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Tuesday
28th Jan., 1941

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

## HOUSE OF COMMONS
## OFFICIAL REPORT

N° VI

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Tuesday, 28th January, 1941.*

## OFFICIAL REPORT.

[Mr. SPEAKER *in the Chair.*]

## PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LAND DRAINAGE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL,

" to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries relating to a Scheme submitted by the River Great Ouse Catchment Board under Section 4 (i) (*b*) of the Land Drainage Act, 1930," presented by Mr. Boulton; read the First Time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed.

# ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

## ECONOMIC WARFARE.

ENEMY EXPORTS

**Mr. Mander** asked the Minister of Economic Warfare, whether he will give an assurance that every effort is being made to prevent the export of German and Italian goods.

**The Minister of Economic Warfare (Mr. Dalton):** Yes, Sir. I attach great importance to the prevention of enemy exports, since the acquisition of foreign exchange through such exports enables the enemy to undertake many most undesirable activities. I have reason to know that the enemy is particularly anxious to acquire further foreign exchange at the present time. My hon. Friend may therefore rest assured that His Majesty's Government make every effort to check such exports.

**Mr. Mander:** Can my right hon. Friend give an assurance that all Departments of the Government are whole-heartedly co-operating with him in achieving that object?

**Mr. Dalton:** It would be quite out of Order for me to answer that question.

**Mr. McGovern:** Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether they are still short of oil—the oil he has prophesied them to be short of in the last six months?

**Mr. Dalton:** Oil is not exported from enemy countries.

UNITED STATES EXPORTS TO RUSSIA.

2. **Rear-Admiral Beamish** asked the Minister of Economic Warfare what official information he has of large quantities of cotton and other goods exported from the United States of America reaching Russia and later Germany; and will he give full details of such imports to Russia and say whether the shipping concerned is subject to navicerts?

**Mr. Dalton:** I have little evidence that United States exports to the Soviet Union reach Germany directly, but ample evidence that the Soviet are exporting Russian goods to Germany and replacing these goods by imports from the U.S.A. United States exports of cotton to the Soviet Union, which are normally negligible, amounted during the last quarter of 1940 to 30,000 tons, considerably more than recent annual imports into the Soviet Union from all sources. Large quantities of cotton are now being exported from the Soviet Union to Germany.

In regard to other important commodities, exports of copper and brass from the U.S.A. to the Soviet Union rose from small quantities before the war to 57,000 tons, and exports of wheat from negligible quantities to 100,000 tons in 1940. Exports of petroleum amounted to 114,000 tons during the first eleven months of 1940. Both wheat and petroleum are commodities of which the Soviet Government have undertaken to supply large quantities to Germany under their recent trade agreements. The value of exports of oil-drilling machinery from the U.S.A. to the Soviet Union during the first eight months of 1940 was nearly double that of the exports during the whole of 1938 and there were considerable further shipments during the last four months of the year. Shipments from the United States to the Soviet

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[Mr. Dalton.]
Union are not subject to navicerts since the trade routes concerned lie outside the navicert area.

**Rear-Admiral Beamish:** Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether any representations have been made either to the United States or to Russia on this matter?

**Mr. Dalton:** We have made it quite clear to both countries concerned what are our feelings in regard to this matter. I hope that, as a result of conversations now taking place with Washington, it may be possible to take some steps to reduce this practice.

**Commander Sir Archibald Southby:** Can my right hon. Friend say whether His Majesty's Ambassador in Moscow holds out any hopes of being able to do anything about it?

**Mr. Dalton:** I think he is doing his best.

**Mr. Thorne:** Is this what business men call commercial morality?

**Viscountess Astor:** Is it not true that it is almost impossible to do anything with the Soviet Union?

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## BRITISH ARMY.

### Missing Men (Pay and Allowances).

3. **Mr. Ellis Smith** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed at the annual meeting of the Stoke branch of the British Legion, in which they ask for reconsideration of the policy in regard to missing men and their pay; if so, has the matter been considered; and what action is proposed?

**The Secretary of State for War (Captain Margesson):** I have received a copy of the resolution, which is based on the misapprehension that the allowances to the dependants of missing men cease after six months. A reply has been sent explaining that allowances and allotments of pay continue to be paid, for 17 weeks, to the family and dependants of a missing man, if they are in a pensionable relationship to him. If the soldier is still missing after 17 weeks, a relative who would receive a pension if the soldier were dead is given an allowance at the pension rate until the Ministry of Pensions are in a position to give a pension.

**Mr. Rhys Davies:** Will the allowance continue in the case of a soldier who has found his way to the unoccupied part of France is his wife is able to provide information that he is still alive?

**Captain Margesson:** I think it would be best in any specific case to put a Question on the Order Paper.

**Mr. Shinwell:** But if a soldier is neither presumed to be dead nor is known to be a prisoner of war, is it not desirable that some allowance should be made to the dependants?

**Captain Margesson:** That, again, is another question which I should like to see on the Paper.

**Mr. Buchanan:** Will the Minister say whether, if a man is found to be alive, the Army repay all the money due to him during the period when payments were stopped?

**Captain Margesson:** Yes, Sir, that would certainly be adjusted.

### Conscientious Objectors' Treatment (Court-Martial).

7. **Mr. Edmund Harvey** asked the Secretary of State for War at what date the report of the special inquiry into allegations of ill-treatment of conscientious objectors attached to the non-combatant corps was presented; and whether he has now considered the report and is in a position to make a statement on the subject?

11. **Mr. McGovern** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he can now publish a complete report of the committee of inquiry into the allegations of brutality used against conscientious objectors at Liverpool; and state what action has been taken, or is proposed to be taken, against those responsible, and the nature of the precautions against any repetition of such conduct by the military?

23. **Mr. Glenvil Hall** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is now in a position to publish the report of the inquiry into the alleged ill-treatment of conscientious objectors by the military?

**Captain Margesson:** The report was received on 28th November last. After careful consideration, I have decided that one officer and six non-commissioned officers, against whom allegations have

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been made, should be tried by court-martial, and instructions have been issued accordingly. It will be appreciated, therefore, that I could not properly make any further statement at this stage.

**Mr. McGovern:** Is the Minister aware that there are still allegations of brutal treatment, of which I will send him particulars? Will he not give a guarantee to inquire further into those allegations, with a view to putting an end to what is happening, and will he also send a copy of his reply to the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Thurtle)?

FUNERAL EXPENSES.

10. **Sir Robert Young** asked the Secretary of State for War what is the amount of funeral expenses allowed for the interment of a soldier killed, or dying, while on service in this country; whether the amount is a definite sum equal in all cases, or whether, in addition, an amount is allowed for cost of transport should the parents decide to bury the body in their own grave at home; and whether the amount due to the deceased soldier is used for the payment of such expenses direct to the undertaker without the consent of those who have to pay the balance of funeral arrangements?

**Captain Margesson:** If a soldier is buried by the military authorities at the station at which he dies, the whole cost is borne by Army funds, and, if relatives wish to attend the funeral and cannot afford the cost of the journey, two return railway warrants are given. If the relatives wish the body sent home, the cost of conveyance, if the relatives cannot afford it, is met from Army funds, and a sum of £7 10s. less any expenses incurred by the military authorities, for example, for the provision of a coffin, is allowed from Army funds towards the cost of the funeral. Any funeral expenses in excess of this grant constitute a charge against the soldier's estate, and, if they have not been paid, are settled, in so far as the estate will allow, by the War Office in accordance with the provisions of the Regimental Debts Act, 1893.

**Sir R. Young:** Is the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that parents resent the Army taking all a soldier's estate when they have to pay that large portion of the funeral expenses? They expect in cases of that kind that the usual £7 10s. should be paid by the War Office and that the soldier's estate should be sent to the parents to supplement their payment?

**Captain Margesson:** I think that the answer which I have given really makes that point perfectly clear. They do receive the £7 10s., less any preliminary expenses which may be incurred. The expenses of travelling or conveyance before the funeral takes place are defrayed by the Army.

**Sir R. Young:** The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has not appreciated what I seek to ascertain. A certain amount of the soldier's estate is taken by the War Office to pay part of the funeral expenses in cases where the parents themselves are looking after the funeral and pay a large amount of the funeral expenses. In these cases the parents expect that the War Office should pay the £7 10s. and send to them the amount of the soldier's estate.

**Captain Margesson:** The Army provides £7 10s. for the funeral expenses, and if parents wish for the funeral to take place at the place where the soldier died, the full expenses are paid. It is only where the expense involved is more than £7 10s. that anything is taken from the soldier's estate.

**Sir R. Young:** When the parents pay a large amount of the expenses and when they undertake the funeral, surely the soldier's estate should be paid to the parents instead of being taken to appear as an additional expenditure by the Army?

**Captain Margesson:** That, of course, involves a question of an increased grant being given by the Army if the expenses amount to over £7 10s. That would be the only possible method.

DEMOLITION AND CLEARANCE WORK (CLOTHING AND BATHS).

12. **Mr. Ellis Smith** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he will see that all men engaged on demolition, clearance, etc., are provided with at least two suits of uniform and other clothing; that they receive a complete change of underclothing at least once a week; that arrangements be made for them to use the municipal baths which are the nearest to their duty or depots; and will he treat this matter as one of urgency?

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**Captain Margesson:** Soldiers employed on demolition and clearance work are each provided with two suits of battle dress, one suit of overalls, one suit of waterproof clothing and two sets of underclothing. A third set of underclothing is being authorised for men who work in flooded craters or under conditions of the same kind. Arrangements are made for the men to use the nearest municipal baths. One bath a week is compulsory, but the average is not less than two baths a man a week, and some units have daily baths.

**Mr. Smith:** While I appreciate that reply, may I point out that these men are doing great work under difficult conditions, and will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman see that they get consideration in all these matters?

**Captain Margesson:** Yes, Sir.

**Sir Herbert Williams:** Are these men supplied with adequate tools? I saw some of them this morning loading broken bricks by hand.

**Captain Margesson:** I will look into the matter.

AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

13. **Mr. Leslie** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he has any figures to show how many of the men who have won honours in the present war for displaying conspicuous bravery and leadership of men fighting against heavy odds were drawn from the middle, lower-middle, and working classes?

**Captain Margesson:** No, Sir.

**Mr. Leslie:** May I take it that honours are decided upon on merit alone, irrespective of class or colour?

**Captain Margesson:** Certainly, Sir.

OFFICERS' UNIFORMS.

14. **Miss Ward** asked the Secretary of State for War the cost to officers of an appropriate tropical outfit?

**Captain Margesson:** The cost will vary according to the station, but, apart from Purchase Tax, it should not be more than £15.

**Miss Ward:** In cases where men have already expended their allowance and are likely to be sent abroad, would my right hon. and gallant Friend consider making a grant for the additional expenditure on kit?

**Captain Margesson:** That involves another question.

15. **Miss Ward** asked the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of his promise to consider the increase in the cost of officers' uniforms owing to the Purchase Tax, he will also consider an increase in officers' pay and allowances to meet the general increase and cost of living?

**Captain Margesson:** The position of the officer is kept under review, but, regard being had to the effect of the war on the financial position of other members of the community, it is not considered that there are grounds at present for an increase in pay and allowances.

**Miss Ward:** Is there not machinery of this kind in almost every other section of the community, and would my right hon. and gallant Friend go further than keeping the matter under review, and take some action?

**Captain Margesson:** Hon. Members must realise that these are times when civilians and soldiers live in very much the same conditions.

**Mr. Glenvil Hall:** Is the Minister aware that a sergeant in the Royal Air Force gets 1s. more per day than a subultern in the Army?

LEAVE.

17 and 19. **Mr. Silkin** asked the Secretary of State for War (1) whether he is aware that men whose homes are in London are frequently given week-end leave, provided that they do not travel by train; what is the reason for this restriction; and whether it is applied to officers as well as men;

(2) why men on training courses, who normally have no duties between 12 noon on Saturday until Monday morning, are not allowed frequent leave, especially when they are training near their homes?

**Captain Margesson:** Only a limited proportion of any unit can be allowed to be absent on leave at a time, part on seven days' leave and part on 48 hours' leave. In the latter case, leave is not given to proceed to a place more than 90 miles away. This applies both to officers and

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to other ranks. Transport difficulties as well as military considerations preclude any relaxation of these limitations.

**Mr. Silkin:** Is the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that that is all right so long as the men do not travel by train? Is it right that these restrictions should be applied to soldiers while civilians can travel without any such restriction?

**Captain Margesson:** As my hon. Friend knows, there are great transport difficulties at the present time. I do not think it would be right to let more than a certain portion of a unit be absent at the same time. These are dangerous days, and I do not think it possible to make any relaxation.

BILLETING.

18. **Mr. Silkin** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that men are being billeted to sleep two or more in one bed; and whether he will take immediate steps to prevent this?

**Captain Margesson:** No such cases have been brought to my notice. Under the Second Schedule to the Army Act, the requirement is a separate bed for each officer and soldier.

**Mr. Silkin:** Does not the right hon. and gallant Gentleman know that it is a common practice for men to be billeted sleeping two in a bed?

**Captain Margesson:** I can only repeat that no such case has been brought to my notice. If my hon. Friend will send me particulars of cases, I will at once look into them. As I said, it is contrary to the Second Schedule of the Act.

**Mr. Thorne:** Do not married people sleep two in a bed?

MEDICAL OFFICERS (TEMPORARY RELEASE).

21. **Sir Francis Fremantle** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the seconding of medical officers from the Army, with arrangements for their instant recall in case of need, to relieve the excessive demands made on medical practitioners by the calling up of younger men and by the greatly increased demand for medical attention to the civil population during the winter months?

**Captain Margesson:** Applications for the temporary release from the Army of medical officers to meet the needs of the civil population have been, and will continue to be, sympathetically considered, but it must be remembered that the Army can ill spare their services.

**Sir F. Fremantle:** Does my right hon. and gallant Friend realise that something like 8,000 medical officers have been taken from civil services to the Forces, although civil needs are greater now than they were in normal times, because of bombing casualties? Is he aware also that a very large number of Army medical officers have very little to do, while the civil services offer a very great deal of work that they can do?

**Mr. Rhys Davies:** Is the Minister keeping in touch with the Ministry of Health on this problem?

**Captain Margesson:** Yes, Sir.

GASTRO-DUODENAL DISEASE.

22. **Sir F. Fremantle** asked the Secretary of State for War what percentage of cases invalided from the British Expeditionary Force to this country were suffering from gastro-duodenal disease; and whether strict instructions will be given to recruiting boards to reject men with a history of organic dyspepsia and save the loss and inefficiency caused thereby to the Army?

**Captain Margesson:** The percentage of patients suffering from gastro-duodenal disease among hospital cases invalided from the British Expeditionary Force was 11.76. As regards the second part of the Question, strict instructions on the point have already been given to recruiting medical boards.

**Sir F. Fremantle:** Is my right hon. and gallant Friend aware that these instructions are not very effective, and that these men are a very great cause of trouble, lapse of morality and inefficiency in the Army? Is it not a great waste of Army effort, and should not an effort be made to bring the facts home to recruiting boards?

**Captain Margesson:** I will press the matter in that direction.

**Mr. Stephen:** Will the Minister see that, in cases where men are weeded out, pensions will be given?

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**Captain Margesson:** That is a matter for the Ministry of Pensions.

CAMPS, COVE.

24. **Mr. Stokes** asked the Secretary of State for War the reasons for keeping secret the report on the investigation into the cost of the Cove militia camps, having regard to the fact that the actual cost of the camps was between two and three times the estimate, and that, on 11th July, the figures were promised shortly?

**Captain Margesson:** I would refer my hon. Friend to the answers given on 17th December to his Question and Supplementary Questions on this subject.

**Mr. Stokes:** Arising out of that reply, which was completely unsatisfactory, will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman acquaint himself with the fact that contractors, other people who have complained, and the people who were engaged independently on the construction of these camps, are not satisfied with the investigation that has been made; and that the committee are not empowered to examine evidence on oath or hear witnesses on the evidence brought before them?

**Captain Margesson:** I understand that the Select Committee has asked the War Office to provide certain figures, in a form which will be most useful to them in carrying out their investigation. Those figures are now being compiled, and they will be given to the Select Committte.

**Mr. Stokes:** Is the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that his predecessor promised that the matter should not be hushed up, and will he confirm that promise?

**Captain Margesson:** I understand that one of my predecessors—not my last predecessor—said that he was prepared to answer questions on the subject. I also am fully prepared to answer questions.

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SERVICE WOMEN (DEPENDANTS' ALLOWANCES).

16. **Miss Ward** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he will now make a statement on the granting of dependants' allowances to members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service?

**Captain Margesson:** It has been decided to introduce, from a current date, a dependants' allowance scheme for general service members of the Auxiliary Teritorial Service. The scheme will follow generally the lines of that applicable to soldiers, but there will be some modifications to provide for the cases of those members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service whose rate of pay is below the minimum rate of a soldier. I am circulating details in the OFFICIAL REPORT. Similar arrangements will apply to the Women's Royal Naval Service and the Women's Auxiliary Air Force.

*Following are the details*:

*Complete scale of dependants' allowances applicable to members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, where the requisite conditions are fulfilled.*

| If the average net weekly contribution of the Auxiliary Territorial Service member towards the support of the dependent during the six months preceding the commencement of her service. | | Rate of allowance (including contributory allotment appropriate to member's rate of pay). |
|---|---|---|
| Exceeded. | But did not exceed. | |
| s. d. | s. d. | s. d. |
| 5 0 | 9 0 | 7 6 |
| 9 0 | 15 0 | 13 0 |
| 15 0 | 20 0 | 18 0 |
| 20 0 | except as below. | 21 6 |

A special rate of 25s. a week (including contributory allotment) may be granted to a dependant living alone, or as the member of a household having no other income, if the Auxiliary Territorial Service member's previous net contribution had amounted to 24s. a week, or more. Members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service who are in receipt of pay at less than 2s. 6d. a day will be required to contribute an allotment of 8d. a day towards any allowance which may be awarded. Members paid at 2s. 6d. a day or more will make the same contributory allotments as soldiers on the same rates of pay.

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## SCOTLAND.

LICENSED PREMISES, GLASGOW (HOURS OF OPENING).

32. **Mr. McGovern** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland the position of licence

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holders concerning hours when premises shall open in Glasgow, in view of the recent Court of Session decision in which the action of Glasgow magistrates was overturned; and whether he will review future decisions of magistrates to prevent such cases arising in future?

**The Secretary of State for Scotland (Mr. Ernest Brown)**: I am advised that the permitted hours in Glasgow are now those laid down in the proviso to Sub-section (2) of Section 1 of the Licensing Act, 1921. The magistrates will have an opportunity of reconsidering these hours at their meeting in April next. I have no authority to review the decisions of magistrates sitting at a licensing court.

**Mr. McGovern:** Is it not the case that if the Secretary of State for Scotland had reviewed this decision and had pointed out to the magistrates that they had exceeded their authority, the trouble would never have arisen, and is it not proper to review decisions of licensing courts?

