

THE SOCIAL CREDITER

FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALISM

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Sovereignty and Parliament

(Chapter III of Part II of *The Brief for the Prosecution* by C. H. Douglas—1944)

"A mass of evidence establishes the fact that there is in existence a persistent and well contrived system intended to produce and in practice producing a despotic power which at one and the same time places Government Departments above the sovereignty of Parliament and beyond the jurisdiction of the Courts."—LORD HEWART, *The New Despotism*.

Since a considerable portion of the earlier portion of this book is devoted to an examination of the process and the origins of the situation to which Lord Hewart refers, further emphasis on the fact is unnecessary. But the statement just quoted, great as its value is as coming from a Lord Chief Justice of England, only deals with half the indictment. The system to which he refers does not merely place the anonymous bureaucrat above the law. It places the law, and the sanction of the law, at the unchecked disposal of the bureaucrat.

It should be realised that the situation of an anonymous lawmaker has become at least temporarily impregnable, and is a violation—admittedly only open rather than covert—of the principles of Parliamentary government without those principles having been renounced. That is to say, while the Act proceeds from the bureaucrat, or his shadowy inspiration, the responsibility, and the odium, rest still upon the Member of Parliament who is constitutionally, but not actually, able to check him. The stealthy separation of power from responsibility, which is so marked a feature of secret societies, is now incorporated into Government activities. For some time, much too long a time, no Bill has been presented to the House of Commons which has not been drawn up by the Treasury, whoever ostensibly sponsored it. But someone *did* sponsor it, and a façade of responsibility has been maintained until recently. This has now gone. "The State" makes laws *tout court*. "The State," in fact, is quite probably some little naturalised alien full of bright ideas from the ghettos of Mid-Europe, looking for preferment to any quarter rather than that affected by his law-making. To employ a colloquialism, lawmaking has become altogether too easy.

Law is taking on a new aspect. For centuries concerned to maintain every man in his rights, it is mainly now employed to take them away. Interference in small matters, to have any rationality, apart from desirability, must postulate an over-riding policy, and if unlimited latitude is allowed, even in regulation-making, control of policy goes with it. To illustrate this, we may consider the proposed large projects for the "utilisation" of Scottish water-power.

The Report on which the proposals are based remarks "No vested interests will be permitted to interfere" with them. That is to say, the proposals represent an over-riding

policy which will be empowered by the sanctions of the law to sweep *existing* vested interests out of its path. At the same time it is admitted that the objective is more power for factory industry, and notably for electro-chemical industry. Who committed the nation to that policy? When was it submitted to the judgment of the House of Commons? When, and by whom, was it decided that *one* vested interest is more important than several?

It is symptomatic of the paralysis which has overtaken British thinking in the past fifty years that this phrase "vested interest" which merely means stability of tenure, can appear in the Report of a Royal Commission, without amplification, as though it described a public evil. There is probably not an individual in the country whose waking hours are not largely devoted to acquiring a vested interest in something or other, even if it be only a tooth-brush. In fact, it is precisely those predatory aggressors on vested interests concerned with the monopolisation of Scottish water-power, and the industries for the use of which it is intended, which transform concentrated vested interests into a public danger. The widespread distribution of vested interests would be the greatest guarantee of social stability conceivable.

This sweeping away of minor vested interests by a major vested interest is policy in action. But the policy is not defined and is carefully kept from Parliamentary discussion unless a nebulous connection with "full employment" can be regarded as a definition.

Large-scale utilisation of water-power for the generation of electricity has been feasible for at least fifty years, and the benefits arising from the general use of electricity have been widely recognised if not realised. It is curious that, while the prime mover, the water turbine, has not been radically improved during that period, and the prime mover used in the generation of electricity from the use of coal, the steam turbine, has been improved out of all recognition, the sudden decision to transform Scotland into a water-power factory has awaited the "nationalisation" of coal. From an orthodox economics point of view, the case for hydro-electric development *on a large scale* is weaker than it was in 1900. The proposal has been presented to the public so as to suggest that water-power represents an *alternative* to power from coal, whereas at the present time it is doubtful whether the development of all the power in the rivers of the Highlands would represent 2 per cent. of the power generated by other methods, and if the total rises, the water-power which is inextensible, becomes still less important. In 1938 the generated units of electricity in

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Authority

There is ample evidence to prompt the reprinting of the following editorial from our issue for July 7, 1951:

We should have thought that the distinction between Power and Authority was one which both the clear lines of Major Douglas and the unending repetition of *The Social Crediter* had jointly and severally established. But it is not so, and some of our correspondents suffer perplexity through still mistaking the one for the other.

