon Demant's opinion, that "the thing which the west has exported in recent times to the great non-western majority of mankind has been, not liberty, but technology. The law and the free institutions on which the west has prided itself grew up . . . in a moral climate created by Christianity, but the technology that has been a by-product of western law and liberty has been cut adrift from the religious and cultural soil from which western law and liberty have sprung. Our technology has been cut adrift, and in being propagated apart from its original spiritual setting it has become destructive." Dr. Toynbee finds himself "less in agreement with majority of the speakers, who seem to be inclined to take it for granted that our western civilisation is the flower of human achievement, than I am with Canon Demant and Mr. Taylor, who are both critical of our western way of life—though this from two very different points of view."

It is interesting to notice Dr. Toynbee's statement of opinion that, in any case, "the result of this civil war in the west is still uncertain." "In the west for the last twelve hundred years totalitarianism has only been kept at bay through an unceasing struggle." "What the modern west has exported to the rest of the world has not been a new vision of God; it has been the high-pressure power that is generated by a combination of autocratic organisation with applied science." ". . . if the non-western majority of mankind were called upon to sit in judgment now, I think we all know what they would say . . . 'We have to master . . . [organised collective power] . . . or go under, for it has come to stay; but the price of survival, which the west has imposed on us, is almost prohibitively high; for, in order to buy this new western form of power, man has to sell his soul. He cannot work the western power-machine without enslaving himself, for regimented man-power is the only fuel that will make this horrible power-machine work.'"

Dr. Toynbee closes his comparison of the western and non-western ways with the encouraging statement that "We

(continued on page 8).

PARLIAMENT (continued from page 3.)

There is no reason that I can see in this country—and I hope I am wrong—why a majority of this House should not sweep away in one Bill or a series of Bills all representative institutions, with only a delaying power of six months in the House of Lords. Why, even a Hitler might have patience to wait six months and do the thing constitutionally. In my view this is removing the safeguards of the constitution to a very dangerous degree. It may be remembered that in the case of Norway, before any constitutional amendment can take place, the people must be consulted. In his farewell address to the people of the United States President Washington was very downright on this. He said:

"The basis of our political system is the right of the people to make and alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the people, is sacredly obligatory upon all."
[HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] Hon. Members who say "Hear, hear," should consult their consciences as to whether they have in fact consulted the people upon this issue, as to whether it has been fully explained to them. I believe that it has been explained to them by only two chance lines in "Let Us Face The Future." We are here tonight making an important constitutional change, a change in the method in which our constitution can in future be altered.

... there is no doubt whatever that there has been no attempt by hon. Members opposite either to explain this legislation to the people or to ascertain the views of the people of this country, as is proper, and has always been the case in the past when an important change was to be made in the constitution of this country.

We have in this country an unwritten Constitution. It is never very easy suddenly to introduce into such a Constitution, which depends upon custom and a number of other factors, something which is hard and written. That is exactly what the Government are trying to do tonight. It is true they are following the bad precedent of the Parliament Act, 1911, which this Bill amends. Nevertheless, it is a very difficult thing to do. It is not surprising, therefore, that they have found themselves in a series of dilemmas, such as the dilemma so ably pointed out to them by my hon. Friend the Member for Oxford (Mr. Hogg), that although the powers of the Lords in respect of legislation are to be reduced they still retain enormous powers in the field of delegated legislation, so that, if they wished to take those powers seriously and use them, they could, whenever they wished, undoubtedly indirectly be much more embarrassing to the Executive than they would be by holding up one or two Bills, however important.

It seems to me that we cannot leave this issue without examining carefully the way in which the decision of the House of Commons is reached. It is absurd to suppose that the House of Commons is attempting, when it votes on any future amendments to our Constitution, to act as a body of so many individuals acting individually; because we know perfectly well that the party Whips will be present and that the party Whips, in turn, are controlled by the party bosses; so that, in fact, it is the Executive which is enforcing its will. It has been pointed out by modern constitutional historians that the initiative in legislation today rests almost entirely not only with the Cabinet, but with a few men in the Cabinet, backed, perhaps, by the party caucus outside; and that although the Members of this House are the repositories of

the will of the people, at the same time they do act, in all the major issues which come before us, under the direction of the party caucus.

A good deal has been said in the Debates which have taken place on this occasion, and on the previous occasion when we had this Bill before us, about the dangers of Single Chamber Government. There is no doubt whatever that the present Measure brings Single Chamber Government very much nearer than it was before. I suppose that nearly every writer on the subject of constitutions has fulminated against Single Chamber Government. We are now very near a Single Chamber Government. We now have a Single Chamber in everything bar six months—a period which is hardly sufficient to be any safeguard. We have the authority of John Stuart Mill, who wrote very solid words on this subject. Cromwell himself condemned the Single Chamber, with which he himself had to put up. Let me remind the House that within four years after the House or Lords was abolished for the last time in 1649—within four years of that event—a number of very significant things happened. A new form of treason was created; a new court was set up which excluded all reporters; trial by jury was largely abrogated; and then, of course, a Single Chamber Parliament itself was abrogated in the end by the entry of Cromwell's soldiers. There is a warning of the danger of entrusting too much power to the Executive. Yet, if there is anything we are doing tonight, it is strengthening the Executive at the expense of the other arms of government.

Burke once said that:

"No constitution can defend itself; it must be defended by the wisdom and fortitude of men."