**Mr. Brown:** The hon. Member is asking me to do what I have no power to do.

RESTAURANTS (HOURS OF OPENING).

33. **Mr. McGovern** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland whether he will take steps to secure the all-night opening of one or two restaurants, in view of the difficulties of travel when troops and members of the public are arriving during the early hours of the morning and have no proper means for securing a meal and refreshment?

**Mr. E. Brown:** The hours of opening of places for public refreshment in Scotland are controlled by the local authorities. I have received no representations in favour of the all-night opening of any restaurants, and I have no power to take the action suggested. The hours of opening of railway refreshment rooms and the provision of canteens for members of the Services are matters for the Minister of Tranport and for the Service Departments respectively.

**Mr. McGovern:** Is the Minister aware that trains come to Glasgow from London during the night from 12 to 4 in the morning and that troops and other passengers are often stranded, having nowhere to go? Could he not make strong representations to the local authority to see that provision is made for these men?

**Mr. Brown:** I am informed that, for the Services, there are in Glasgow from 12 to 14 hostels in the centre of the town, open all night and providing meals and beds for 980 men, and that more are being provided to bring that number up to 1,280. There are six coffee stalls in the central division, open between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m. There are no station buffets open at night. At the Central Station, one was opened experimentally for three weeks from midnight to four a.m., but in that time only seven cups of tea were supplied, and the experiment was dropped.

**Mr. McGovern:** Is it not the Minister's advice to the general public that they should congregate round coffee stalls in the black-out, as hundreds of people are congregating, and that no accommodation should be provided?

**Mr. Brown:** I pointed out that at the Central Station an experiment was made to see what the demand was, and the facts are as I gave them.

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DOMINIONS (POST-WAR IMMIGRATION).

36. **Mr. Marcus Samuel** asked the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs whether, in the consideration of post-war problems, the Government are consulting with the Dominion Governments in order to secure their co-operation in operating a large-scale scheme of immigration?

**The Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs (Mr. Shakespeare):** The hon. Member can be assured that the Government have this matter closely in mind and that, like other questions of post-war reconstruction, it will come under review in consultation with Dominion Governments as opportunity offers.

**Mr. Samuel:** Will they not get a move on and make some opportunity?

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LIMITATION OF SUPPLIES.

38. **Mr. Liddall** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he has considered the representations made to him by the Lincoln Incorporated Chamber of Commerce as to the alleged unfair manner in which the quotas under the Limitation of Supplies Order work as between distressed and reception areas; and whether he has any statement to make?

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**The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lyttelton):** Yes, Sir; a reply has been sent to the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce. Reception areas, of course, need more supplies than other areas, and the Limitation of Supplies Orders allow wholesalers to divert their supplies from one area to another within the limits of their quota. I have seen representatives of the textile wholesalers, who have given an undertaking that in allocating supplies they will take account of the new distribution of the population.

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## CIVIL DEFENCE.

### Fire Prevention.

40. **Mr. Ellis Smith** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he proposes to take to prevent any repetition of the fact that many firms had neglected their legal obligations under the Fire Watchers Order; what supervision there was of night fire watchers; whether it is intended to provide fire watchers with steel helmets and other necessary equipment as soon as possible; and whether he will make a statement on this matter?

**The Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Security (Mr. Mabane):** New Defence Regulations and Orders have been made to extend and strengthen defence against fire bombs. The Fire Watchers Order placed the responsibility for the immediate supervision of fire watchers on the occupier and the responsibility for seeing that the Order was observed on the local authority. Arrangements have already been made for greatly increased supplies of helmets and other equipment to be available very soon. My right hon. Friend would prefer to wait until there has been time to see how the new arrangements work before making any detailed statement.

**Mr. Smith:** There are several urgent matters arising out of this Fire Watchers Order, and therefore I shall raise the matter on the Adjournment at the earliest possible opportunity.

### Shelters.

55. **Mr. Lunn** asked the Home Secretary what resolutions he has received from local authorities against Circular 262/1940, to pay for the construction or equipment of shelters provided after the date of the circular, and expressing a desire that the Government will pay the total costs of all shelters whether erected before or after the date of the circular; and whether the Government are prepared to agree to their representations?

44. **Captain Sir Ian Fraser** asked the Home Secretary whether he will reconsider making the 100 per cent. Government reimbursement for shelters built by local authorities after the issue of Home Office Circular No. 262/1940, on 12th October, 1940, applicable to shelters built before that time, in order not to penalise those local authorities who at an early stage in the war took active steps to protect their citizens?

**The Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Security (Miss Wilkinson):** My right hon. Friend has received a number of such representations, but he is unable to modify the decision that the concession announced in the circular cannot be made to operate retrospectively.

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## LICENSING TRADE (STATE MANAGEMENT).

41. **Mr. Thorne** asked the Home Secretary whether the annual report for 1940 of the State management of Carlisle-Gretna and Cromarty has been, or will soon be, published?

**The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Peake):** I am sorry that the publication of the annual report for the year ended 31st March, 1940, has been unavoidably delayed. It has now gone to press and I hope that it will be published very shortly.

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## DRUNKENNESS (STATISTICS).

43. **Mr. R. C. Morrison** asked the Home Secretary whether he will give the total number of proceedings, convictions, and charges proved of drunkenness in England and Wales for the year 1939?

**Mr. Peake:** Owing to the necessity of giving priority to urgent work directly connected with the war, the compilation of statistics has been delayed, and it may be some little time before these figures are available. I will furnish them to my hon. Friend as soon as I can.

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**Mr. Morrison:** Do I take it that owing to the war they do not intend to publish these figures this year?

**Mr. Peake:** No, Sir. They will be circulated to anybody who asks for them.

**Viscountess Astor:** Could my hon. Friend tell us roughly whether drunkenness convictions have increased or decreased?

**Mr. Peake:** I cannot say in answer to this Question.

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## " BLACK RECORD."

46. **Viscountess Astor** asked the Prime Minister whether, in view of the publication of Sir Robert Vansittart's " Black Record," he will state the conditions under which serving civil servants are free to publish their political views; and, in particular, whether they must be submitted in advance of publication?

**The Prime Minister (Mr. Churchill):** Civil servants are required by the terms of a Treasury circular, of which I am sending a copy to my hon. Friend, to obtain the previous consent of the head of their Department to publication of a book or other work the subject matter of which is connected with their official duties or those of other public servants, and to submit to him in advance the version which is to be published.

**Viscountess Astor:** Could the right hon. Gentleman say whether Sir Robert Vansittart submitted this to anybody, if so, to whom he submitted it, and whether he thinks it a good plan?

**The Prime Minister:** Sir Robert Vansittart, I am informed, consulted the late Secretary of State about his broadcasts, and the latter gave him his permission. The present publication is a reprint of the broadcasts which have already appeared in the Press. Lord Halifax was aware of this development. I might add that the varying reproductions in the Press gave a partial impression which the publication corrects, though the publication naturally reaches only a small part of the public who have already heard the broadcasts. In regard to the last part of the Supplementary Question, I think that it was quite proper that publication should be made after the regular formalities had been complied with, although, of course, it does not express any opinion except that of the very able public servant who was responsible for it.

**Viscountess Astor:** Is it a new policy of the Government that civil servants should make political broadcasts?

**Mr. Davidson:** Before they are published in the " Times "?

**Mr. Ellis Smith:** Is it not a fact that the gentleman has proved himself more British than some other people?

**Mr. Henry Strauss:** Is it not a fact that on the subject of Germany the views of Sir Robert Vansittart have been proved generally right, and that the views of the Noble Lady have been proved almost invariably wrong?

**Mr. Speaker:** That is a matter of opinion.

**Viscountess Astor:** It is entirely wrong.

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## GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES.

47. **Mr. Stokes** asked the Prime Minister whether he will give an assurance that no further leases or sale of land in the British Commonwealth will be granted or made to any foreign country before consulting this House?

**The Prime Minister:** I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him by my right hon. Friend the Lord Privy Seal on 3rd December last.

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## POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION.

49. **Mr. Sloan** asked the Minister without Portfolio whether his study of reconstruction after the war will include the constructive proposals of the Labour party for national ownership of mines, transport, land and banks?

**The Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Arthur Greenwood):** Yes, Sir. Constructive proposals from any responsible source will be welcomed and carefully considered.

**Mr. Shinwell:** Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it is going to be mighty difficult to ignore the constructive proposals of the Labour party after the war?

**Mr. Sloan:** Will the right hon. Gentleman keep in mind that the millions of

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[Mr. Sloan.]
working-class workers who are regimented in the military and industrial machine in this fight for democracy are looking forward to the complete socialisation of industry?

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## NATIONAL FINANCE.

### Supply Services.

50. **Sir Waldron Smithers** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has considered the recent report on the Supply Services presented to Parliament by the Select Committee on National Expenditure; and, in view of the recommendations therein made, what action he proposes to take?

**The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Kingsley Wood):** This report is being considered by the Departments concerned, and on a number of points action has already been taken. I cannot yet say what further action will be taken, but my hon. Friend will be mindful of the recent statement in this connection by my right hon. Friend the Minister of Labour.

**Sir W. Smithers:** In view of their inability to punish people who are guilty of waste and extravagance, under the terms of reference, and the limited powers of these Committees, will the Chancellor recommend to the Cabinet that a more rapid procedure be set up under a court of law, where witnesses can be heard on oath and the complainants represented by counsel?

**Sir K. Wood:** That is an entirely different matter.

### War Damage Compensation.

51. **Sir H. Williams** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention had been drawn to the complaints of the inadequacy of the compensation, and the delays in making payment, under the War Damage (Compensation) Act where property has been requisitioned in the national interest: and what steps he is proposing to take to remedy these complaints?

**Sir K. Wood:** I am assured by all Departments that they are making every effort to deal expeditiously with claims. It is common practice to make a payment on account when a settlement is delayed, and in particular when delay causes hardship. I do not think there is any ground for altering the basis of compensation. If my hon. Friend has any cases in mind I have no doubt that if he will bring them to the notice of the Department concerned, they will be promptly investigated.

### Land Sales (Profits).

54. **Mr. Mander** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, with a view to preventing profiteering by land speculators in bombed sites, he will consider introducing legislation to compel all profits made on land sales above the 1939 value to be handed over in full to the Treasury, thus imposing a 100 per cent. war profit tax.

**Sir K. Wood:** Under the present law, a profit arising from sales of land may be a revenue profit or a capital gain according to the circumstances of the particular case, the broad distinction being between the carrying-on of a trade or business and the realisation of capital assets. In the former case the profit would be taken into account in computing profits for the purposes of the excess profits tax, and as at present advised I am not prepared to introduce extended legislation on the lines suggested.

**Mr. Mander:** Is my right hon. Friend satisfied that profiteering of this kind is being prevented at the present time, and, if not, will he undertake to introduce legislation in the next Finance Bill with a view to stopping it?

**Sir K. Wood:** I do not accept, in the first place, the major premise laid down by my hon. Friend that such profiteering is taking place. He is asking me to investigate certain circumstances, and I shall have to look into them in the light of such information as hon. Members may be able to give me.

**Sir Hugh O'Neill:** Has the right hon. Gentleman any information as to whether there is in fact any selling of these plots?

**Sir K. Wood:** That is what I have already intimated I would like to have information about.

**Mr. Leach:** Is it the Chancellor's intention to circumscribe the definition of "capital gain" in his next Budget?

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**Mr. Loftus:** Will my right hon. Friend make inquiries as to whether there is speculation going on in bombed area sites in the East End of London?

**Sir K. Wood:** As I have already said, I should be glad to receive any details with which my hon. Friends could supply me.

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## ITALIAN TERRITORIES IN BRITISH OCCUPATION (POSTAGE STAMPS).

56. **Mr. Mander** asked the Postmaster-General whether he will consider the advisability of overprintnig the stamps of Italian territory now in British occupation, as was done in the last war in the case of German Colonies; and whether he will bear in mind the propaganda value of provisional occupation issues?

**Captain Margesson:** I have been asked to reply, as it is likely that the matter would fall to be dealt with in the first place by a military administration. The answer to both parts of the Question is "Yes, Sir."

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## FOOD SUPPLIES.

### DAMAGED CROPS (HUNTING).

58. **Mr. Thorne** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he can now give any information of the amount of damage done by 20 horses and a pack of hounds running over fields of turnips and beans at Faversham on 26th and 27th December?

**The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. R. S. Hudson):** Yes, Sir. The occupier has stated that the damage was less than £1 and, as a matter of fact, amounted to a few shillings only.

### OATMEAL.

59. **Mr. Thorne** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, as representing the Ministry of Food, why there is a shortage of oatmeal?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Major Lloyd George):** There is no general shortage of oatmeal. Certain well known brands of packeted rolled oats may no longer be imported, but there are ample supplies of loose oatmeal and rolled oats. Not all grocers, however, have been accustomed to stock oats in these forms, and some members of the public may have had temporary difficulty in making purchases from their usual suppliers until the retailers had taken steps to remedy the position.

### MEAT PROCESSING.

60. **Captain Plugge** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, as representing the Ministry of Food, what is the opinion of his scientific advisers with regard to the comparative food value of meat extracts, pressed meat, canned meat, chilled and frozen meat; and to what extent it would be possible at the present time to save shipping space by processing the greater part of the meat before it is shipped to this country from South America and other distant places?

**Major Lloyd George:** The Scientific Adviser to the Ministry does not attach importance to meat extracts, but he has advised certain measures in regard to the other forms of meat mentioned in the Question, which will result in economies in shipping space.

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## BOMBED PROPERTY (GROUND RENTS).

61. **Mr. Glenvil Hall** asked the Attorney-General whether he will introduce legislation similar in effect to the Landlord and Tenant Act, 1939, to help leaseholders whose property has been rendered unusable by enemy action but who at present continue fully liable to their ground landlords for rent where such is payable?

**The Attorney-General (Sir Donald Somervell):** The hon. Member will be aware of the special provisions in the Landlord and Tenant (War Damage) Act, 1939, dealing with the case in which the property which has suffered war damage is held on a ground lease. The Government are at present considering whether, in the light of experience, these provisions provide a satisfactory solution of the difficulties which confront ground landlords and their tenants in these cases or require modification.

**Mr. Hall:** But surely it does not need any thought to realise that it is grossly unfair on a tenant if he has to go on paying ground rent after having sustained a loss running into hundreds of pounds?

**The Attorney-General:** That may be, but it might also be unfair to the landlord.

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## NIGHT BOMBING RAIDS.

63. **Mr. Sorensen** asked the Secretary of State for Air whether he will inform the House approximately when and where the first night air-bombing raid took place during the present war, respectively, on Great Britain, France and Germany?

**The Under-Secretary of State for Air (Captain Harold Balfour):** The first British raid on German territory was the attack on the seaplane base on the Island of Sylt on the night of 18th-19th March, 1940. The first German attack on British soil was carried out on the night of 16th March, 1940, when bombs were dropped on the Orkneys, causing civilian casualties. One of the first acts in the German offensive in the West was at attack on the town and harbour of Calais in the early morning of 10th May, causing numerous civilian casualties. This was followed by German attacks on aerodromes and communications in France on succeeding nights. The Royal Air Force began attacks on military lines of communication in Western Germany on 11th May, 1940, and on the following nights and days.

## POTASH ORDER

64. **Mr. Wootton-Davies** asked the Minister of Supply whether, for the guidance of small traders, he will issue a popular explanation of the newly-issued Caustic Potash and Carbonate of Potash Order, 1941 (No. 55)?

**The Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Supply (Mr. Harold Macmillan):** I am sending my hon. Friend a copy of the notice which was circulated to the trade Press at the time when the Order was made. I think he will find that this affords sufficient guidance to traders in these materials.

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES (APPOINTMENTS).

67. **Mr. Sorensen** asked the Minister of Health, under what authority public authorities inquire of applicants for temporary or permanent positions in their service, and who are women or above or below the age for military service, what their personal views may be on religion, politics, or war, in view of the fact that such irrelevant personal questions are, in fact, being asked?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health (Miss Horsbrugh):** It is withing the competence of a local authority to decide what inquiries should be made before making appointments to its staff, and my right hon. Friend has no authority to intervene.

**Mr. Sorensen:** Does the hon. Lady agree that it is entirely undesirable for public bodies to ask elderly people what their personal views may be, seeing that they have no relevance?

**Miss Horsbrugh:** I stated that my right hon. Friend has no power over the employing authority to determine what questions shall be asked when these appointments are made. They must be left to do so as they think best.

**Mr. Sorensen:** Will the hon. Lady see that some recommendation is made to these local authorities on the subject?

## WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' PENSIONS.

68. **Mr. Glenvil Hall** asked the Minister of Health, whether he is aware that the present allowances under the Insurance Acts for a widow with children are inadequate to meet requirements owing to the rise in the cost of living, and are, in any case below those now allowed elsewhere by the Government for women with children; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

**Miss Horsbrugh:** The present combined health insurance and pensions contribution contains no margin which would enable any of the statutory benefits provided under those schemes to be improved. These contributions were increased as recently as July last in order to lower the age at which a woman becomes entitled to an old age pension, and, if any further increase in contributions were found possible, my right hon. Friend is not satisfied that the first claim on any such additional money should be for the purpose which the hon. Member has in mind.

**Mr. Hall:** Surely the hon. Lady realises that a widow with children—in one case in my constituency, with six children—cannot bring them up on 30s. a week? Does she imagine that that is possible, and is it not time that something was done?

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**Miss Horsbrugh:** There are a good many cases, as the hon. Member will agree, which have to be taken into consideration, as I have indicated in the answer.

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## ARMORIAL BEARINGS DUTY.

69. **Mr. Brooke** asked the Minister of Health which steps are taken to prevent the Armorial Bearings Duty, in so far as it is payable by everyone who uses a signet ring or a piece of household silver bearing a crest, from being an unfair tax, in the sense that good citizens who know about it will pay it, but a much greater number who do not like paying, or do not know that they have to pay, can permanently evade it with impunity?

**Miss Horsbrugh:** The responsibility for the collection of this duty lies with the local authorities concerned. The money it yields is used for the relief of rates, and this fact would appear to be an inducement to them to do whatever is practicable to get the tax properly paid.

**Mr. Brooke:** Surely the question is how much is payable, and if in fact this tax is not at present being paid by anything like 100 per cent. of those liable, does that not prove that it is operating unfairly?

**Miss Horsbrugh:** I do not know that that is necessarily so, but my right hon. Friend has no information with regard to the extent of evasions which would be very difficult to prevent.

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## SURPLUS COMMODITIES.

70. **Mr. David Adams** asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether consideration has been given, in association with America, to a scheme for storing Colonial surpluses for release after the war?

**Mr. Greenwood:** I have been asked to reply. Measures to deal with Colonial and other surplus comodities are being actively considered, in connection with the general problem of surpluses, by a Committee of Ministers, over which I preside, assisted by an Official Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Frederick Leith-Ross.