If not conterminous with it, the whole field of interest of Social Credit is with Authority and outside the field of interest of Power. And, even with this in mind, we should say that Authority is that which can and does make a man change his Real Mind, and go on changing it, until. . . . But, so far as we can see, the process is not one which belongs to Time. Life does not move in straight lines. Only Planners move along straight lines, and they belong to the damned. That life does not move in an orbit either, seems to imply that it does not belong to the world of matter any more than to the universe of Time. We are glad to see that our instinct did not err when we welcomed a recent remark by the Dean of Winchester. At Easter Dr. Selwyn preached a sermon in the Cathedral which we should like to cite extensively. Evidently Dr. Selwyn understands the difference to which we have alluded. He mentions "what the Apostle calls 'power,' namely, that whole network of invisible influence which goes by the name—a German name—of the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the age. Can we deny that, just as our outward lives are conditioned to an insecure extent, by machines, so too our minds are conditioned by mechanistic ways of thinking? Is it not clear that vast numbers of people to-day are quite content to regard themselves as cogs in the social machine, to look to governments who manipulate the machine as the proper authorities to regulate their whole lives, to let decision after decision go by default, because in their circle, or their tradition, or their nation, a majority, whether real or faked, is on the other side? Morality to-day seems to have become submerged under seas of politics and economics; and the robust foundations of the individual conscience on which our country's greatness has been built, seem to be in peril of being swept away.

"Such, as I see it, are some of the principal mind-conditioners of the present day; and they are formidable enemies, all the more because they insinuate themselves so speciously and catch us unawares. . . . Few things are more mischievous than the light talk you sometimes hear about the spiral of Communism being inevitable, for little more reason than that it is the latest political theory in the field, and has been imposed on an increasing number of nations in recent years. Does that make it any more true? To think so, to take this 'whispering campaign'—for that is what it is—at its face value, to accept the fatalistic assumptions on which it rests—all this is treason to the Christian faith. Nothing is inevitable for those who are resolute to defeat it. . . ."

Don't They All Wear Them?

Osbert Lancaster's Pocket Cartoon in the *Daily Express*, June 15:—

Woman wearing sun-glasses, to another woman: "Darling, I KNOW the sun's gone in—it's just that I can't stand the intolerable brilliance of Lord Hailsham's halo."

Not Our Business

"If people are to rediscover what Christianity is about then the pulpits should be shut down, and the congregation encouraged to use their brains, and engage their priests in fierce discussion of theological issues." (Quoted by Monica Furlong in *The Daily Mail* for June 6.)

New Guinea

The following letter appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, May 13, 1963:

Sir,—Mr. Hasluck's assurance about the premature independence for Papua-New Guinea (*Herald*, May 8) opens up the question of whether our great and powerful friends will again bow to the United Nations Afro-Asian majority whose General Assembly resolution No. 1514 of December 14, 1960, reads:

"Immediate steps shall be taken in trust and non-self-governing territories or in all other territories which have not yet attained independence to transfer all powers to the peoples of these territories without any conditions whatever. Inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence."

The expatriates of this country are anxiously waiting to hear how Mr. Hasluck proposes to handle a demand from a majority in his proposed enlarged Legislative Council for independence now, as happened in the Congo, Kenya, etc.

An appeal to the United Nations Afro-Asian majority will bring immediate pressure to get out now. Papua-New Guinea could then join the blackmail gang and play us against the Communists. Judging by Soekarno's success, Russia would easily replace the few millions Australia provides—at a price, of course.

MICHAEL J. LEAHY.

Zenag, via Lae,
New Guinea.

"This Daily Torrent of Verbiage"

(Earl Baldwin of Bewdley)

On May 29th, the House of Lords debated a Motion by Lord Francis-Williams calling attention to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Press and moving for papers.

The report in *The Times* for the following day extended over two-and-a-half columns, the speakers reported being Lord Francis-Williams (a journalist), the Bishop of London, the Earl of Drogheda (Managing Director of *The Financial Times*), the Marquis of Hertford (who said he worked in Fleet Street with a public relations firm), the Earl of Arran (who said he was an executive of Associated Newspapers Limited and a Director of *The Daily Sketch*), Lord Balfour of Inchrye (speaking as a non-executive Director of a newspaper company and a former reporter), Earl Baldwin of Bewdley, Lord Walston, Lord Mabane, Lord Airedale, the Earl of Longford and Viscount Hailsham.