Very few voices have been raised—not one from the other side of the House—in defence of the Constitution tonight. That is because they believe that, in the present circumstances, it will be easier for the Executive to enforce its will and force through Measures which they did have in their party programme at the last General Election and, perhaps, other Measures, too, which were not in their election programme last time and which, if included in the next election programme, may lead to defeat. In other words, they would be able to defeat the will of the nation. That is what they are making possible, but they should reflect that no party remains in power indefinitely, and it is not wise to have powers of this kind put into the hands of Governments—powers not only to do what is the will of the people but what may not be their will at all.

Several hon. Members opposite have advanced the most extraordinary proposition. They have advanced the proposition for a permanent and irrevocable mandate. They believe that when the people have once voted for them, they can interpret the will of the people for five years, even against the greatest expression of popular opinion in the country.

Sir R. Acland: How does the matter stand when the hon. Gentleman's party has a majority?

Mr. Digby: We do not subscribe to that view. We subscribe to the view that there is no irrevocable mandate given to us in this House. We believe ourselves to be the representatives of the people, and not always of what the people thought in 1945 but also of what they think today.

Sir R. Acland: When the party opposite has won a majority, what is the instrument which restrains that majority

or the Executive which is supported by that majority, from pursuing its will, however mistaken, for its five-year period? What instrument restrains the hon. Gentleman's party when in power?

Mr. Digby: I fully agree with the hon. Baronet, and that is why I want to see a new Second Chamber, because I believe that there should be a Second Chamber which is capable of restraining both parties. That has been the position of my party throughout the conversations which took place, and that has been the position which has been bitterly resisted by the party opposite, because they do not wish to have any trammels imposed on their mandate for five years. If the people change their minds, so much the worse for them.

I believe that there is a very great part to be played by the Second Chamber and we have now reduced our own Second Chamber, which I agree is not the ideal one which I would wish to see, beyond what is reasonable and sane. Hon. Members opposite may remember, if I may give an illustration, that in 1814 there was in France a Second Chamber, which was perhaps despised beyond all other Second Chambers because it had been created by a dictator as one of his creatures. It was there for the outward form of a check or safeguard, and yet it was that, that other Chamber, which had been created as a mere creature by Napoleon, which to his surprise one day passed a decree overthrowing him, and three days later set up a Liberal constitution for France. The constitutional safeguard of the Second Chamber had worked despite itself.

That is but one example of the importance of having some check on the untrammelled power of an Executive. It can restrain the Executive when it oversteps the mark, and just as it was able to restrain that headstrong and powerful figure, so lesser and weaker Governments today stand in need of some check. Even if they did not, the time will come when the people of this country should be very careful to see that there is some additional check on the party bosses. By and large, the people of this country have not very much faith in the party bosses, and I believe that they would rather see within the period of five years, particularly towards the end of it, some check or restraining power which is able to form an idea of their real wishes and which is outside and not entirely controlled by any party caucus.

The Lord President of the Council (Mr. Herbert Morrison): . . . We had a long conference of the political parties—the Inter-Party Conference, representing Lords and Commons. We got through without a cross word under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister; and here I want to pay tribute to the right hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. C. Davies) and to his noble Friend, Lord Samuel, for the impartial and helpful attitude they adopted during that Conference. Their attitude is significant, because they started by rather agreeing with the 12 months from the Third Reading which was urged by the Conservatives, but as we so nearly reached agreement on composition, subject of course to ratification by the various political parties or otherwise— . . . the Liberals came to the conclusion that, in view of the high measure of agreement which had been reached on composition, and the near agreement on powers, it was a tragedy that the thing had to be broken up. Therefore, if the Conservatives had wanted agreement, we might

have got agreement on a changed composition of the House of Lords. I think it a tragedy that this Bill has to be handled in the way we are handling it, when it could have been handled with mutual good sense. I think we had a good deal of sense on our side. We made some progress and were prepared to compromise, and so did our Liberal friends, but the Conservatives were “sticky,” and would not give way on the point that the fourth Session must be imperilled as well as the fifth. That is not a reasonable proposition, and the object of this Bill is therefore to protect the fourth Session. . . . I can only say, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, that we feel it necessary that this Bill should pass. We think it is a Bill which establishes fair play between the great contestants for political power in this country, that it is reasonable in itself, that it still imposes a period of delay of some substance, and that it proceeds on fair and reasonable lines. It is argued that this Bill would facilitate a possible *coup d'état*. . . .

The Opposition and their Press supporters thought that there would be a storm of indignation in the country against the Bill. There is not. If I am asked whether people are holding mass meetings to demand the Bill, the whole Bill and nothing but the Bill, I admit they are not. It all shows that British people can look at these changes and modifications with perhaps greater calmness than in earlier days. If there was any undermining of the Constitution it would be another matter. The idea that this Bill will facilitate a *coup d'état* is nonsense. There can be no *coup d'état* in a situation which requires not less than 12 months from Second Reading to last Reading and when the *coup d'état* has to pass through two Sessions of Parliament. . . .

Question put, “That the Bill be now read a Third time.”

The House divided: Ayes, 323; Noes, 195.

OVER TO CHINA! (continued from page 6.)

are free to sell our souls to Leviathan; and, if we do finally sell them, that will be, not Christianity's funeral, but ours. Christianity can take care of itself. A Christian tradition was in existence before our western civilisation was heard of, and I personally have no doubt that Christianity will still be the spiritual force that it is, even if this western civilisation of ours were to become extinct . . . The battle continues.”

It does. As Dr. Toynbee has remarked before, “we are doing with our hands what we deny with our lips.” But what are “we” doing?

Dr. Toynbee is almost explicit: “We are handing the decision over to the Chinese “some hundreds or thousands of years hence.” Dr. Toynbee couldn't sing “There will always be a western world,” any more than “There will always be an England.” But he could, he says, sing “There will always be a China.” Odd isn't it?

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