**Mr. Adams:** Can my right hon. Friend say when we are likely to have a report on this subject?

**Mr. Greenwood:** There is no question of a report; it is a question of taking action, and action has already been taken to purchase Colonial surpluses.

**Mr. Adams:** I take it that the action will not be similar to that which was taken with regard to the cocoa crop, which was destroyed?

**Mr. Greenwood:** In all these questions the Governments of the Dominions are of course being consulted.

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## BRITISH PRISONERS OF WAR.

26. **Captain McEwen** (*for* **Major-General Sir Alfred Knox**) asked the Secretary of State for War whether he has reason to believe that conditions in Oflag VII C/H are worse than in any other camps; and, if so, whether he will make representation to the German Government through the protecting Powers?

**Captain Margesson:** No, Sir. My information is that the heating, lighting and sanitary conditions at this camp are reasonably satisfactory, and that improvements have recently been made as regards bedding, washing, clothing and welfare.

**Captain McEwen:** How recent is that information?

**Captain Margesson:** I must have notice of that Question.

27. **Captain McEwen** (*for* **Sir A. Knox**) asked the Secretary of State for War whether he will give, separately, the number of food and clothing parcels despatched by the British Red Cross in each of the months July to December, and the total number of those parcels known to have passed the German frontier in the same period?

**Captain Margesson:** As the answer contains a number of figures, I will, with my hon. and gallant Friend's permission, circulate a statement in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

*Following is the statement*:

The numbers of food and clothing parcels collected by the General Post Office from the War Organisation of the British Red Cross Society and Order of St. John of Jerusalem in each of the months July

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to December, 1940, and the numbers of such parcels known to have passed the German frontier in the same months, are as follow:

| | Collected from the War Organisation. | | | Left Geneva for Germany. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Food. | Clothing. | Total. | Food. | Clothing. | Total. |
| July ... ... ... | 17,839 | 1,200 | 19,039 | 2,749 | 772 | 3,521 |
| August... ... ... | 70,306 | 4,596 | 74,902 | 84 | 12 | 96 |
| September ... ... | 34,490 | 2,2 | 36,755 | — | — | — |
| October ... ... | 96,098 | 9,231 | 105,329 | 17,464 | 268 | 17,732 |
| November ... ... | 122,414 | 3,487 | 125,901 | 15,060 | 50 | 15,110 |
| December ... ... | 150,361 | 2,383 | 152,744 | 81,324 | 20 | 81,344 |

*Notes :—*

The above figures exclude food and clothing sent in bulk.

The difference between the number of parcels shown to have left Geneva in December, namely 81,344, and the figure given on Tuesday last, namely 99,592 (OFFICIAL REPORT, House of Commons—Col. 3), is accounted for by the fact that the latter figure telegraphed from Geneva is now found to have been for the period 27th November to 31st December, and included parcels of books, cigarettes, tobacco and medical comforts.

## ROAD TRANSPORT (CO-ORDINATION).

62. **Captain Plugge** asked the Minister of Transport whether, in the new official organisation he is setting up to co-ordinate road transport, he will indicate the extent to which this organisation is to be staffed by civil servants, and indicate the experience which civil servants have had in running an organisation of this nature?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport (Mr. Montague):** The organisation for the new road-transport scheme will form an integral part of my Department, and the details have not yet been fully worked out. My right hon. Friend will, however, as has already been announced, obtain the assistance of qualified men experienced in the industry, who will be invited to join the staff of the Ministry for that purpose.

**Mr. Davidson:** Will the representatives of the workmen's organisations connected with road transport be consulted?

**Mr. Montague:** I will take note of that Question.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Resolved,

"That the proceedings on Government Business and the Motion relating to the Suppression of the "Daily Worker" and the "Week" be exempted at this day's Sitting, from the provisions of the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—[*The Prime Minister.*]

# WRITTEN ANSWERS.

## BRITISH ARMY.

### FOOD (ECONOMICAL USE).

**Sir W. Smithers** asked the Secretary of State for War what steps are being taken to cut down food waste at camps, and to improve the cooking and preparation of the food?

**Sir Smedley Crooke** asked the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been drawn to the waste of good human food which is placed in swill tubs for pigs at a military camp in the Midlands; whether, in view of the Minister of Food's appeal for economy in foodstuffs, he will have a strict inquiry made into the matter and also issue urgent instructions to messing officers to make their inspection more intense in order to prevent this waste in the future?

**Captain Margesson:** I would refer my hon. Friends to the answer given by my predecessor to my hon. Friend the Member for Duddeston (Mr. Simmonds) on 10th December last, of which I am sending them copies. I am well aware of the complaints that have been made, and we are constantly endeavouring to eliminate waste. Inspectors and catering advisers have been appointed in Commands, and additional inspectors are being trained so that regular inspection of unit cookhouses may be made. Specialist messing officers have been posted to all large

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training units, and regimental officers have, since the beginning of the war, been receiving instruction at special centres throughout the country. I think that by these measures considerable improvement has been, and is being, effected.

DOCUMENTS LEFT IN VEHICLES.

**Mr. Ammon** asked the Secretary of State for War (1) in how many of the 21 instances were the papers, appertaining to his Department, which were left in taximeter cabs and other public vehicles, recovered; and what was the nature of the disciplinary measures meted out to the persons responsible for such negligence;

(2) in how many instances during the past 12 months were documents and papers relative to his Department lost from private and from service cars; how many recovered; and what disciplinary action was taken against the persons responsible for such carelessness?

**Captain Margesson:** The documents were recovered in 19 of the 21 cases. None of the losses were from service cars, but there was one loss (unrecovered) from a private car. In this case, which presented several unsatisfactory features, the loser was dismissed from his employment. In four other cases, which were dealt with directly from the War Office, the losers were suitably admonished. The remaining cases, where the losers were identified and the documents were of any importance, were referred to local military authorities for appropriate action.

DISABILITY PENSION.

**Sir Smedley Crooke** asked the Secretary of State for War, whether he is aware of the fact that the maximum disability pension for the rank of private under the Peace-time Warrant still remains at 32s. 6d.; and whether, having regard to the increased cost of living, he will consider raising the rate to 34s. 2d. which is the present rate paid by the Ministry of Pensions in connection with disabilities due to the present war?

**Captain Margesson:** The basic rate of 32s. 6d. for peace disability pensions is being raised to 34s. 2d. Existing pensions will be reassessed without application by the pensioners concerned.

DEPENDANT'S ALLOWANCES.

**Mr. R. Gibson** asked the Secretary of State for War, whether he is aware that because the civil employers of Lance-corporal J. M'Gregor, No. 2888300, of the Gordon Highlanders, made him a grant of 8s. a week, his mother, a Greenock constituent, was deprived of her dependant's allowance of 17s. per week by his department; and what steps he proposes to take to eliminate this anomaly?

**Captain Margesson:** I am re-examining this case and will communicate with my hon. and learned Friend.

LEAVE.

**Mr. R. Gibson** asked the Secretary of State for War, how frequently, on an average, is a seven-days leave granted to a Scots soldier stationed in the south of England; whether, in the case of such a soldier, the 48-hours additional leave granted from time to time to other soldiers who can make use of it is allowed to accumulate so as to allow of the Scots soldier making an additional though less frequent visit to his family; and whether a free pass is issued for such additional visit?

**Captain Margesson:** If the flow of leave is not interrupted, a soldier should receive seven days' leave once in about fourteen weeks. Leave cannot be accumulated. A soldier may be given two free travelling warrants a year for leave purposes. On other occasions, he can travel at half fare.

ACTING LANCE-CORPORALS.

**Mr. Silkin** asked the Secretary of State for War, with regard to men who, for periods of several months, are appointed as acting lance-corporals without increased pay or official status, whether, as this causes considerable dissatisfaction among men so appointed, he will consider a review of the system so that increased responsibility is recognised by increased pay or status, or both?

**Captain Margesson:** All appointments to lance ranks during war time are made initially on an unpaid basis. After holding the appointment for a continuous period of 21 days, the soldier is granted the pay of the appointment retrospectively, provided a vacancy exists on the establishment of paid lance appointments allowed for his unit. Local military commanders are, however, empowered to sanction the temporary appointment, in cases of necessity, of a small number of

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unpaid lance appointments in excess of the paid establishment. Men filling such additional appointments should be considered for paid appointments as vacancies for the latter arise.

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## ITALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR.

**Mr. Wedgwood** asked the Secretary of State for War what he proposes to do with the Italian prisoners; what is the estimated cost of maintaining them per annum; will he consider setting them free on the island of Rhodes; and does he propose to make any distinction between the regular Italian army and the Blackshirt divisions?

**Captain Margesson:** A considerable number of Italian prisoners of war is being sent to India. The disposal of the remainder is not yet settled, but it is in contemplation to bring a number to this country for agricultural work, and possibly for other work where there is a shortage of British labour. I cannot yet give any figure for the cost of maintenance. A suggestion to set these prisoners free on the island of Rhodes has already been considered and rejected as impracticable. The accommodation of Regular and Blackshirt prisoners in separate camps is under consideration.

**Mr. Butcher** asked the Secretary of State for War the number of Italians taken prisoner by British Forces in North Africa to the last convenient date?

**Captain Margesson:** It was reported on 20th January that about 80,000 prisoners, including 66,000 Europeans, had been taken. These figures include 3,284 officers. It is estimated that over 25,000 have since been taken at Tobruk.

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## NATIONAL FINANCE.

### Excess Profits Tax.

**Mr. Hannah** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a firm, compelled by war work, but probably only temporary, to increase its staff, may use what would otherwise have to be returned as excess profits to provide a canteen that will be much too large for use by the normal staff after the war?

**Sir K. Wood:** Where capital expenditure has been incurred by reason of the war in the provision of canteens it will rank for relief from Excess Profits Tax under the provisions of Rule 3 of Part I of the Seventh Schedule, Finance (No. 2) Act, 1939, and, as I indicated in reply to a Question asked on the 19th December last by my hon. Friend the Member for Aylesbury, I intend to include in the next Budget, as a war-time measure, proposals for the allowance of similar relief for the purposes of Income Tax and National Defence Contribution. I would add that all revenue expenses incurred by a trader in the maintenance of canteens for the use of his employés are admissible as a deduction in computing his trading profits for taxation purposes.

### Income Tax.

**Mr. Hannah** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider granting to a widower with children, compelled to employ a housekeeper, the same concession in Income Tax as though his wife had lived?

**Sir K. Wood:** I would point out that Section 19 of the Finance Act, 1920, authorises an allowance to be given in respect of the housekeeper in the conditions referred to in the Question. I cannot see my way to propose any higher allowance in such a case.

### War Damage Compensation.

**Mr. Rostron Duckworth** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what has been the average payment in respect of claims for the replacement of essential furniture put forward by those who have lost their homes; and whether, in the case of dissatisfaction with the amounts awarded, such claimants have any further right of appeal?

**Sir K. Wood:** The payments which the Assistance Board have made in respect of essential furniture cover a great variety of cases. The applicants to the Board who have suffered the total loss of their homes form only a small proportion of the total, and I regret that separate information is not available about the payments made to them. The answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative.

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## ARMED FORCES (TELEGRAPH FACILITIES).

**Mr. Salt** asked the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the time taken in the

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transit of letters sent by relatives to soldiers serving overseas, he will consider permitting them to send one free cable each month similarly to the present arrangement for parents to their evacuated children in the Dominions?

**Captain Waterhouse:** The question of allowing free telegrams to and from members of His Majesty's Forces in the Middle East has been examined in consultation with all the interested Departments, and the unanimous conclusion has been reached that an entirely free service could not be justified. There are already telegraph services for messages to or from the Forces abroad at special rates which are substantially lower than the cheapest normal rate. The number of children evacuated overseas is extremely small in comparison with the numbers of the Forces serving abroad, and the problems of providing free telegraph service in the the two cases are not comparable.

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### CHINA (BRITISH SHIPPING).

**Mr. R. Morgan** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to what extent British ships are now able to proceed up the Yangtze without interference from the Japanese authorities in occupation of the area?

**Mr. Butler:** There has been no change in recent months and the Yangtze remains closed to third Power shipping above Kiangyin.

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## SCOTLAND.

### MEDICAL REFEREES.

**Mr. R. Gibson** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland in which of the sheriffdoms of Lanarkshire, the Lothians, Angus, Aberdeen and Renfrewshire ophthalmologists and dermatologists, respectively, have been appointed as medical referees in cases under the Workmen's Compensation Acts; and whether he has any statement to make regarding sheriffdoms in which no such appointments have been made?

**Mr. Peake:** Ophthalmologists have been appointed as medical referees under the Act for the sheriffdoms of Lanark, Lothians and Peebles, and Renfrew. Medical referees to deal specially with cases of scheduled diseases (including dermatitis) have been appointed for the sheriffdoms of Lanark and Renfrew. My right hon. Friend appreciates that it may be desirable to strengthen the panels of medical referees in these and other areas by more extensive appointments of specialists, and he will be very glad to consider representations in regard to any particular area; but experience shows that it is extremely difficult to secure the services of suitable specialists as referees under present conditions.

### EDINBURGH (BUILDINGS).

**Mr. Hannah** asked the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps the burgh council of Edinburgh is taking to preserve the picturesque old building whose pend supplies a passage between St. Patrick Square and Buccleuch Street?

**Mr. E. Brown:** I am informed that in 1938 the corporation considered the question of preservation of this old building and decided to demolish it in view of the condition of its fabrics. I am advised that the building has not sufficient architectural or historic interest to justify preservation.

### GLASGOW TELEPHONE SERVICE.

**Mr. McKie** asked the Postmaster-General if he can take steps to ensure the more speedy and efficient working of the Glasgow telephone exchange with regard to trunk calls from Southern Scotland, and thereby save to subscribers in the latter area the delay and inconvenience that they at present suffer?

**Captain Waterhouse:** The difficulties to which my hon. Friend refers are largely due to the heavy pressure of traffic on the main telephone routes available out of Glasgow. The provision of additional circuits is in hand and I anticipate that a number will be brought into service shortly. If my hon. Friend has in mind the delay on calls to any particular place I will gladly have inquiries made.

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## COAL INDUSTRY.

### SUPPLIES.

**Mr. Cocks** asked the Secretary for Mines whether the committee on coal distribution has reached any conclusions on the subject; and what steps are to be taken to implement them?

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**Mr. Grenfell:** I assume that my hon. Friend has in mind the committee presided over by my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council. The function of this Committee is, not to make recommendations, but to co-ordinate executive action by the Ministers responsible for maintaining coal supplies; and the decisions reached by the committee from week to week are carried into effect forthwith by the Ministers concerned. I am glad to have this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the steps already taken by my right hon. Friends the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Shipping, which have materially eased the situation.

### Conditions of Sale.

**Sir J. Nall** asked the Secretary for Mines on whose authority the coal controllers are seeking to impose new standard conditions of sale for industrial coal contracts, contrary to the wishes of consumers and colliery owners?

**Mr. Grenfell:** I would refer the hon. Member to the reply which I gave on 23rd January to the hon. and gallant Member for the Withington Division of Manchester (Flight-Lieutenant Fleming), of which I am sending him a copy.

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## LIMITATION OF SUPPLIES.

**Mr. Cocks** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the value of buckets in fire-fighting, he will consider increasing the quota allowed for these articles under the Limitation of Supplies Order?

**Mr. Lyttelton:** No, Sir. I am informed by my right hon. Friend, the Minister for Home Security, that bags, not buckets, should be used for storing sand and for dealing with incendiary bombs, and, further, that industrial concerns and local authorities should make the fullest use, as water containers, of 4-gallon petrol tins, which are available in large quantities from the Army. I am sending the hon. Member a copy of an announcement made on this subject on Monday, 27th January.

**Mr. Temple Morris** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether steps have been taken, in view of the increase, through evacuation, of the population in various parts of South Wales, to increase the amount available of articles of clothing?

**Mr. Lyttelton:** I realise that reception areas need more supplies than other areas, and the Limitation of Supplies Orders allow wholesalers to divert their supplies from one area to another within the limits of their quota. I have seen representatives of the textile wholesalers, who have given an undertaking that in allocating supplies they will take account of the new distribution of the population.

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## MILK BOTTLES (THEFTS).

**Mr. Chater** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the hardship created for reputable milk distributors by the constant thefts of milk bottles by certain of their competitors; and whether he is prepared to make an Order, under the Emergency Powers Act, imposing drastic penalties for such offences, including imprisonment in the case of constant offenders, having regard to the fact that the present method of dealing with this evil under the Merchandise Marks Acts has utterly failed to check it?

**Major Lloyd George:** The Merchandise Marks Acts do not deal with offences of this nature, and I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on 21st January.

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## ROYAL AIR FORCE (MARRIAGE ALLOWANCE).

**Mr. Mander** asked the Secretary of State for Air whether he will consider the advisability of removing the age limit of 30 below which officers in the Royal Air Force are not entitled to full living out marriage allowance?

**Sir A. Sinclair:** The regulation providing that officers under 30 years of age shall receive marriage allowance, though at a lower rate than those over 30, applies to the Army and the Royal Navy as well as to the Royal Air Force. This arrangement was introduced at the beginning of the war after most careful consideration of the problem in all its bearings, and I know of no cogent reason for its modification.

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## AGRICULTURE.

### TENANCIES (TERMINATION).

**Mr. Brooke** asked the Minister of Agriculture how many agricultural tenancies have so far been terminated in each county, respectively, under the Defence Regulation which provides for this action to be taken if holdings are not being properly and efficiently cultivated?

**Mr. Hudson:** The total number of agricultural tenancies in England and Wales which have been terminated by notice under Regulation 62 of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, is 968. Circumstances vary greatly in different counties and in many instances negotiations between county war agricultural executive committees and owners and occupiers have led to desirable changes of tenancy without resort to the exercise of powers under Regulation 62. The number of such cases is not known. The figures do not, therefore, give a complete or accurate picture and comparisons between counties would be misleading.

### RIGHTS-OF-WAY.

**Major R. Beaumont** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether he is aware that a number of rights-of way are being ploughed up and are going out of use as a result of the campaign to plough up additional land; and what steps are being taken to preserve the existence of these rights-of-way and to ensure that any restriction of the public enjoyment of them will only be temporary?

**Mr. Hudson:** I would refer my hon. and gallant Friend to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member for Shipley (Mr. Creech Jones) on 5th December last.

### DRAINAGE SCHEMES (PAY).

**Mr. De la Bère** asked the Minister of Agriculture whether, in connection with mobile gangs to carry through the drainage schemes, he will take steps to increase the agricultural minimum rate of pay, which is at present 1s. an hour, so as to bring it more closely into line with mobile gangs who are employed on camp construction or demolition work in London, in view of the fact that many men who would be available are attracted away because of the higher rates of pay?