Lord Baldwin's speech as reported in *The Times*, was as follows:— (We have not compared this report with *Hansard's*.)

"Earl Baldwin of Bewdley said that his interest was entirely emotional as a relative of a politician who was plentifully abused by certain sections of the press in between the wars and was sometimes abused still when convenient.

"Though his few personal encounters with the press had been generally urbane, he could recall incidents of a trivial but disquieting nature. He could remember being coaxed into being photographed seeming to do something which he had not done, but captioned the next day as having done it. He had been spoken to rudely on the telephone by a lady reporter who thought he was not co-operating over some dull matter to do with a young member of his family. He had been libelled and apologized to by a left-wing journal which naturally inferred that because he was a director of more than one company he was therefore corrupt.

"He objected to the sheer cumulative impact of newspapers because of its stupefying effect on the reader. Just as over-eating led to physical flabbiness, the over-reading of popular periodicals led to mental sloth and general unfitness of judgment. It was the sheer quantity of empty brightness which was dulling men's wits.

"If the mind of man (he said), and therefore the sanity of public opinion, is even more important than the well-being of the press, then I think that the more mature and well-educated folk, at least, should examine themselves in relation to this daily torrent of verbiage, which is gradually washing the colour out of our individuality.

"Our political safety may lie in the freedom of the press but our judgment can only be kept fit by self-discipline. I doubt whether any legislation is an adequate substitute for that."

any normally contemplated termination of hostilities, and such termination must cause an almost immediate drop in the demand for electrical power. By the time the immense works contemplated are complete, industrial demand, in the absence of war, will have fallen far below present electrical supply capacity, and will not be replaced by equivalent domestic use. To the extent that this capacity displaces man-power (the objective of using electrical power) the unemployment situation, looked at from an orthodox point of view, will be worsened.

The proposal to increase greatly the generating capacity of electric power-stations, therefore, requires far more justification than has publicly been offered for it, by whatever means the power is generated. The idea that there can be no limit to the generating capacity required is not merely absurd on the face of it, but is contradicted by experience, *except in war*. If it has been decided to adopt the philosophy of the Great German General Staff, that the primary objective of a nation is war, that is another matter. Even so, it is far from certain that these large power-stations do not constitute the gravest possible military risk. There is a considerable mystery surrounding their comparative immunity from attack.

We must therefore link up the development of water-power with the "nationalisation" of coal. A considerable proportion of the coal mined in Great Britain goes to provide the energy which is distributed as electrical power. A good deal of careful propaganda has been devoted to the "wastefulness" of burning coal, but in fact the subject is far from being susceptible to unqualified judgment. What is obvious is that coal is the principal raw material of the chemical industry: that every ton released strengthens the chemical industry: and that the chemical industry with its collateral, electro-metallurgy, is making preparations to take delivery of a high percentage of the electrical energy generated by Scottish water-power: and that the propaganda for increased export may easily result in the export of our capital resources on an even larger scale than in the past, without the fundamental policy, and its possible disastrous consequences having ever been discussed by those most affected.

On the other hand, the minor vested interests which are adversely affected are numerous. Perhaps the first in importance, although apparently the last to be considered, is the antipathy of the resident population. The Scottish Highlander has never taken kindly to the industrial system. He is entirely unconvinced that "the development" of the highland areas would be to his advantage, and in fact the arguments which have been adduced to convince him, are both perfunctory and disingenuous, and, in one case at least, the comparison of the proposals to those carried out by the Tennessee Valley Authority in America can only be characterised as unscrupulous. The Tennessee Valley works, themselves the subject of embittered controversy, are primarily flood control schemes, and bear no resemblance whatever to Scottish conditions. The natural Highland water-power is almost ideal for the utilisation of small, high-fall installations taking water from small streams at a high altitude, and returning it to its original bed several hundred feet lower down, without interfering in any way with the watershed or the local amenities. Such plants, rarely exceeding two or three hundred horsepower, under local control and possible in nearly every village, offer advantages to the local population obtainable in no other way, and are almost specifically excluded from the project.

SOVEREIGNTY AND PARLIAMENT (continued from page 1)

Great Britain were approximately 26,000,000,000. Excluding war production, which was already considerable, it is doubtful whether industrial demand was 50 per cent. of that figure. At the present time, *i.e.* before any of the proposed water-power has been developed (war-time electricity-production-figures cannot be given), it is very greatly in excess of the pre-war figure. There is no possibility of utilising power from extensive hydraulic development for many years after

The Commission proposals are radically different. Whole catchment areas are to be monopolised, glens are to be flooded, villages submerged, immense dams and pipelines built, with secondary effects on climate and vegetation which are unknown but certainly considerable. No one can say with certainty to what extent American soil erosion is affected by large power schemes.