**Mr. Hudson:** No, Sir.

## WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

**Mr. Rostron Duckworth** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works and Buildings whether his attention has been called to the unsatisfactory working conditions in Sunlight House, Manchester, where a number of members of the Inland Revenue staff are employed; whether he is aware that the inadequate heating has led to sick leave, discomfort, loss of working time and inefficiency; whether efforts have been made to ensure that the owner of the building provides proper accommodation, and with what result; and whether there are any further steps he can take in the matter?

**Mr. Hicks:** Yes, Sir. My Department have been trying for a long time, without success, to induce the owner of Sunlight House to render in a satisfactory manner services which he undertook to maintain when leasing the building. Further steps are under consideration.

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## CIVIL DEFENCE.

### INTERNEES.

**Mr. Wedgwood** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs whether his attention has been called to the conditions in Camp R, in Canada, where 70 refugees, mostly Jews, are dominated by several hundred Nazi sailors; also Camp B, where orthodox Jews are forced to work on the Sabbath; and will he make representations to the Canadian Government so as to improve the conditions of these interned refugees?

**Mr. Peake:** I am informed that the 70 refugees, referred to in the first part of the Question, were separated from Nazi internees some time ago. I am making inquiry as to the statement of the right hon. and gallant Member in relation to Camp B.

### LONDON SALVAGE CORPS.

**Sir R. Gower** asked the Home Secretary whether the London Salvage Corps is still in existence; and whether some arrangement can be made for the salving of at least easily accessible objects of value under the debris of demolished houses since, at the present time, owing to the fear of being accused of looting, demolition workers will not touch them.

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**Mr. H. Morrison:** The London Salvage Corps is in existence and co-operates with the London Fire Brigade in emergency fire fighting operations. I am considering a scheme under which the personnel of the corps would form the nucleus of an expanded salvage organisation, working in conjunction with the London Fire Brigade. Under existing arrangements objects of value are recovered by those engaged in the work of clearance of debris, and they are handed over to a responsible officer of the local authority. I have no evidence to suggest that these arrangements are not satisfactory.

DETENTION.

**Mr. Stokes** asked the Home Secretary when a decision will be taken with regard to the case of Miss Frances Eales, who was detained under Regulation 18B on 1st July 1940 and appeared before the advisory committee on 25th November 1940?

**Mr. H. Morrison:** I presume that my hon. Friend refers to the case of Miss Florence Eccles. I regret that I am not at present prepared to authorise the release of Miss Eccles.

PERSONNEL (SERVICE BADGES).

**Captain Elliston** asked the Home Secretary whether a badge can be granted to all civil defence workers for each year of completed service from the date of their enrolment?

**Mr. H. Morrison:** I am not aware of any general demand for a long-service badge among Civil Defence workers, and I should be averse from introducing any artificial distinctions where all are contributing to the common effort to the best of their ability.

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WATERLOO BRIDGE (TRAFFIC).

**Mr. Thurtle** asked the Home Secretary why taximeter-cabs are not allowed to cross Waterloo Bridge from South to North when they have passengers?

**Mr. H. Morrison:** The northern approach to Waterloo Bridge, between the Strand and the temporary bridge, is so much reduced in width on account of road works that a system of one-way traffic has had to be introduced. In view, however, of the inconvenience and hardship likely to be caused to passengers travelling from Waterloo Station, it has been decided to allow omnibuses to use the bridge and its approaches in both directions. These vehicles are limited in number and have a high carrying capacity; if other vehicles were admitted, serious congestion at the Wellington Street-Strand crossing would result. It is regretted therefore that the concession cannot be extended to cabs (or to any other class of traffic) at present. As soon as a greater width of carriageway is available at the northern approach, the ordinary two-way operation will be restored.

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TROOPSHIPS (CARGO SPACE).

**Captain Elliston** asked the Minister of Shipping whether local exporters are invited to use any cargo space available for fruit and foodstuffs in troopships and supply vessels returning from the Middle East and other military bases?

**Mr. Cross:** Subject to military needs, full advantage is taken of any cargo space available in such ships for bringing priority cargoes to the United Kingdom from ports *en route*.

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## FOOD SUPPLIES.

COCOA AND CHOCOLATE.

**Mr. Rostron Duckworth** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food whether any preference in manufacture is given to cocoa over chocolate, or whether there are enough ingredients for both?

**Major Lloyd George:** Cocoa powder and chocolate are to some extent joint products. Since the outbreak of war there have been sufficient supplies available of raw cocoa and the production of cocoa powder has been increased to meet an additional demand. On the other hand, chocolate production has been restricted owing to the reduced allocation of sugar for manufacturing purposes.

CEREALS CONTROL BOARD.

**Sir E. Graham-Little** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food whether he is aware that considerable dissatisfaction is caused by the occupation

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by representatives of three firms which dominate the milling industry, of key positions in the Cereals Control Board of the Ministry, one such representative being chairman of the Cereals Imports Committee, another representative chairman of the Home-Grown Cereals Committee, and a third vice-chairman of the Flour Mills Control Committee; and whether he will reconsider this situation?

**Major Lloyd George:** No, Sir. My Noble Friend has no reason for thinking that dissatisfaction exists such as my hon. Friend suggests. In reply to the last part of the Question, the Cereals Control Board and the three committees named were dissolved seven months ago when the functions of the Board were taken over by the Cereals Division of the Ministry of Food. In that reorganisation, the chairman of the Cereals Import Committee was appointed Director of Cereals Imports, and the vice-chairman of the Flour Mills Control Committee was appointed Director of Flour Milling.

PIGS.

**Mr. Rostron Duckworth** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food why his Department discourages the raising of heavier-weight pigs, especially in view of the shortage of pig products; and whether he will encourage the use of more food so that the light-weight pigs which are being slaughtered now can be made heavier?

**Major Lloyd-George:** The Ministry of Food pays the highest prices for pigs of carcase weight betwen 110 and 180 lbs. Pigs of this class yield the most suitable bacon for distribution against the 4 oz. ration. It is not possible to adopt my hon. Friend's suggestion that the use of more concentrates for pig feeding should be encouraged, although we hope that pig keepers will make an increasing use of swill and other waste materials. I would remind my hon. Friend that under the Government's scheme for the rationing of animal feeding stuffs, which comes into operation on the 1st February, the rations for pigs will be limited to approximately one-third of the pre-war quantities.

RATIONED FOODS (SOUTH WALES).

**Mr. Temple Morris** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food whether steps have been taken, in view of the increase, through evacuation, of the population in various parts of South Wales, to increase the amount of rationed food commodities?

**Major Lloyd George:** I would refer my hon. and learned Friend to the reply given to my hon. Friend the Member for Blackpool (Mr. R. Robinson) on 3rd December and to the reply given to my hon. Friend the Member for Stretford (Mr. Etherton) on 16th October. I would add that the information promised to manufacturers in the reply of 3rd December has now been furnished.

LIQUID MILK.

**Mr. Stokes** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food, what quantity of liquid milk during the month of December, 1940, it is anticipated will go to consumers other than the liquid milk consumers; and what price will be paid for it?

**Major Lloyd George:** While it is not in the national interest to publish detailed figures of milk production and utilisation I can assure by hon. Friend that very little milk during December was supplied to other than liquid milk consumers. Any milk manufactured into condensed milk or milk powder was sold at the manufacturing price of 1s. 7d. per gallon and any quantities utilised in the manufacture of butter and cheese at 10d. per gallon. In a few cases manufacturers of certain prepared foodstuffs and beverages obtained trifling quantities for which they paid the full liquid price of 2s. 0½d. per gallon.

MUTTON.

**Mr. McKie** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food, whether it is the intention of the Government to allow to producers of mutton the same right of appeal to deadweight which the Government graders themselves claim?

**Major Lloyd George:** I assume that in referring to Government graders my hon. Friend intends to refer to the livestock inspectors of the Ministry of Food who have certain limited powers to decide that sheep and other animals should be sent to the slaughterhouse for grading on the basis of their actual carcase weights. The certifying authorities who carry out the grading have no such powers. The grading of fat stock at each collecting centre

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is carried out by a certifying authority composed of three persons, one of whom is a farmer. The Ministry take all possible steps to ensure that the grading is carried out fairly and uniformly at all collecting centres and a staff of specially qualified Inspectors is employed for that purpose. Consideration has been given to the question of allowing producers the right to appeal against the decision of the graders in cases where they are dissatisfied, but the complexity of the arrangements for the operation of any such scheme on a national basis would render it unworkable. There is no indication of any general desire for a right of appeal which, if granted, would have to be equally available to the Ministry as to the farmers. The answer to my hon. Friend's question is therefore in the negative.

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## BRITISH PRISONERS OF WAR.

**Mr. Savory** asked the Secretary of State for War what steps are being taken to facilitate the repatriation of medical officers serving in His Majesty's Forces, and now captives in Germany?

**Captain Margesson:** The German Government have been informed that His Majesty's Government are ready to repatriate the German medical personnel who are entitled to repatriation under the Geneva Convention of 1929, if the German Government will also conform to the terms of the Convention as regards British medical personnel in their hands. The matter is being actively pursued, but a satisfactory settlement has not yet been reached.

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## NATIONAL WAR EFFORT.

### FACTORY CANTEENS.

**Mr. Rhys Davies** asked the Minister of Labour whether he is aware that the employés in some factories doing Government work resent private firms entering to establish canteens on a profit basis; and whether he will consult with employers in order that such canteens may be managed, without profit, by an equal representation from the employers and workpeople?

**Mr. Bevin:** There are great advantages in canteens being run by the management in association with representatives of the workpeople, and I am glad to say that there are many run very successfully on these lines. I cannot, however, rule out the use of experienced catering firms, particularly at a time when catering presents special difficulties, to assist in achieving what I regard as of the greatest importance at the present time, namely, the widest extension of well-run canteens able to supply good meals at reasonable prices.

### MOTOR VEHICLES (REPAIR AND RECONDITIONING).

**Mr. Price** asked the Minister of Labour whether he is aware that private garages and motor repair shops are being given important work by the Ministry of Supply reconditioning vehicles for war service; that at the same time they are continually losing their working staffs to the fighting services and find it increasingly difficult to carry on; and whether he will look into the whole question of reservation of labour for these trades?

**Mr. Bevin:** I am aware that the repair of Army and motor vehicles is undertaken at a number of garages for the Ministry of Supply. In addition the Services undertake the repair of a large proportion of their own vehicles and require suitable personnel for this purpose. The age of reservation for the occupations of motor fitter, motor mechanic, and garage hand (mechanic), which is reviewed from time to time, is fixed with a view to a proper distribution of the men in these occupations between the Services and civilian industry.

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## CONDUCT OF A MEMBER.

**The Prime Minister (Mr. Churchill):** I beg to move, "That the Report which, upon the 18th day of December last, was made from the Select Committee on the Conduct of a Member be now considered."

**Mr. Boothby (Aberdeen, East):** This is a very difficult speech for me to make, and I know I have no reason to appeal to the House to accord to me that indulgence which it always does on the melancholy occasions when personal statements have to be made. I am very conscious that much time and energy have already been spent on this unfortunate affair, and this is scarcely a moment when the House can be expected to take much interest in the fate and fortunes of one individual. I know also that the House is anxious to get on to the next Debate. I shall, therefore, be as brief as I possibly can.

Let me say at once that I do not ask the House to reject this Report. It came as a very great shock to me, and the House will appreciate that my first, and instinctive, reaction to it should have been one of resistance. There are certain things in the Report which I find myself unable to accept, and I think I owe it to myself, perhaps not for now but for the future, to explain why. But on the main issue I must abide by the Report of the Committee, and submit myself to the judgment of the House. This, I gladly do.

The Report is so long and detailed a document that it is very difficult for anyone to get from it a clear picture of what actually took place. I find that I am myself still somewhat bewildered by it. What strikes me most forcibly is the very sharp divergence between the impression which was clearly formed on the minds of the Committee by the evidence and the impression formed in my mind during the period—now nearly two years ago—when these events were actually taking place. I think this was probably inevitable. I want to tell the House that when I myself read all the documents which had been taken from Weininger's files and pieced together, and the accompanying memorandum of the Treasury Solicitor, the effect produced on my own mind was one of surprise and dismay. These documents and letters actually dealt with events covering a period of many months, but they can be read in a single hour. Presented in this telescoped, and, if I may so describe it, skeleton, form, they seemed to me to throw a sinister light upon activities of mine which had appeared to me at that time to be not only wholly innocent, but actually praiseworthy. The Committee have found that I did in fact deceive the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

What I want to do is to convince the House that it was never my intention to mislead the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or anyone else, and it, therefore, seems to me that, before I deal with points of detail in the Report which I think I ought to deal with, I had better give to the House a brief outline of the story as I saw it, indicating what I believe to be the salient features, and also what was the state of my mind at different periods—because that is of some importance. It will not take long to do this. First of all, I am sure that the House will accept the fact—which is not disputed by the Select Committee—that my interest in Czecho-Slovakia began, and grew steadily, long before any question of my personal financial affairs arose. I made clear in many speeches in this House, and in articles in the Press outside, my deep feeling about German intentions towards Czecho-Slovakia, and what I feared might happen if these intentions were realised. My anxiety was greatly increased by my visit to the Sudetenland and to Prague in the summer of 1938; and the House will find, in my memorandum in page 236 of the Report, a letter which I wrote to the then Prime Minister, telling him that, according to my information, the German plans were to culminate in an invasion of Czecho-Slovakia between the middle and the end of September. Unfortunately, this forecast proved to be correct. And the reason why I felt so desperately unhappy at the time of Munich was not so much because of what was done—or had to be done—by us, but because of what had been done to Czecho-Slovakia.

I shall not easily forget the morning after Munich, when Weininger and Dr. Janza presented themselves in my flat, and asked for such assistance as I could give them in obtaining a loan for their unfortunate country in its dark hour. I made up my mind, then and there. that

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anything I could ever do to help the Czechs I would do. It was in these circumstances, and against this background, that Weininger came to me at the beginning of 1939, and told me about the family fortune in Czecho-Slovakia, and of his reasons for wanting to liquidate it; and suggested that if I could help him to do this professionally it might provide an avenue of escape for me from the financial difficulties I was then in. In order to enable me to do this, and to spend what might be a considerable time in Czecho-Slovakia, he made me a payment in advance of £1,000. The evidence discloses the fact that I immediately gave him a promissory note for that amount. The reason I did so is, I think, wholly creditable to me. This was a business proposition, and I regarded that payment simply as a loan, to enable me to do the work which would be necessary, and which might, or might not, prove sucessful. In this connection I think I ought to make it quite plain to the House that the loan which I had received some months previously from Sir Alfred Butt, who had in days gone by been a client of my firm, was offered to me at a moment of financial panic in the City, to tide me over a difficult period. It was unsecured, and had nothing whatever to do with any business transaction.

Now I come to what I described in my own memorandum, and what has been described in the Report, as the " facade of British interest " which was set up in the Weininger funds. At first sight the expression " facade of British interest " does not, of course, create a good impression. I want to say that it was upon my advice that this was done, and I take full responsibility. My object was a perfectly simple one, and I want the House to be quite clear about this. By the middle of February I knew that the Germans had gone far to establish an absolute stranglehold over the economic and financial life of Czecho-Slovakia; and I felt convinced that it was only a matter of time before they took over the whole government of the country in one form or another. In these circumstances I took the view that if the Weininger fund remained purely a Czech fund, the Germans, sooner or later, would get it. But that if we could point to a specific British interest of some kind there might at least be a chance of saving what was, after all, a considerable fortune from falling into their hands. That was the sole reason for this transaction.

When the Germans marched into Prague on 15th March, 1939, I did everything I could to secure that they should not get the Czech assets in this country. The House will remember that the Austrian assets were not blocked under similar conditions; and they will, I think, accept the fact that my estimate of the amount of the Czech assets here in this country was very much larger than the estimates of other people. I gave this information to the Treasury. The Treasury say that their decision to block the assets was not influenced by it; they would have done it anyway. That may be so. I confess I was a little astonished that Mr. Waley, of the Treasury, had no clearer recollection of the number of times I telephoned to him the day after the German occupation of Prague, because I pestered him—and others, including the present Secretary of State for War—most of that afternoon and evening, simply in order to say that we must block these assets quickly if we were to prevent the Germans from taking them. I did not want to claim any particular credit for myself. The important thing was to stop £17,000,000 going to the Nazis, and that was done. I only wish we had subsequently been able to prevent a further £6,000,000 of gold going to them through the Bank of International Settlements.

As the House knows, Weininger offered to renew his contract with me after the occupation of Prague, but I did not accept this offer, for two reasons—first of all, because I thought he was being unduly generous, and, secondly, because by April I had accepted an obligation to advocate the cause and claims of Czech residents in this country in this House and elsewhere, including refugees from the Nazi terror—and had become chairman of an informal committee of Czech claimants.

Weininger, however, persisted in his determination to relieve me of all financial embarrassment, and to reserve a 10 per cent. proportion of his funds for this purpose. He told me that, contract or no contract, he would take over my debts as soon as he was in a position to do so, and it is an attitude from which he never

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subsequently deviated. During the summer two things happened which caused me to evolve in my mind a somewhat ambitious scheme for dealing with the claims of Czech, as distinguished from British, holders. The first was the transfer of the gold from the B.I.S. to the Nazis, apparently without any active resistance on the part of the Treasury, which seemed to me at the time to smack of further appeasement; and the second was the opening up of direct negotiations with a representative of the German Government—Herr Wohltat. I want to tell the House frankly that I hoped to bring all the Czech claimants together, to produce a comprehensive scheme which would cover them all, and to be invited to represent their case—in a professional capacity—in the impending negotiations with the German Government. Towards the end of July these hopes of mine crystallised into a strong expectation that this would happen. They were, however, completely shattered at my interview with Lord Simon on 3rd August.

This interview is of considerable importance. It took place a long time ago, and there is some conflict of evidence with regard to it. It is in any case largely a matter of impression. Lord Simon was greatly assisted in the evidence he gave by the fact that before that interview he had prepared an elaborate note, and an equally elaborate memorandum afterwards. In the circumstances, I think, it is perhaps natural that the Committee should have accepted his evidence and rejected mine. All I want to say now to the House is that my own impression of that conversation remains quite clear, and that I cannot alter it. The sole topic under discussion was my position as Chairman of the Committee, and the allegation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—for that was what it amounted to—was that I had been using that position for the purpose of making money. Indeed, that is the only question upon which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had at the time any interest in the matter.

Had I been entrusted at a later stage with the conduct of negotiations on behalf of the whole body of Czech claimants with the Germans I might well have accepted remuneration for my work from the larger claimants, subject, of course, to proper disclosure. But in no other circumstances would I have done so in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee. The day after my interview with the Chancellor I wrote the following letter to Weininger:

> " I am afraid it will not now be possible for me to have an agreement of any kind either with you or Zota, because legislation may be necessary, and if I do, I shall not be able to take any further part. I think I must go on, because although the Committee has been disbanded, the Czechs are relying on me to put their case, and the House of Commons would think it very odd if I remained completely silent.
>
> Such is life! "

His immediate response to this letter was to tell me that, whether I had a contract or not, and apart altogether from Czech assets, he still proposed to pay my debts as soon as he was in a position to do so. He said that if he received any money from any source he would use it for this purpose. He offered to visit my creditors personally. And he further offered, if necessary, to place the whole of his funds in Czecho-Slovakia at my disposal as security.

He added that once my debts were safely in his hands, we could discuss the terms of any repayment I might wish to make, or be in a position to make. But in any event I would then be safe, and able to devote myself with a mind free from anxiety to my political work. It was not until after he had said this that I gave the charges which I did give to my creditors. The Select Committee have taken the view that it is inconceivable that Weininger should make such an offer unless it were in return for political services to be rendered. I can only say that they have under-rated this man. There was indeed nothing then that I could possibly do for him in return. Friendship of this order may be rare, but it can and does exist. I see now very clearly that one of the great mistakes I made was to think of Weininger always as a friend rather than as a claimant. But the House should not suppose that our friendship was entirely one-sided, or that our association in business was confined to Czecho-Slovakia. Immediately after the outbreak of the war I asked him to co-operate with me in work of considerable potential importance and magnitude. I gave some account of this work to the Select Committee, but they decided that it would not be in the public interest to disclose it at present, and I bow to their decision. Some day the full story may be told. In the meantime it is

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sufficient for the purposes of my argument to repeat what I told the Committee, that this merely reinforced, if it was necessary, Weininger's determination to give me such financial assistance as I might require.

The Report states correctly that after August, 1939, I did not take any very active political steps in respect of the Czech claims until 23rd January, 1940, when I made a very material speech on the Second Reading of the Czecho-Slovakian (Financial Claims and Refugees) Bill. I think I am entitled to say with regard to that speech that there was nothing new in it, except that I said I thought that claimants with a thousand pounds or less should be paid in full, and first.

So far as my further activities were concerned, they were confined to pressing that all the claims should be met as soon as possible—owing to the war there had been great delay in dealing with the matter—and to clearing up some muddle which appeared to have arisen with regard to the transfer of the Weininger fund to a British Company, for which, as hon. Members will recollect, I was mainly responsible.

The House can imagine the distress which I felt personally when, on 17th September last, Weininger was arrested in my presence, in my flat, and removed to Brixton Prison there to be kept in confinement for months without trial or charge. I protested in the strongest possible terms to the Home Office, but could get no satisfactory explanation. In the end I appealed to the Prime Minister himself. I do not know now the reason for his imprisonment, but I do know that he has been a consistent opponent of the Nazi régime from the very beginning and that he rendered notable service to this country after the outbreak of war.

It appears that after his arrest his files were seized, and the evidence before the Committee discloses the fact that the whole case against me was built up from documents and letters extracted from them. This process must have taken some considerable time, and I was not told until it was completed. I was, of course, aware that documents relating to me must have been in Weininger's files, in view of our long association and business relationship over a period of years, but I think I am entitled to point out to the House that I would have scarcely protested so violently against his arrest and imprisonment as I did if I had been conscious of the slightest guilt in respect of any transactions I have ever had with him.

That, in brief, is the story I have to tell. Now, if hon. Members will forgive me, I propose to deal specifically with two points in the Report. On page 4, paragraph 7—I do not think it will be necessary for hon. Members to refer to it, as I have it here—my counsel having been asked whether he wished to call Weininger as a witness, replied that after reflection he wished to do so. This implies a certain reluctance on his part, but it was always our intention to call Weininger. He was, indeed, our principal witness, and at the inquiry my counsel said to the Committee, " The most important witness I have to call is a gentleman who for a very long time has been a great friend of Mr. Boothby's, a Czech subject called Weininger." On page 10, paragraph 37, there is a statement to the effect that there is no evidence that any proposal that the larger Czech claimants should make a contribution for distribution to the poorer Czechs was ever brought before the Committee. This I regard as very important. I want to submit with the greatest respect—I know of no complaint on grounds of fact—that this statement was not in accordance with the facts and can only be justified if the evidence given, not only by myself and Weininger, but also by Dr. Janza, Chairman of the Czech Legation, and Dr. Calmon, is rejected. Dr. Calmon, whose evidence can be found on pages 101 and 102, referred not only to such a proposal, but specifically to a suggestion put forward on these lines by himself at our Committee. The question of a comprehensive scheme embracing all Czech claims was one in which I was deeply interested, and, as the House will realise, it has an important bearing on my position. This was the reason why I was so anxious to get the Petscheks to join my Committee, and therefore I am entitled to ask hon. Members not to disregard the formidable weight of evidence given on this particular matter.

I now come to the conclusions of the report. I am sure hon. Members will

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acquit me of any discourtesy to the Committee if I say that I feel bound to express my personal dissent from the first five. The first conclusion was that I had expectations from the Hans Weinmann claims. I want to tell the House that I did not know of Weininger's proposal that his brother-in-law should join him in any financial assistance until the inquiry took place. In paragraph 50 the Committee found that Weininger promised to pay me this considerable sum of money on the understanding that I would render services in return, such services to include political speeches, pressure on Ministers of the Crown and Treasury officials. If that really were the case, I should retire altogether from public life and never have anything more to do with it. I can say to hon. Members—and I will give the House an absolute and unqualified assurance as well—that the question of my rendering political services to Weininger was never at any time discussed or even mentioned between us, nor do I think that in the light of events it can be maintained that there was anything in the nature of a tacit understanding.

On page 182 of that report hon. Members will find a copy of a letter sent to me by the former Chancellor of the Exchequer on 19th July, in which he told me that foreign nationals, including Czechs, who were and had for some time been ordinarily resident or ordinarily carrying on business in this country should be included in the category of "British holders," and that he saw no reason why British holders should not count on obtaining an adequate settlement in respect of cash balances. After the receipt of this letter, a copy of which I immediately sent to Weininger, there could be no doubt whatsoever that Weininger's claims, if valid, must subsequently be met. There was no possibility in these circumstances of my assisting in any way by political effort, and yet it was not until after the receipt of this letter from the then Chancellor of the Exchequer that I accepted his offer of financial assistance. It might conceivably be argued that I did subsequently render Weininger a service by continuing to press for payment of claims as a whole, but I cannot think that hon. Members will seriously think that anybody would offer to pay so large a sum of money simply in return for asking a Government Department to hurry up.

In paragraph 51 of the conclusions to their Report, the Committee say that I could not fail to be influenced in my efforts by the knowledge that Mr. Weininger might withdraw his promise or be unable to fulfil it. Surely, all the evidence shows that Weininger was continually pressing me to accept financial assistance, that it was I who was reluctant to do so and agreed to take advantage of his generosity only when my own financial position became one of acute difficulty. In paragraph 52 the Committee find that the evidence was inconclusive as to whether I had expectations of payment for my services as Chairman of the Czech Committee. I must say that I thought the evidence of Dr. Calmon, on page 101, in which he said:

> "There never was, in any member of the Committee's mind, any idea that Mr. Boothby should get anything from the Committee or in connection with the money we got from the British Government for our claims"—

was decisive. Finally, in paragraph 53, the Committee admit that my interview with the former Chancellor of the Exchequer on 3rd August was regarding the affairs of the Committee of which I was Chairman, and they say that I expressly protested on my honour that I had no financial interest. The implication here is that I was not telling the truth, but in fact I had no financial interest whatsoever in the Committee, or in my capacity as Chairman. The only conceivable interest I had was in Weininger's promise to help me with my debts. In their penultimate paragraph the Committee say that if I intended to delimit my disclaimer to the Chancellor on 4th August it was essential that I should have stated explicitly what my interest was and what it was not in the whole matter of the Czech assets. This conclusion I accept.

It is easy to be wise after the event. But, looking back, I can see now that I was guilty of a tragic error of judgment. If I had even put a postscript to this letter to the effect that, although the Weininger claims were now technically British claims with which my Committee was not directly concerned, and although I had no legal or enforceable contract with him, nevertheless I had an expectation of financial assistance from him if and when the

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[Mr. Boothby.]

claims of his family were met, this case could never have been brought against me. Had I done so, it would have made no difference to me personally or to anyone else. Why did I not do it? Let me try to tell the House what was in my mind, because, in judging of my conduct, that is a matter of some importance. I was very disappointed as a result of my talk with the Chancellor the previous day, when he made it quite clear to me, not only that my services would not be required in connection with any negotiations on behalf of the Czechs, but that he regarded my Committee as redundant. By the very same post I sent a letter to Weininger, which I have already quoted, definitely and finally refusing his offer of a contract. At that moment I felt disheartened, not only because my plans seemed to have come to nothing, but because my motives seemed to have been misunderstood by the Chancellor. When I wrote those two letters I had absolutely no doubt in my own mind not only that I had no financial interest in the Czech claims as such, but that in view of the attitude of the Chancellor I could no longer hope to render the services which I hoped to render to the cause which I had so much at heart and for which I had fought so long.

That is all I wish to say about the Report. I do not intend to raise any constitutional issues nor do I propose to examine the question of whether a Select Committee is the most appropriate tribunal to deal with a case of this kind. That is a matter for the House to decide. I content myself with pointing out that the powers of a Select Committee far exceed those of a court of law and that much of the evidence put in would have been inadmissible in a court. In addition, the decision of a majority in a Select Committee become the findings of the Committee as a whole. As was to be expected, my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General was scrupulously fair throughout the inquiry but it was inevitable that from the outset, the inquiry should take the form of a trial. In those circumstances, I am doubtful in my own mind whether it was altogether right that the memorandum of the Treasury Solicitor together with the documents obtained from Weininger's files, should have been in the hands of the Committee for a whole week, before I was able to make a reply and that during the course of the inquiry fresh evidence, much of which would ordinarily be privileged, should have been continually demanded and produced and ultimately published. There is both rhyme and reason for the procedure of our courts of law and there is something to be said for adopting it, in a case of this kind.

Sir, I have done. The finding of the Committee has gone against me. Let us be clear what that finding is. It is not suggested that I ever advocated a policy contrary to the public interest in order to further my own interests. The finding is that I ought to have made a full disclosure of any financial interest I may have had in regard to the Czech claims, and that by not doing so I failed to come up to the standard of conduct required by this House of its Members. This imposes a standard upon hon. Members with regard to disclosure which has pretty wide implications. I want to say to the House now that I sincerely regret not having given fuller information to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to my interest in, or to put it more accurately, my expectations of benefit from the Weininger funds. I want also to say that whether I had an interest or whether I had not, would have made no difference at all to my political activities both inside this House and outside it. It so happened that, at a certain period, Weininger's personal interests coincided with what I believed and still believe to be the public interest. But the Weininger claim was merely an incident in a political campaign on behalf of the Czechs which I had begun long before I ever heard of it and would have continued if I had never heard of it.

I have been long enough here for the House to know that I am not in the habit of making speeches designed to bring me either financial gain or political advancement. As I told the Committee I am satisfied in my own mind and conscience that whatever errors of judgment or omission I may have committed, I never in any sense or at any stage acted contrary to the public interest. My two main objectives throughout were to prevent the money going to the Germans and to secure its distribution among Czech residents in this country, many of whom

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would otherwise have been penniless today. If the House considers that either of those objectives was contrary to the public interest, I bow at once.

Looking back now, the whole unfortunate business seems so unnecessary. A postscript to a letter, a sentence or two in a conversation of a speech—which could have altered neither the facts, nor the course of events, nor my conduct in relation to them—are all, it seems, that were required. But it never occurred to me that they were necessary. It may be that I was thoughtless. The other night I turned as I always do in times of stress to one of whom Lord Rosebery has said, that his poems are a treasure-house in which all may find what they want and from which every wayfarer in the journey of life may pluck strength and courage as he passes. I soon found what I wanted:

> " The poor inhabitant below
> Was quick to learn and wise to know
> And keenly felt the friendly glow,
> And softer flame;
> But thoughtless follies laid him low,
> And stained his name! "

In peace-time there is much to be said in favour of not holding office. But in time of war it is hard to give up a post of responsibility in the Government in which one might have been of some service to the country. I am very sorry to leave the Ministry of Food, where I was exceptionally fortunate in having an opportunity of studying at first hand the methods of so great an administrator as Lord Woolton. I am still more sorry that I have had to sever my association with the Prime Minister, in whom I have always had such great faith, and whose star—now, fortunately for this country, in the ascendant—I have followed for many years.

With regard to my future action, I want only to say this at present. The true picture of events is still so clear before my eyes that I am quite unable to comprehend how an interpretation could have been put on them which could make me seem unworthy of membership of this House. It is not true that I suddenly took an interest in Czecho-Slovakian affairs because I was given a financial interest. I helped the Czechs because I did not want them to be robbed by the Germans, not because I wanted to rob them myself. It is not true that I pressed the claims in which I might be held to have had an interest as against others. On the contrary, I pressed in this House that the small claims, in which no one suggests that I had an interest, should be met in full. It is not true that I deliberately deceived the Chancellor or the House. When I disclaimed any financial interest to the Chancellor, I was answering his charge that I and my Committee were working for payment, and that I was being paid as Chairman. It is not true that I advocated any case on account of personal interest. I challenge denial that everything I said or advocated was in the national interest.

Finally, it is not true that I have received one single penny for anything I said or did with regard to the Czech claims. Knowing all this, I cannot, of my own free will, take any action that might even imply an acknowledgment of guilt on my part. Folly I have admitted; guilt I cannot admit. In face of the issues which confront us all my own plight fades into insignificance. Whatever happens, I intend to serve the country to the best of my ability in some capacity. There is only one objective for anyone today and that is to win the war. What else matters? In accordance with precedent, Mr. Speaker, I now propose to withdraw from the Chamber.

Question,

" That the Report which, upon the 18th day of December last, was made from the Select Committee on the Conduct of a Member be now considered,"

put, and agreed to.

Report considered accordingly.

The hon. Member then withdrew from the Chamber.

**The Prime Minister (Mr. Churchill):** I beg to move,

" That this House doth agree with the Report of the Committee."

We cannot, I think, with any advantage attempt to re-try a matter to which the Committee have devoted so many days and so much thought and attention. The House, as a whole, cannot, in the nature of things, deal with these complicated matters except by the practice which is settled and has been so long adopted of referring them to a Committee of the House. It would be, I venture to think, fatal to the whole of that practice if the House were to disregard the opinion

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[The Prime Minister.]

of the Committee unless something had been brought to their notice which showed that the Committee had been misinformed, or unless they had reason to doubt the competence or the impartiality of their Committee. Therefore, I do not propose to enter upon the arguments, and I am bound to say that I do not believe any great advantage will be derived if that should be done in other quarters.

The Committee commended itself to the House by its composition and its high character. It has discharged its distasteful task with efficiency and expedition, and it came unanimously to the conclusions which are contained in the Report. The Chairman of the Committee, one of the oldest Members in the House, is well known to all of us, and it is a tribute to our system and to him that all parties in the House should have agreed in appointing him. The task was an unenviable one, but everybody will agree that it has been discharged to the satisfaction of the House. I do not think that any choice was open to the head of the Government, when the evidence came into our possession by somewhat unusual events connected with war-time conditions, but to bring the matter before a Select Committee and to ask the House to concur in that course. My hon. Friend was a Minister and the reputation of the Government as well as the House might have been seriously affected if we had neglected to take any further step.

I shall not attempt to add anything to the report or comment on it in any way. It sets a very high standard, but we have to set a very high standard for the House of Commons, and we have to try to live up to that standard. The fault of my hon. Friend may have been serious. The penalty is most severe. It is at least the interruption of a career of high Parliamentary promise. It causes pain to all. I am sure that the House has been quite exceptionally distressed by this affair and all that is connected with it; and especially it is a source of great pain to me because, over a good many years, my hon. Friend, as he has reminded the House, has been one of my personal friends, often a supporter at lonely and difficult moments, and I have always entertained a warm personal regard for him. If it is painful to us, it is also a loss to all. It is a loss to His Majesty's Government, who lose a highly competent and industrious Minister, one of the few of that generation who has attained advancement and who has discharged his tasks with admitted and recognised distinction. It is also a loss to the House. We are none too fertile in talents of the order that have just been displayed to us. Altogether it is a heartbreaking business. The popularity of my hon. Friend, his abilities, and the manner in which during his short tenure of office he conducted himself, all add to the poignancy of our feelings, but I do not think they can influence our course of action. There we must leave this matter. We should accept the report of the Committee, and that is all we have to do. As for my hon. Friend, one can only say that there are paths of service open in war time which are not open in times of peace; and some of these paths may be paths to honour.

**Mr. Elliot** (Glasgow, Kelvingrove): I think it would be a pity if no word from the back benches were spoken on this occasion. While all must concur in the verdict which the Committee has given, yet, as the Prime Minister and Leader of the House has said, my hon. Friend the Member for East Aberdeen (Mr. Boothby) has paid a heavy forfeit. He has tholed his assize, as we say in Scotland, and I hope it will not in future be impossible for him to render service to the State. I should hope that it would be possible for the message to come to him to-day for the future, that the past being the past, to-morrow is also a day, and great opportunities for service may still be open to him.

**Mr. Mander** (Wolverhampton, East): I entirely agree with the Prime Minister that there is no point in going into the investigations of the Select Committee, which no doubt will be accepted unanimously by the House, but there is one passage, to which I think the House ought to give attention, in the final speech made by my hon. Friend the Member for East Aberdeen (Mr. Boothby) to the Select Committee. He used the following words:

"As I say, I have been here for 16 years, and while I would demand a high standard from Private Members, and a much higher standard from Ministers of the Crown, I do venture to suggest to the Committee that it is inadvisable, in view of what we all know

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does go on and has gone on for years, to set a standard that is not likely, in practice, to be generally attained."

There are two comments that I wish to make on that. Surely, there can be only one standard for Members of the House, whether they are Private Members or Ministers. We are all on the same level, and the standard should be the highest possible one. The other comment I want to make is this: Many of us are not aware of anything that has been going on for years. If there is evidence of any kind of a similar nature, let it be produced and investigated, but let us not have these general charges made that this sort of thing is going on among Members of the House. It is a reflection on the whole House which we have reason to resent. I believe this is the first time in Parliamentary history that the conduct of a Member has been definitely brought before a Select Committee and a conclusion arrived at. I venture to hope that one result of this most unhappy business will be that a definite and high standard will be set for all Members of this House in the future.

**Earl Winterton** (Horsham and Worthing): I desire to associate myself with what has been said by the hon. Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Mander), I do not wish to make any comment on the case put by the Prime Minister, because I entirely agree with him. We must not allow sympathy for any individual to obscure our sense of duty to the House as a whole, and I invite the hon. Member for East Aberdeen (Mr. Boothby), if he has any specific instances of the character to which he referred in his speech, to bring them to the notice of the House. That is all I have to say, although I leave myself perfectly free to put a Motion down on the Order Paper.

Question, "That this House doth agree with the Report of the Committee," put, and agreed to.