The electrical energy generated is transmitted at so high a voltage that its utilisation locally or *en route* is impracticable, and is in fact disclaimed.

After rendering lip-service to the need to arrest the depopulation of the country, the country's chief assets are to be at least damaged, and at most destroyed, and its power transmitted almost intact to selected industrial areas farther south. The Severn Barrage Scheme which is free from many of the objections to Highland industrialisation appears to have every claim to prior consideration.

While the Highland project, brought forward under cover of war, when probably 75 per cent. of the individuals whose lives will be affected are prevented by absence or other causes due to war, from expressing their opinions on it, affords a compact instance of the working of the Supreme State, it does not differ, save perhaps in magnitude, from hundreds of similar cases. The technique is always the parade of "the common good." As Madame Ayn Rand so truly remarked in *The Moral Basis of Individualism*, "no tyrant ever rose to power save on the plea of the common good."

To anyone who will take the trouble to penetrate through the veneer with which written British history has been overlaid, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the political instinct of the people has deteriorated, rather than progressed. The situation with which we are confronted is one with which our history ought to make us familiar, and to which we have previously reacted correctly by such measures as Magna Carta and the Petition of Right. The native instinct has intuitively recognised in the past that it was not so much the question of who held certain powers which was important, as that those powers should not be concentrated. The derided phrase, "That is not done," embodies a sound, if now perverted, national conclusion. One of the more ominous symptoms of this political degeneration is often to be found in those quarters which in many ways represent the flower of our culture. It takes the form of a lament that "the unity of purpose which we find in war cannot be carried over into peace." The short answer is that it can be and is, in Germany and Russia, and that if that is all that is required, why not surrender to one or the other?

This attitude arises more than from any one other cause out of an almost perverse determination *not to recognise the persistency of a policy of centralisation of property rights and in consequence, the absolute necessity for the equivalent of a Bill of Rights ultra vires of Parliament, together with a permanent professional body, trained to attack not only an existing law, but armed with permanent power to bring out into the open for cross-examination at any time the originators of any law which encroaches on those rights.* It is essential to exalt the man above the machine. It is nothing less than suicidal to concede the idea of abstract and unquestioned omnipotence to the products of a law-making system of the chain-store variety such as we tolerate to-day, and such "laws" as Regulation 18B, which sweep away the hard-won safeguards of a thousand years, are the logical outcome of this mental attitude. It is perhaps hardly

necessary to observe that such a body would be appointed and dismissable by individuals, not by the administrative Civil Service.

One of the first results of such an arrangement would be an arrest in the flow of law-making. If the world is regarded as a factory run by officials on would-be mass-production lines, continuous works-orders camouflaged as laws are inevitable, though quite rapidly fatal. But, in a world in which it is realised that the more action is spontaneous within the limits of personal sovereignty the less the friction and the higher the general satisfaction, they are both redundant and objectionable.

It will be remembered that Great Britain has no written Constitution, and it has often been claimed that this is an advantage. The claim is more than suspect. The Constitution of the United States, for instance, is a body of Superior Law which is a powerful check on "Administrative lawlessness," as President Roosevelt discovered when he tried to pack the Supreme Court in order to obtain a favourable decision on unconstitutional measures of the New Deal. The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution makes it impossible to enact or enforce such a measure as the Regulation 18B under which large numbers of persons have been imprisoned for years without trial.

There are several unofficial bodies in existence whose intentions in regard to this problem are excellent, but it is no detraction from their public spirit to say that they are wholly inadequate. We have to deal with the usurpation of powers which derive from a completely different conception of the nature of the state, and these powers require to be brought into proper relation to the world of to-day by measures as carefully designed and powerfully supported as those with which they have to deal.

It is often said, and with justice, that we hear too much in these days of "rights," and far too little of duties. It does not appear to occur to such critics that when rights were more stable, duties were more recognised.

Footnote to Several Items in Recent Issues

(Not excluding "Try It On A Map")

[*"Of H. G. Wells's last published work, "Mind at the End of Its Tether" (19 pages):—*

"It is not surprising that the work received scant attention from Wells's contemporaries: to make its conclusions credible it would need the formidable dialectical apparatus of Schopenhauer's Welt als Wille und Vorstellung. . . ."

—Colin Wilson, "The Outsider"

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