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## SUPPRESSION OF THE "DAILY WORKER" AND THE "WEEK."

**Mr. A. Bevan** (Ebbw Vale): I beg to move——

**Mr. Maxton** (Glasgow, Bridgeton): On a point of Order. I should like to ask for guidance on your procedure on this matter, and to ask which Amendments you propose to call and in what order. My hon. Friends and I are particularly interested in the Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for West Fife (Mr. Gallacher). May I ask you, Sir, when you propose to call that Amendment, and whether there will be an opportunity for us to cast votes on the Amendments?

**Mr. Speaker:** I propose to call the Amendment standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Keighley (Mr. Lees-Smith).

**Mr. Maxton:** That Amendment only?

**Mr. Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr. Maxton:** Surely that rather leaves the House no opportunity of deciding on the big issues involved, and certainly leaves an hon. Member of this House who is most keenly concerned and most directly concerned no opportunity of staing his case and moving a Motion or Amendment in expression of his case and casting a vote upon it. Surely it has always been the practice of this House to give the maximum opportunity to any section of the House which is particularly concerned to voice its points of view adequately?

**Mr. Speaker:** I think that has been the case and I hope that will be the case to-day. I propose to give those who are interested adequate opportunity of expressing their opinions before the House.

**Mr. Maxton:** Will the hon. Member also have an adequate opportunity of casting a vote in support of the view he has put on the Order Paper?

**Mr. Speaker:** Certainly, he will be allowed to cast a vote against the Amendment on the Order Paper.

**Mr. Maxton:** Frankly I cannot see any reason why your Ruling should be greeted with ribald laughter. According to your Ruling, Sir, the only opportunity that the hon. Member would have of casting his vote would be by voting against the main Question.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member can vote against the Amendment and the main Question if he likes.

**Mr. Maxton:** But he cannot vote for his Amendment on the Order Paper?

**Mr. Speaker:** I do not propose to call that Amendment.

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**Mr. Bevan:** I beg to move,

"That this House expresses its detestation of the propaganda of the 'Daily Worker' in relation to the war, as it is convinced that the future of democratic institutions and the expanding welfare of the people everywhere depend on the successful prosecution of the war till Fascism is finally defeated; but is of the opinion that the confidence of considerable numbers of people can be undermined if it can be shown to them that any newspaper can be suppressed in a manner which leaves that newspaper no chance of stating its case; and therefore regrets that the Home Secretary has not proceeded against the 'Daily Worker' and the 'Week' under the powers given to him for this purpose, but has taken action under Regulations which were justified to the House by the Government on the sole ground that they might be needed in circumstances of direst peril arising out of physical invasion."

Last Tuesday, I understood from information which has been brought to me, the Home Secretary met the Newspaper Proprietors' Association, and informed that Association that he proposed to suppress the "Daily Worker" and the "Week." At two o'clock on the same day, the Home Secretary met editors of the national newspapers, and that evening these two newspapers were suppressed. Members of the House of Commons had no knowledge of the intentions of the Home Secretary until the following day, and it was clear from the newspapers on the Wednesday morning that with one or two exceptions the newspapers were agreed with the Home Secretary to suppress one of their members; and now we have an opportunity, one week later, of discussing this unprecedented action of the Home Secretary on a Motion by a private Member. I submit that that story by itself shows an extraordinary deterioration in democratic standards in Great Britain. It does not seem to me to have been necessary, if the Home Secretary intended to take action of the kind he did, to secure the connivance of the other newspapers in order to do so. My hon. Friends and myself have made it quite clear in our Motion that we do not share the views of the "Daily Worker." [An HON. MEMBER: Where is the Home Secretary?] I am very reluctant to make any statement at all without the presence of the Home Secretary. However, I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman has now entered the Chamber.

I think it is unnecessary to repeat what I have said, because it will be communicated to him. It is unnecessary, I am sure, to convince hon. Members in all parts of the House that my hon. Friends and I do not share the opinions of the "Daily Worker"; we have made that clear in our Motion. Therefore, it would be irrelevant to quote against us articles in the "Daily Worker" with which we ourselves profoundly disagree, although they may be quoted in justification of the action of the Home Secretary. They cannot be quoted against us because we do not accept them. In the second place, we are firmly of the opinion that the war should be prosecuted to final victory, and it is because we believe that that we have put the Motion upon the Order Paper. It is quite clear to everyone——

**Mr. Hammersley** (Willesden, East): Do I understand from the hon. Member that anything in the "Daily Worker" is irrevelant?

**Mr. Bevan:** No, Sir, I did not make any such statement. I think I made myself quite clear, that to quote articles from the newspaper called the "Daily Worker" against us would be irrelevant, because I do not agree with those articles, though of course it is obvious that hon. Members may quote in justification of the Home Secretary's action. It is perfectly clear to everyone who has thought about the matter for a moment that in any community, whether in peace or war, the amount of liberty to be accorded to any minority or any individual must necessarily be under some restraint. Therefore, there is an element of expediency in all liberty, although that society is the best which can make the most progress with the least restraint.

I accept also that in time of war restrictions upon liberty must be greater than they are in times of peace. It is expedient to give less liberty because society is in greater jeopardy. I am, therefore, not concerned to argue the abstract principle that anyone has a right to absolute liberty. That would be a foolish position to take up. What I am contending is that it was not expedient to suppress the "Daily Worker" because we could still afford the amount of liberty which the newspaper was enjoying. It is, therefore, my first contention that there has been an unnecessary deprivation of the liberty of the subject by the suppressing of the "Daily Worker." What influence did the "Daily Worker" exercise? It would have had to exercise such

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influence as to be undermining the war effort, before the right hon. Gentleman would have been justified in taking away its liberty. What evidence is there that the war effort of the country and the morale of the population was being affected? We have stood up against the worst bombardment that any civil population has ever had, and we have been called upon to bear trials which no other population has been called upon to bear. We have sustained them to the admiration of the world. In fact so negligible, so unimportant, so uninfluential was the circulation of the "Daily Worker" that it was unable to undermine the morale of the country when it was exposed to the greatest bombardment in its history. It seems to me quite unnecessary, in circumstances of that description, to take away a liberty which can be shown not to have affected the national war effort.

In the next place, it is because we permitted liberty to the "Daily Worker," and because we allowed assemblies like the Peoples' Convention to be held, that the great democratic institutions of Great Britain evoked admiration in America. Newspapers there pointed to the fact that this beleaguered island could carry the indulgence of liberty so far as to include Peoples' Conventions and the "Daily Worker." No higher tribute could have been paid to the morale of the country and our determination to fight the war to victory. The Home Secretary by his action has now deprived us of that precious asset. He has made a present to our enemies of the fact that we feel so insecure that we can no longer permit the liberty that this newspaper was enjoying. It was, therefore, unnecessary for the Home Secretary to take this action. Furthermore, all the by-elections which have been held since the war began have shown that it commands the overwhelming allegiance of the British people. Deposit after deposit has been forfeited whenever the issue has been put to the test. So that this newspaper, opposed to the war, and the organisation which it stimulates, or feeds, or fosters, have been unable to convince any large number of citizens. The public interest was not, on that account, jeopardised in the least.

Why did the right hon. Gentleman think it necessary to silence this voice? He and his Government enjoy more Press support than any Government ever had in our history. Indeed, so large is the measure of support, that the hon. Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Pickthorn) pointed out on 31st July that the main trouble was that the Press was in too few hands, some of those hands being in the Government. Nevertheless, enjoying this unprecedented support, enjoying the support of newspapers whose proprietors are associated directly or indirectly with the Government, the right hon. Gentleman suppresses this one small voice. His position is far stronger than was the position of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George) in the last war. There was then a far greater minority Press in the country, supported by many influential people and by many in this House. The right hon. Gentleman is there, and some of us are here, because during those years we fought against the war. The right hon. Gentleman's voice would not have been heard from 1914-18 if, to use an Irishism, he had been Home Secretary then, and this House would have been denied the use of his unrivalled powers.

**Mr. Woodburn** (Stirling and Clackmannan Eastern): There was nothing corrupt about the Home Secretary's opposition to the war.

**Mr. Bevan:** The hon. Member must not anticipate my arguments. His interruption is evidence that this is the sort of subject which the House of Commons is not fit to discuss judicially. The fact is that the Government enjoys in these circumstances far greater support than the last war Government did, and yet in that war there was no suppression of any daily paper. [*Interruption.*] My information is that "Forward" was not suppressed. There was interference with the Press but there was no suppression of a newspaper.

**Mr. McGovern** (Glasgow, Shettleston): It was suppressed for three weeks.

**Mr. Bevan:** I wish hon Members would pay attention to what I say. I said there was no suppression of a newspaper. Closing down for a day or two is not suppression. In the last war there were no suppressions of newspapers, although there were newspapers of great influence supported by prominent members of the

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[Mr. Bevan.]

House. The Home Secretary has taken action in circumstances which are far stronger than his predecessor enjoyed. If there is any case at all against the "Daily Worker," the best thing to do is to state it—to argue it. When the "Daily Worker" was coming out, morning by morning, and its articles could be discussed, as they were discussed, the answer to it arose spontaneously in the minds of its readers, and it was by the atmosphere of public discussion, by the full utilisation of democratic institutions, that its power was kept within bounds. Now that it has been suppressed its views will be disseminated in places where they cannot be replied to. That is the vicious part of suppression. It is not merely that, but in taking away the voice from subversive opinion you take away the opportunity for effective answer to that voice and the people will be denied the opportunity of hearing in public the case that they will hear whispered to them in private. It seems to me that, on those grounds alone, the action of the Home Secretary was extremely unwise.

Take the second ground. A minority has not the right in any society, especially in time of war, to withhold from the Government, from the majority, the instruments of executive action. It is entitled to conduct its propaganda, but is not entitled to take its propaganda to the point where it performs, acts or persuades other people to perform acts which frastrate the will of the majority. That is an abuse of minority rights. In other words, if the "Daily Worker" in an article called upon engineers to refuse to make shells or incited people directly to sabotage the war effort, action could be taken against it for that act alone, because it would be an attempt on the part of the minority to deny to the majority the effective instrument for carrying out the people's will. Can the right hon. Gentleman say that the "Daily Worker" has been guilty of that? If so, the Home Secretary has his remedy in the courts. He has his powers. He has been given power since the beginning of the war to get action in the courts on specific charges against individuals or collections of individuals for acts of that kind, but he has not done so.

May I say to some of my hon. Friends, particularly on the opposite side of the House, that they really must try and look upon the industrial population of this country with some degree of consistency. On the one hand, they regard the working class as heroes, and, on the other, they regard them as deluded simpletons and fools. They suggest that because there is a dispute in a workship, a quarrel with a foreman, a strike here and there, that these are the result of the vicious propaganda of some evilly disposed person who goes to those poor simpletons the workers, exacerbates their grievances, rouses their blood and persuades them to go on strike. That is a complete distortion of the facts.

**Mr. Logan** (Liverpool, Scotland Division): Is not the hon. Gentleman aware that what he has described actually takes place in the workshops and that this agitation by the Communist party is carried on in the workshops?

**Mr. Bevan:** I admitted in the first part of my case that the Communist party is conducting an agitation which, if it succeeded, would largely undermine the war effort. But we are not alienists, we are not concerned with people's intentions. We are concerned with what they are able to do, and it is my case that the Communist party and the "Daily Worker" have failed, are failing and will fail in an atmosphere of free discussion. There is no evidence to show, as far as I know, that the workers in the factories have been brought out on strike by any maliciously disposed person. If a worker strikes he strikes because he has a grievance. There is only one of two ways of dealing with it—either redress it if you can, or, if you cannot, explain clearly why you cannot. Hon. Members will have realised that the workers do not eat, drink and sleep war. They have other interests that claim their attention, such as insufficient rations, low wages and bad housing.

Those are the things that affect the workers. They feel bitter about them and sometimes strike about them and quarrel about them, although they may be 100 per cent. supporters of the war. Why should action upon their part be regarded as sabotage and as subversive? The financial columns of the newspapers report every day that many firms are going slow because the Excess Profits Tax destroys their incentive to production. Is

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that described as sabotage? If the matter is considered idealistically the one is as much sabotage as the other; but we must consider human beings in the round and not as logical abstractions. Those who went to the People's Convention would be the first to take up rifles if any German set foot in Great Britain. Idealistically, there would be contradiction between the two actions, but individuals are contradictory beings and often pursue two courses at the same time. Any of us may sit down to a big fat meal, as some of us do, and not consider that we are undermining the war effort. Hon. Members must try to maintain some sense of proportion in this matter.

There is nothing which will provoke a greater sense of dissatisfaction among the industrial population than the belief, which will now be distributed among them independent of the merits of the "Daily Worker," that a newspaper has been suppressed by a police act of the Home Secretary because it was expressing an unpopular point of view. The other day I had an argument with some prominent Communists about the People's Convention. I was opposing it. One of the objects of the Convention was the promotion and defence of democratic and trade union rights in Great Britain. I pointed out that there were no greater evidences of the vitality of democratic rights in this country than the publication of the "Daily Worker" and the holding of the People's Convention. I cannot say that to-day. The right hon. Gentleman has taken that reply away from me; he has taken the defence from me and given the case to our opponents quite unnecessarily. When a meeting is held in Great Britain to-day in support of democratic rights one name will spring to the lips of every person, namely, the "Daily Worker," and people will say, "Your democracy is so weak you could not afford the voice of opposition." The right hon. Gentleman has done a real disservice to the cause of democracy by the action he has taken.

**Mr. Beverley Baxter** (Wood Green): Did these thoughts occur to the hon. Gentleman when "Action" was banned?

**Mr. Bevan:** The hon. Gentleman must be sure of his facts. "Action" was not suppressed.

**Earl Winterton** (Horsham and Worthing): May I make a friendly interruption to my hon. Friend? I am not influenced by the opinions of the House on one side or the other. I would like to ask him whether he is not aware, whether or not "Action" was technically suppressed, that in fact the Fascist party was brought to an end without a murmur of disapproval by anybody. The whole Fascist party was closed down, including "Action."

**Mr. Bevan:** I agree that that was the case, but I was answering the charge that "Action" was suppressed. It was not.

**Mr. Baxter:** That is a technical point.

**Mr. Bevan:** Wait a minute. The answer about "Action" is a simple one. The organisers of the Fascist party were direct allies of our enemies, and they were suppressed because of that fact.

**Mrs. Tate** (Frome): What about the Communists?

**Mr. Bevan:** Will hon. Members try to restrain themselves. The Communist party has not been suppressed. We are not discussing the Communist party, but discussing the suppression of the "Daily Worker." Now that the right hon. Gentleman has decided to suppress the "Daily Worker" because it is undermining national morale and conducting systematic propaganda against the war effort, where does he propose to stop? Will it be illegal to say at a thousand meetings what the "Daily Worker" was saying every day? This is a serious matter, and the seriousness of it will come home to hon. Members in a few weeks' time. Meetings are arising in this country, all over the place, it may be stimulated by Communists, but supported by large numbers of people who while they do not agree with the Communist at all think that the "Daily Worker" ought not to hav been suppressed. At those meetings speeches will be made attacking the right hon. Gentleman and the Government for what they have done. Those meetings will be held systematically for weeks and months, and statements will be made there similar to statements which werc written in the "Daily Worker." Will that be illegal? Will the right hon. Gentleman stop that? If he does stop it, we shall soon have the

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whole apparatus of the Gestapo in Great Britain. We shall have espionage, industrial espionage, and agents-provacateur. We shall have the whole apparatus of the "police State." It would have been much simpler to have allowed this propaganda to go on above ground where it could be met. If the right hon. Gentleman does not take action, he will find himself forced by exactly the same quarters as forced him to take action against the "Daily Worker."

I should like to ask next why the right hon. Gentleman did not make specific charges against the paper and take the paper into court. This House is not the place in which to discuss matters of this kind. On issues where feelings run so high and so deep we cannot have a judicial mind, and, further, the Whips are at work, and party loyalties are mobilised—against the welfare of the public. My right hon. Friend the Member for Keighley (Mr. Lees-Smith), the spokesman for the Opposition, is moving the Amendment on the Paper. What is the symbolism of that? It is impossible for the House of Commons to discuss judicially a matter of this sort when party allegiance and party loyalties are ruled by the Whips and when the fortunes of the Government are bound up with the position. Why have we a judiciary which is independent of the House? Because that judiciary can, after a decent lapse of time, discuss an issue calmly in the austere rooms of a court of law, as little influenced as possible by political bias and prejudice and declare upon the facts without having any political aim in view. That is why it would be so much more desirable to take this matter to a court than to dicuss it here. And the right hon. Gentleman is the very last person to have charge of this matter, because I am afraid that he has been fighting the Communist party for so long that he looks under his bed every night to see whether they are there. He is entirely unfit to discharge his duty judicially in this matter.

I have one other thing to say in support of my case. I have referred before to the powerful support which the Government have in the Press of the country. I shall not make any more specific charge against the Press, but I would point out that during the last few days some newspapers which last Wednesday were fully satisfied that the Government had behaved correctly are much more doubtful to-day. The case of the right hon. Gentleman in respect of the "Daily Worker" is so slight that there is only one explanation of why he took action, and that is that it was intended to serve as an instrument of intimidation against the Press as a whole. I do not say that without some justification. It was only a few months ago that some newspaper proprietors, not after an official meeting of newspaper proprietors but, I imagine, after conversations with Members of the Government, approached the proprietors of two very important newspapers in Great Britain with very large circulations. The Government, they were told, were very worried about the line they were taking. The proprietors of those two papers said, "If that be so, we should like to discuss the matter with the Government," and they saw a Member of the War Cabinet. That Member of the War Cabinet said—mark his words—that in his view the line taken by those newspapers was subversive—[*Interruption.*] Yes, the "Daily Mirror" and the "Sunday Pictorial"—and the Cabinet Minister was the Lord Privy Seal.

At that time the propaganda of those two newspapers, which were both supporting the war, was a propaganda against the unwisdom of retaining certain members in the Government. So closely do politicians, when they get into office, identify their welfare and reputation with the well-being of the State. When the Cabinet Minister was asked to point out in what respect the newspapers were subversive he failed to do so. He said their general line was subversive. The conversation ended amicably—but what, now, is the position? The law is whatever the Government like to make it, because no newspaper has a defence. If the right hon. Gentleman sends for the editor of a newspaper and says, "I do not like your newspaper, I do not like the way it is behaving, I do not like its general line," the newspaper editor may say, "Well, I am very sorry about that, but what do you object to, because if you object to any particular thing you have your remedy in the courts" "Oh, no," says the right hon. Gentleman, "you will have no court to go to. I will

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stop you without going to court at all." The right hon. Gentleman may never take action against any other newspaper, but the damnable part of it is that that power hangs over every editorial chair in Fleet Street. So long as the Home Secretary can behave in that dictatorial manner, leaving the newspaper no chance of stating its case, he can do almost as much by intimidation and terrorism as by taking action.

**Mr. Lipson** (Cheltenham): Surely the hon. Member has not forgotten the control of this House over the Government.

**Mr. Bevan:** The hon. Member refers to the control of this House. We see what the control of this House means. It is one of the canons of British law that an accused person shall have a voice in his own defence; not that some other well-disposed persons can, if they so desire, speak up on his behalf. These are not merely democratic forms; behind these forms are five centuries of British history. Magna Charta, Habeas Corpus and the Bill of Rights are behind the right of every individual to appear in his own defence.

**Mr. Garro-Jones** (Aberdeen, North): Would my hon. Friend illuminate the House on this point: Who, precisely, would be brought before the House to answer for the policy of the "Daily Worker"?

**Mr. Bevan:** The editorial board; and not before this House but before a court of law. They would have the opportunity of answering the charges. What do right hon. Gentlemen opposite mean by making speeches about the defence of democracy, if they think this position is right? The Prime Minister makes use of unexampled eloquence over the radio and talks about freedom and democracy. What does freedom mean, if not that men may not be yanked off to court by policemen without having a chance of defending themselves, and that a newspaper may not be suppressed without having a chance of being heard in its own defence? These are not idle forms; they are the citadels of our democratic institutions.

It is more important for us to fortify the souls of our people by confidence in our democratic institutions than by this feeble, panic legislation. The right hon. Gentleman and his Government—they are all in this, I understand—have broken faith with the House of Commons. They received these powers from the House of Commons by what now appears a trick. They got them on 31st July last year. There was another Debate in this House at that time, and I shall not go into the details because another hon. Member is to do that. It was a Debate about the Channel Islands being in the hands of the Germans, and we were discussing this matter with imminent invasion over our heads—[HON. MEMBERS: "As it is now."] Do hon. Gentlemen suggest that the situation is desperate? Can it be more desperate than it was then? Even then, the House of Commons tried to prevent the right hon. Gentleman from having these powers, and he got them by saying that they were not intended to be used except in the circumstances then feared.

**Mr. Henry Strauss** (Norwich): For the sake of convenience would the hon. Gentleman point to the passages of the speech on which he relies?

**Mr. Bevan:** Certainly. They are to be found in the OFFICIAL REPORT for 31st July, 1940. The right hon. Gentleman then said:

> "The whole thing can be put in a nutshell. The reason why it seemed, not merely to the Home Secretary but to the Government, that a Regulation of this kind, admittedly very drastic, was necessary is this: the invasion, the overrunning, in a very short space of time, of Holland, Belgium and part of France brought home to us in a way it had never been brought home to us before that we in this country were exposed to perils of a kind that most of us had never before imagined."

The right hon. Gentleman went on:

> "What we have to ask ourselves, and what the Government had to ask themselves, before deciding to make this very drastic Regulation, was whether, if the direst peril we can imagine were to come upon us, . . ."

What is the direst peril that we could imagine could come upon us? Invasion.

**Mr. Woodburn:** And treachery inside.

**Mr. Bevan:** My hon. Friend will probably have the opportunity of making his own speech. The right hon. Gentleman went on—and his sentences are almost as long as those of the Prime Minister:

> "It would be tolerable that there should at that moment, when the resolution of some of the weakest among us might be shaken or be in danger of being shaken, be allowed even for a short time the systematic publication of

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matter calculated to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war to a successful issue." —[OFFICIAL REPORT, 31st July, 1940; col. 1320, Vol. 363.]

I tell the right hon. Gentleman, in all fairness, that the House understood by that statement that he intended these very unusual powers to be used only in the circumstances then feared by the House, those of invasion. I admit that the higher critics can come along at this stage and, by violating the spirit but considering the letter, argue that some other interpretation is possible. Even conceding that point to the Home Secretary, it is clear that the House was very disquieted on that occasion. Some of my hon. Friends on this side went into the Lobby against the Government, of which their leader was then a Member—60 of them. The Government got a majority of only 38, the smallest of its majorities up to that time.

I submit that there is no situation of such peril, urgency and terror in Great Britain as was envisaged then, and that the Home Secretary has violated a pledge which was given to the House by his predecessor. The right hon. Gentleman is putting us in a very difficult position. Last Tuesday, his colleague the Minister of Labour brought in powers of industrial conscription, without any countervailing powers against property in Great Britain. On the same day, the Home Secretary suppressed the "Daily Worker." Unless he is very careful, and shows a stronger arm than he has done so far, he will be driving even greater inroads into democratic liberty, as a consequence of the action which he has now taken. The juxtaposition of those two events will have a significance which will be realised in every village and town in the country. That significance will be driven home by evilly disposed persons, who will point out that this is a sinister conjunction.

Those are two Labour Ministers. When the war began, I tried to persuade friends of mine, South Wales miners, to support a resolution. Part of the resolution was that we should support the war, and it was carried by a two-thirds majority. Another part of the resolution was that we support the war on two fronts, namely, that we fight against Hitler abroad and against privilege and reaction at home. We believe in winning the war on two fronts, but the right hon. Gentleman does not. The Government are winning the war against us, and are making Labour Ministers the catspaws of reactionary policy. I say to Conservative Members opposite: You are doing a grave disservice to this State by permitting Labour Ministers to indulge the weaknesses of their temperament in their positions. You are doing a great disservice to the spiritual harmony and unity of this country in time of war. To my hon. Friends on this side of the House I say: For heaven's sake, take care where you are going. I few years ago we were accusing hon. Members on the other side of the House of leading us to disaster and to war because of loyalty to their party and to the old school tie. They put loyalty to their party above loyalty to their country. To-day they are asking us to do the same thing, to go into the Lobby, not because we believe the Government have done the right thing, but because our Ministers are involved. It is a great disservice.

It is because I detest the point of view of some of those who write in the "Daily Worker," because I believe that this is the worst possible way to treat them, and because I believe our case is good and can stand the light, that I believe that hon. Members opposite are doing a great disservice in driving these forces underground, in making them subterranean and subversive, where we cannot pursue them and expose them. I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will not consider that his political future and the future of his Government are involved in clinging to that error. We are living in very unusual circumstances. Ministers have to make difficult decisions in difficult circumstances. This House would not whisper a word of criticism against the Government if they said that the paper had been punished, that they would allow it to be printed again and would prosecute it in the courts where the facts could be known and where concrete charges would be their own propaganda against the paper. I submit that that can be done. If the right hon. Gentleman does not do it, I suggest that he is entering the third phase of the war. The first phase was when the late Mr. Neville Chamberlain ruled over this country disastrously. The second phase was when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Epping (Mr. Churchill) took charge and inspired the country, and the third phase was when Ministers of whom

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we had a right to expect something greater lost their faith in democracy, lost their confidence in the ordinary people and tried to lead the country to victory by methods which have proven disastrous in other countries in Europe.

**Sir Richard Acland** (Barnstaple): I must begin by apologising to this House, because it must be the experience of many hon. Members that in asking intricate Supplementary Questions on the spur of the moment one is apt to get rattled and to use the wrong words. Last week I asked the Home Secretary whether he would take a course which would enable him to prove his damning indictment in court, but by mistake I used the word "damnable," and I was very properly stopped. I apologise, and I hope the House will excuse me.

I wish to raise a preliminary issue. I understand that this is to be made a vote of confidence. I submit to the House that it is important for us to re-think the whole question of raising issues of confidence in the unprecedented situation in which we find ourselves. For the first time we find that although many of us may criticise this item or that of Government policy, there is only one Member of this House who does not passionately desire the Prime Minister to remain Prime Minister. A vote of confidence means that the Prime Minister says to each Member of the House, "If you vote against me on this issue, you are expressing your desire that I resign." That, of course, is perfectly proper when there is an alternative Government in sight, as there was last May, when the late Prime Minister made the Norway Debate an issue of confidence. But now that everyone knows that there is no alternative Government in sight, I submit that to raise any issue to the status of confidence means nothing less than this, that the Prime Minister is allowing the Government Whips to call upon hon. and right hon. Members not to address their minds to the issue which is actually before them on paper but to pretend that they must address their minds to another issue altogether, namely, the resignation of the Prime Minister, which everyone in this House in fact knows is not seriously open to discussion. If the House tolerates that, then I say that as long as the present situation continues Parliamentary control over Government policy will be at an end, and therefore I appeal to all hon. Members who feel that our case is justified on its merits to treat this question of raising the issue of confidence as what it is, namely, a great piece of Whips' Office bluff.

My views about the "Daily Worker" are stated with sufficient accuracy in the first sentences of the Motion. If I had drafted it myself, I would have substituted "disapproval" for "detestation." But the point is a minor one. My view is based, first, on my own fairly general reading of the "Daily Worker," but also on the much more carefully considered judgment of another. It is quite easy to stamp on the "Daily Worker," but when a working man or woman finds that one paper is vigorously taking up his grievances, some of which are very real, it is a much harder matter to persuade that man or woman that the attitude of the "Daily Worker" to the war is in fact mistaken. The man who has done more work on those lines and achieved more successes on those lines than anyone else in the country is Mr. Victor Gollancz, and I quote his judgment with confidence:

> "There is no doubt whatever that at every stage in the conflict the 'Daily Worker' has adopted a policy which can have no other intention whatever than to weaken the resistance of the people to the Hitler menace."

Moreover—and these are not his words but mine—it has done so with, at times, an inconsistency which did not match the attacks made on the consistency of other papers. For example, in a recent issue, it proved by reference to the range of vision of the very best binoculars that the system of roof spotters could not allow workers enough time to get to their shelters. In a subsequent issue another column described the roof-spotter system under which the "Daily Worker" carried on up to the last moment, and appealed to its friends for a pair of binoculars. Of course, the "Daily Worker" and its friends can point to equal inconsistencies in other organs of the Press, but I would remind them that

> "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

Nevertheless, I would not have suppressed the "Daily Worker." Presumably the Home Secretary feels that something is wrong with the national morale, otherwise he would not have acted at all. I

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rather tend to agree with him, but I do not think the trouble comes from the "Daily Worker." But if I had thought it came from the "Daily Worker," I would have asked the other national newspapers on what terms they would have allowed me to take the whole of their best advertising page every day for a week, I would have invited the editors of the "Daily Worker" and the "Week" to state their case in one half of the space, and I would have replied in the other half. Of course, in order to be quite certain of winning the Debate, it would have been necessary to invigorate a number of the Departments of Government which are dealing with internal affairs. But that is what I would have done; I would have done it because I know that 99 out of 100 people who call themselves Communists do not take this view from any desire that Hitler shall win, but from a belief, which I am convinced that 80 of the 99 can be made to understand is erroneous, that by weakening our war effort they will simultaneously weaken the German war effort and therefore the war will fade out in a victory for neither Government. Therefore, state the case publicly, and you can recapture 80 out of 99 potential Communists.

What distresses me is that our Prime Minister, who has the military guts to strip this country of guns and tanks in order to make an impression on the minds of the Italian people and persuade them to desire to struggle enthusiastically against Fascism, has not got the moral guts to do those things which would persuade thousands of bewildered people in this country to desire to struggle against the danger of Nazism. What I have said so far is, of course, entirely a matter of opinion.

Now I want to come to something which I think is a matter of proof. It does not concern the merits of the "Daily Worker" nor a question of whether it should or should not have been ultimately suppressed. It concerns the method of its suppression. I can quite understand the Government Amendment to our Resolution, which says in effect that the "Daily Worker" was so horrible, anyway, that what does it matter how it was suppressed, so long as it has been suppressed? If hon. Members will forget that they are being addressed by one of the most insignificant Members of the House, who has often raised unpopular issues and done unparliamentary things, and will consider his arguments divorced from his own personality, I think I can show that on the question of method alone turns the authority or subservience of this House and the liberty or bondage of the Press.

The House will remember that we first became aware of the possibility of dealing with publications of this kind in the early Spring of last year, whereupon the last Home Secretary dealt with the matter in a very commendable way. He asked an informal gathering of Members of all parties to meet, and with them he thrashed the matter out. As a result, he put before the House Regulations 2a, 2b, 2c and, most important, 94a, which were agreed. Under that agreed procedure the individuals concerned in a case of this kind were to be warned, then they were to be prosecuted, and then their presses were to be taken away from them. A few weeks later, without re-consulting that same committee of interested Members of all parties—which strikes me as an extreme breach of courtesy to hon. Members of this House—he laid before the House Regulations 2d and 94b, by which the Home Secretary has power, without warning, without prosecution, without hearing, without appeals, without anything, simply on his own personal "because I say so," to suppress any newspaper whatever. Upon this he was challenged, and the hon. Member for Ebbw Vale (Mr. A. Bevan) has very correctly recalled the circumstances. The Home Secretary did not say that the powers he already had were inadequate for the circumstances as they were on 31st July, and the hon. Member for Norwich (Mr. H. Strauss) has given us our points, namely, that at this moment circumstances are not different in anything substantial.

**Mr. H. Strauss:** I did not say that.

**Sir R. Acland:** I think if the hon. Member will look up his previous remarks——

**Mr. Strauss:** I do not think I am destroying my hon. Friend's point by pointing out that I did say, in my submission to the hon. Member for Ebbw Vale (Mr. A. Bevan), that the danger of invasion is certainly no more acute than

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it was then; but, of course, I leave myself complete liberty, and I do not want to take the hon. Member by surprise in the least. If I have the good fortune to catch the eye of the Chair at a later stage in the Debate. I shall certainly point out that at that period aerial bombardment of this country had not started, whereas now we have been experiencing it for some time.

**Sir R. Acland:** I think the position is now perfectly clear. The then Home Secretary did not say that his powers were inadequate then, or in the present, situation. He did not say that if a newspaper were steadily and consistently conducting a course of propaganda for months, he and his advisers might neglect to issue the warning in time, neglect to initiate proceedings in time, and, therefore, might have to have recourse to this more drastic procedure. He said, as has been stated by my hon. Friend, that he wanted these powers in case they were necessary in the event of a physical overrunning of this country, and he got his majority of 98 to 60. I think it is legitimate to say that the present Home Secretary would not have had his present powers at all if his predecessor had not advanced this, the one and only, argument which is to be found in his speech.

Now what happens? When none of the supposed circumstances have arisen, when there is no physical overrunning of the country, when no one will contend that we are in our direst peril, when there is no reason why the Home Secretary should not have initiated proceedings six weeks ago, and when there is no reason on earth why he should not initiate them now and get them through, when none of these things has happened, he uses these powers. Perhaps he will tell us, as we cannot judge for ourselves, what is the number of weeks which the Law Officers advise him would be necessary, under the highest pressure, to get this prosecution concluded. Will he make a point of giving the House this information, because, of course, it must be in his mind?

I now come to the point made by the hon. Member for Norwich. Bombing has developed since 30th July. I quite understand that, but surely the Minister is not going to shelter behind the bombing, which started at least five months ago. The "Daily Worker" developed its line about bombing—some of which was, incidentally, quite correct and better than almost any other newspaper's—about four months ago. The situation has developed progressively. There has been no sudden break; neither the Minister nor his advisers can say they have been taken by surprise. They could have forecast in every month what would be the situation in six weeks' time, and I submit that the Minister really cannot say that because his advisers neglected to pursue the proper agreed procedure in time, he is therefore going to make use of powers that were only given to him by this House for use in an entirely different set of circumstances. I ask the Home Secretary in his reply to address himself to this point. Of course, he has a number of other points to answer; but I hope that the House will be alert to notice whether he contents himself with taking the line of the official Amendment, that it does not matter two hoots how the "Daily Worker" is suppressed, so long as it is suppressed.

He must either say that when a Government are challenged by the House about certain points it is quite proper for the Minister concerned to tell the House any old story for the Government to get their powers in consequence, and for them then to snap their fingers at the House, to treat the House with contempt, and to use those powers just as if those special reasons had never been offered; or else he must raise himself to the height of popular esteem, by admitting that a mistake has been made, and by taking steps, as I am convinced that he can, even now, to deal with this matter by way of prosecution. If he adopts the first alternative, and says that that is the kind of thing that hon. Members have to accustom themselves to from the Government in these days, and that it will be a sign of great disloyalty if any Member votes against him and the Government, he is saying that Parliamentary control over policy is ended until an official Opposition, which intends to oppose, is created on these benches. That is something which I am sure he desires to avoid. I know that the House would not think any the worse of him if he adopted the second alternative. I have been criticising him because he has to take responsibility for everything that happens. That is the constitutional position.

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[Sir R. Acland.]

The personal position is quite different. How can any Minister be expected, especially when he changes from one Ministry to another, to remember everything that has happened in this House in the past? But his advisers must know what has happened. If the Minister feels, as he must, that he has been put into a very awkward position in relation to undertakings given in this House by his predecessor, I suggest that he should make an investigation, in order to find out whose was the guiding mind which framed the Defence Regulations which this House unanimously rejected at the beginning of the war; who suggested that Regulations 2D and 94B might usefully be put in; who was responsible for framing the first draft of the Special Courts Act, which it took this House two weeks to bash out of the intolerable shape in which somebody had the impertinence to present it to us; who drafted the brief which was read to this House by the Attorney-General on 31st July; and who suggested that action be taken under Regulation 2D. There exists in the right hon. Gentleman's Department a little gang of misguided gentlemen.

**The Secretary of State for the Home Department** (Mr. Herbert Morrison): That is quite unfair; and it is an insult to me. I took this decision. I fully accept responsibility. [*Interruption.*] The decision was taken by me, in association with my colleagues of the Government, and we are responsible. It is a little off the mark to go behind the Minister, and to make an attack on civil servants.

**Sir R. Acland:** I am sorry if I have done something unparliamentary. I withdraw all I have said. But I am sorry about the intervention of the right hon. Gentleman, because it means that he did what he did having in mind the undertaking which was given.

**Mr. Morrison:** Certainly.

**Sir R. Acland:** I am very sorry to hear that. I have dealt with the way in which this issue will affect the power of Parliament to control a Minister unless a sufficient number—I do not say a majority, because everybody knows that we are not going to get that—have the courage to go into the Lobby against the Government.

If I could address members of the Press Gallery directly I would say, "You are all in it." People say, "No, the Government will never suppress the 'News-Chronicle'". Of course not, but they may drop the hint that something the "News Chronicle" has said is causing them to consider whether some day they may have to suppress it or not. If it is said that the procedure of 2D and 94B is not to be used other than in the case of a physical overrunning of the country, if the Home Secretary will say that that is the position in relation to all other papers for the future, editors can deal with that Government bluff for what it is worth, remembering that it was newspaper criticism which gave us munitions in the last war. If, on the other hand, the House accepts this procedure, under which there is no chance of stating a case, the editors are powerless. I am talking about something which has happened already. There has been a case already where *prima facie* evidence of a first-rate scandal was submitted to an editor, and he replied, "It is no use my investigating that, because we have been warned." Did the Home Secretary take that point? It is nothing new, we have mentioned these cases before. If the House is not going to protest against that, the Liberty of the Press is gone. I am prepared to call my witnesses in support of those statements, provided that I get a cast-iron guarantee from the Government that there will be no victimisation of those witnesses or of any of the papers concerned.

I should leave my argument incomplete if I did not say something which is bound to be unpopular with this House. I do not think that this House is a suitable tribunal to judge these matters. It is not a matter of conjecture, but a matter of proof, that on many of these issues this House does not represent the views of the country. It is quite certain that the views of the country on many fundamental issues have substantially changed since this House was elected. It is equally certain that no hon. Member except myself has changed his views on any substantial issue since this House was elected. If anyone has done so I have been unfortunate in missing the obviously important occasion when he has said that any view which he previously held was wrong, or that circum-

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stances had so altered as to make that view right no longer. I should make an exception in the case of the Prime Minister, who has also admitted error—but only by way of comment. Whatever may be the case on general issues, I say to the House, quite bluntly, that, if the cheers that we heard on Thursday are any indication of the Division we are to get in the Lobby to-night—which Heaven forbid—this House will not represent the views of the country on the matter. Perhaps it will be as well if I read some of this letter received from a private in the Army:

"As you are seconding the Motion as Member for North Devon, in which I am stationed, I wish to add my protest and that of many other soldiers against this blow against freedom. I can assure you there are many other members of the Ilfracombe detachment who resent the Government's attack. They include friends and opponents of the 'Daily Worker' policy, daily readers and people who rarely if ever see the paper, Socialists, Liberals, and even men who have supported the Conservative party."

Look at the courage of this man; there ought to be some cross given for moral courage.

"My name and number can be used in any way to support your protest."

It is Private Wallace, No. 7677785 in the R.A.P.C. I wish we had more people like him:

"As members of His Majesty's Army we have been told that we are fighting for freedom and democracy, and we are determined that freedom and democracy shall not be sacrificed, at least not without a struggle."

I wonder if the Home Secretary would think it worth while to find out upon how much authority from serving soldiers in the detachment that letter was written. I make a more fundamental challenge than that. Last year I defended, against the wishes of the hon. Member for Oxford University (Mr. A. P. Herbert), the right of the Government to employ the war-time social survey as an accurate means of assessing public opinion in order to found a policy upon it. I ask the Home Secretary whether he will invite the Ministry of Information to make a survey on these points. The Government resented these words when they were used last year. I am sorry that the Minister is now using them with such relish. I am taking a great risk in inviting the Home Secretary to take this course, because everything will depend upon how this Debate is handled to-night by the Press and on the wireless. If they report only the Minister's attack on the "Daily Worker"—it will be very formidable, of course—I have no doubt the majority will be against the view that I am taking, but the result will be distinctly other than the one the House indicated by its cheers last week.

Finally, as the Home Secretary is convinced that everything in the moral garden is not just as lovely as it might be, may I submit that some day we have a Debate on the whole subject, if necessary, in secret? Meanwhile—and I cannot go into the points now—may I ask a few questions, particularly in relation to armament workers and to blitzed towns, which, by an unfortunate coincidence, sometimes happen to be in the same place? Why do the Government now neglect the advice of almost everybody who has looked into this matter that, even in a short time, you do not get maximum output by driving everybody at 100 per cent. pressure for 100 per cent. of the time? Is there anyone who has a real experience of industrial psychology within the confines of the Ministry of Aircraft Production who has a status within the hierarchy of the Ministry which enables him to tell Lord Beaverbrook where he gets off. Because if the answer to that is in the negative, it is absolutely futile to look at the "Daily Worker" for the cause of the present discontent. I reported some months ago a case in which, at a meeting of 1,000 armament workers—I attended the meeting myself, and I swear that not 10 of those who were present were Communists—men were putting forward complaints about the technical inefficiency of their factory. The Minister sent me a very nice letter assuring me that all my complaints were unfounded. Why did he reject my entreaties that something should be done in relation to this matter by going down and meeting the men—I gave him only a small indication of the data—and showing them that the Government appreciated the value of workers who took an interest in the technical efficiency of their factory? I am sure that since then the atmosphere in the factory has steadily deteriorated.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Aircraft Production (Colonel Llewellin):** The hon. Member asked for an impartial tribunal. I went very fully

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[Colonel Llewellin.]

into that case myself and had a very careful inquiry made, and I wrote a long explanation to the hon. Member. There was not a *prima facie* case for the inquiry for which he asked, and he will be as glad as I am when I tell him that the morale in the factory is extremely good at the moment.

**Sir R. Acland:** I appreciate that what I asked for in my letter was a full inquiry, but I hinted again and again that somebody who had some knowledge of industrial psychology should go down and see these men. I would have maintained that point if I had been 100 per cent. certain that a single plant was wrong. What is the status of the welfare workers in any one aircraft factory? Has the welfare committee the right at any time to say to the management, "No, you cannot do this, which seems to you to be the right thing, because, with our knowledge of industrial psychology, we inform you that it is the wrong thing from the point of production"? Is something concrete going to happen which can be presented to the people of this country, with the full weight of Government propaganda behind it, to prove to them that nobody is to be able even to try to pull this country back to 1939?

Until you deal with that matter, it is in vain to suppress the "Daily Worker." A strong Government would have dealt with the matter, and with other matters which I have just raised. It is the sign of a weak Government to deal with it in this way. Therefore, I ask the Prime Minister certain questions. Of course, I do not expect him to be here, but perhaps they may be reported to him. Will he call for the reports on all these matters which I have just been raising, and on many others dealing with the subject of morale which are now in the possession of Mrs. Adams' Department of the Ministry of Information, and which, I believe, are being kept from the Prime Minister on the grounds that they are not really important enough to justify taking up his time? I ask him also, Will he remember his own patriotic sincerity and certainty in the rightness of his own views when he was almost in a minority of one? Will the House seriously deny that if any group of responsible Ministers had listened to his views open-mindedly for one hour in those days, this war might have been avoided? Will he then, please, admit the possibility that there are hon. Members in this House whose gratitude to him for what he has done in the last few months is second to that of nobody, who passionately desire that he should continue to be Prime Minister but who believe, with a sincerity that matches his own, that in the realm of national morale major mistakes are being made now which may cost us the verdict in this struggle and must postpone that verdict unnecessarily for months and perhaps years?

If he will admit that, I will make one further appeal to him. Will he allow some of us one hour in which we may put our case to him personally for him to consider it with an open mind? I must end by appealing to my great friend—my almost boyhood friend—the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Economic Warfare. I quite understand his own position. He has to consider the merits of this case, and when he has made up his mind he has to consider whether it is an issue of such importance as to justify his voting, assuming that he is on our side. He may take one view or another, but I warn him that in war and in politics it is by acts of personal courage that we succeed.

**Mr. Lees-Smith** (Keighley): I beg to move, in line 5, to leave out from "defeated" to the end of the question, and to add instead thereof:

"and while anxious that the principle of freedom for the expression of minority opinions shall be maintained so far as possible and that the minimum use shall be made even in time of war of powers of repression, recognises that special and effective measures must be taken against the habitual and persistent publication of matter which is calculated to impede the national war effort and thus to assist the enemy, and approves the action of the Home Secretary in relation to the 'Daily Worker' and the 'Week'."

I am sure I am expressing in this Amendment the opinion of the great majority of those in the House, and I am bringing it forward because I feel that when a Minister of any Government has to take an unpopular course of action, with which we agree, we ought to accept the responsibility of unmistakably standing by his side.

**Mr. Bevan:** Does the right hon. Gentleman approve of every vote of the Conservative party during the last five or seven years?

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**Mr. Lees-Smith:** I think I have listened fairly to the arguments of the two hon. Members who have put forward their case at some length. What they say appears to me to come to this, that even if it is admitted that the "Daily Worker" ought to be dealt with, they contend that the Government should not have suppressed the paper by executive action, but that the proper course would have been to prosecute in a court of law. The hon. Member for Barnstaple (Sir R. Acland) thinks that even now the Government ought to change from one process to the other. That, I think, is a fair statement of the main contention. To that I would reply that I do not think the method which the two hon. Gentlemen suggest is suitable to the particular problem which faced the Home Secretary. This movement does not consist of passionate social reformers who every now and then commit an occasional indiscretion which can be dealt with by an occasional prosecution. It consists of attempting steadily, day by day, with large sums of money to expend, to undermine our national effort on the psychology plane, which in this war is almost as important as the battlefield itself.

I do not propose to quote extracts, as I do not wish to speak at any great length. I need not deal with the early days of the war, but before it began there was no newspaper so ferocious as the "Daily Worker" in attacking the Government for not standing up to Hitler, and, indeed, on the day before war broke out, when, as hon. Members know, there seemed to be doubt as to whether the Government were going forward, the "Daily Worker" issued a manifesto calling the country to action in order to push the Government into war. Three weeks later, when Poland was divided up between Germany and Russia, they suddenly turned in their tracks—they double-crossed those who had followed their lead—and ever since then have developed what I think it is necessary really to understand, the thesis laid down by Lenin for Communists in time of war. It is this thesis which is called revolutionary defeatism. Now the thesis of Lenin's doctrine was this, that in a war between two Powers, neither of which is Communist, such as Great Britain and Germany, such a war was merely a war between two rival imperial groups, and Communists were equally hostile to both. Therefore, the duty of Communists in each state was to try to defeat its own Government, and even though Communists in the other State were not to succeed in similar efforts, nevertheless, the Communists in each State were to conduct a war for the defeat of his State on his own front. That is the doctrine of revolutionary defeatism with which we have to deal. It is no use saying, "But this is a war for political liberty," because the Communist creed has no place for political liberty. It advocates political liberty in an Amendment on the Order Paper, but only so that it may destroy political liberty when an opportunity comes. The whole Communist creed is that when it can it will deal with its political opponents with a merciless ferocity comparable with that of Nazism itself. So we are dealing not with passionate men who stray over the line, but with a conspiracy, a sixth column, whose endeavour it is to impede our efforts at national survival.

In those circumstances, I say that the Government are entitled to take action against attempts of that sort in the middle of the war. It is not disputed that if the Communists are trying to impede our war effort, the Government are entitled to take action, but what is said by those who are opposed to the Government's action is that that action should not have been under Regulation 2D, but under Regulation 2C, which involves certain judicial processes. Looking at the facts, I would say that if action has to be taken, it is more appropriate to this particular case to take it under a regulation which enables one to close the newspaper, and particularly not to allow it to reappear under another name or another guise, which the other regulation would not prevent. The two hon. Members who have spoken have advocated action under Regulation 2C; let us examine what that Regulation is. It states that the Home Secretary shall first give notice in writing to the newspaper that action will be taken against it unless it corrects its articles. The Home Secretary then has to wait to see whether the newspaper again gets over the line, and if it is foolish enough to do that, the Home Secretary has to prosecute. I suppose that with the amount of time that would have to be allowed for appeals, the whole procedure

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[Mr. Lees-Smith.]

would take between six weeks and two months. Then, if the prosecution were successful and there were a fine imposed, or even a sentence of imprisonment, the paper would still go on. [HON. MEMBERS: "No."] Yes. It could still go on under another name, and then the whole rigmarole would have to be gone through again.

I do not think this procedure would deal with the problem, even if the newspaper were not allowed to go on after a verdict had been obtained, because as I read the situation it would not be necessary for the newspaper ever to publish any one article which by itself would break any regulation. That indeed does not seem to have been the technique which has been adopted. But if a newspaper day after day gives the whole of its space to the inevitable dislocation arising out of the war, the hardships arising out of the blackout, the evacuation of population or the delays on the railways, the hardships arising out of problems of soldiers' leave or even the inevitable mistakes which the Government may make—if a newspaper gives the whole of its news to these things and never criticises Hitler, and if, indeed, when Hitler commits some new act of aggression it tries to explain it away, as the "Daily Worker" did the invasion of Norway, when it said it was a reply to our gross breaches of international law—if a newspaper does these things, then in the end it produces a distortion of views about the war which will impede our war effort without breaking any single regulation, and will do so by the very methods which I think Dr. Goebbels would probably recommend.

These are serious times. We have to counteract such attempts in the most speedy and effective way, and the most speedy and effective way of doing so is under Regulation 2D and not under Regulation 2C. I notice that both hon. Members seemed to suggest that even if the newspaper was conducting an agitation which, if it succeeded, would impede our war effort, nevertheless Ministers should not use their executive powers which the House has given them. I would point out, however, that it is now clear that one of the reasons democracy in Germany perished was that Ministers there were afraid to use the powers which they had on paper. The hon. Member for Ebbw Vale (Mr. Bevan), in particular, appealed to us on behalf of democracy, and said that this action under Regulation 2D was an abandonment of democracy. I do not agree in the least. I think that when Parliament has given powers to a Minister and that Minister exercises those powers and brings his action for Debate on the Floor of the House, and asks for it to be finally judged by a vote in the House, that is just as democratic as would be shifting the matter on to a judge in a court of law. The vast majority of those with whom I usually associate support the action of the Home Secretary, and they support it particularly, not perhaps on any ground which I have so far stated, but on one simple, instinctive ground, which is that they believe the object of the "Daily Worker" is to slow down our war production and, therefore, they support any action which may be necessary to counter those who are endeavouring to deprive the men in the Forces of the means to defend their lives.

**Mr. Gallacher** (Fife, West): Many of us here took part in the pioneer days of the Socialist movement. I am quite certain that, in those days, any Member would have hotly and indignantly repudiated any such suggestion as that he could foresee such a situation as this arising. I have met, in this House and outside, very many Liberal intellectuals. They have protested to me their devotion to the Press and to the freedom of speech, and time and again they have said that they would defend the freedom of the Press and freedom of speech even on the part of their bitterest enemies, and even if the expressions were of the most obnoxious views. And now the "Daily Worker," one small paper, has been suppressed. Any amount of prejudice can be aroused in time of war, and the speech to which we have just listened is a speech to arouse prejudice and to destroy judgment. Why did the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Keighley (Mr. Lees-Smith) refer to the Lenin thesis? Why did he not refer to his own thesis, which I will read to him? It is the thesis of Members of this side of the House, it is his own thesis and the thesis of the Secretary of State for the Home Department:

"If a war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working classes and their

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parliamentary representatives in the countries involved, supported by the co-ordinating activity of the International Socialist Bureau, to exert every effort in order to prevent the outbreak of war by means they consider most effective, which naturally vary according to the sharpening of the class struggles and the sharpening of the political situation. In case war should break out anyway, it is their duty to intervene in favour of its speedy termination and with all their powers to utilise the economic and political crisis created by the war to arouse the people and thereby hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule. . . . Proclaim your will in every form and in all places; raise your protest in the parliaments with all your force; unite in great mass demonstrations; use every means that the organisations and strength of the proletariat place at your disposal. To the capitalist world of exploitation and mass murder, oppose in this way the proletarian world of peace and fraternity of peoples."

That is his own thesis. It is the thesis of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and it is the thesis of the Lord Privy Seal and of the Minister of Labour. It is so easy to make a speech of the kind to which we have just listened, which is approved and supported by the Home Secretary.

**Mr. H. Morrison:** What is the date of the thesis?

**Mr. Gallacher:** 1912. Why did the right hon. Gentleman not give the date of Lenin's thesis? Lenin's thesis was prepared following and on the basis of that resolution. The issue before us is the question of a small daily paper, the only paper in opposition to the Government. I am sorry that the ex-Communists should try to distract the attention of the Minister while I am speaking. It is very significant that the Minister surrounds himself with ex-Communists—one at his side and one behind—in order to get what inside information he can. But the question is that of the only national daily paper in this country which was definitely opposed to the Government. Every other national daily newspaper in this country is now in the hands of the big millionaire financiers, and this is the only daily newspaper owned by the workers, run by the workers, and maintained by the workers. The Home Secretary is in a position now where he can have his agents in the trade unions, the co-operative societies, the Labour movement, and the Communist movement. He can obtain information of all kinds, and he knows all about the finances of the "Daily Worker." The main thing is that it is the one daily paper opposed to the Government. The millionaire Press brags about its great circulation, and the millionaire financiers have not only that enormous circulation, but they have the monopoly of the B.B.C. Again I say that the one small daily paper belonging to the working classes is suppressed.

As has been pointed out, it is significant that on the same day there are two actions—conscription of labour and suppression of the "Daily Worker." I asked a question at a terrific meeting in St. Andrew's Hall on Saturday night, and I put it to the Home Secretary. I ask the Home Secretary, Is it not the case that this action coincides with and is intended to suppress opposition to conscription of labour introduced by the Minister of Labour? I said to the audience that the Minister of Home Affairs replied that there was no connection between the two actions, and there was a burst of laughter which almost brought down the building. I can quite easily enter into a discussion on all the political matters which have been raised The reason for this action is not only to arouse political prejudice but to distract attention from one simple issue. The "Daily Worker" has opposed the Government all along. Why take action now? Anyone who goes around the country can feel that a big change is taking place and that there is lack of confidence in the Government. It is recognised that a special attitude has been adopted towards the Prime Minister, but, apart from that, no one can say that the Government have the confidence of great masses of the people—very much the reverse—and because of this growing feeling of opposition this action is taken against the "Daily Worker."

The Mover of the Motion said that, when the attack was made on London by the German bombers, and when the worst effect of it was felt, the "Daily Worker" had not been able to break the morale of the people. It never attempted to break the morale of the people. There is continual talk about the "Daily Worker" exploiting grievances. There is a world of difference between exploiting grievances and proposing remedies—[*Interruption*] I do not like the hon. Member for Wood Green (Mr. Baxter) chipping in. He referred to the "Daily Worker" as indecent, yet he wrote an article in a Sunday paper recently in which he referred

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[Mr. Gallacher.]
to Mussolini as a second-class brain. He debated with me at Manchester University two years ago on the policy of the National Government and presented before the students the late Neville Chamberlain and Mussolini as the two greatest men in Europe. Do not talk about indecency. Think of your own moral, political and journalistic prostitution.

**Mr. Baxter:** I remember very well the debate at Manchester, in which the hon. Member was even more violent and less logical than usual. I described what I had seen at first hand, Mr. Chamberlain's visit to Rome, and I prophesied then that the good that would come out of that would be very great, and I still think that prophecy will come true.

**Mr. Gallacher:** I was dealing with the statement that the " Daily Worker " had killed morale. The " Daily Worker " not only did not try to break morale, but I assert here, before the shelter queen or anyone else, that the " Daily Worker " played a very big part in strengthening the morale of the people of London. It advocated and encouraged the opening of the tubes and tunnels. It was the first to advocate shelter committees in order to unify and maintain the morale of the people. Will the Minister deny that? The actions and campaigns of the " Daily Worker " did an enormous amount to strengthen the unity and the morale of the people of London. The facts are on record. The tubes and tunnels are open, and the committees are in existence. With regard to factories, sabotage has been mentioned. Sabotage is a crime, and we are not criminals. Never in the history of Communism has there been a Communist who has advocated, approved or participated in sabotage. It is utterly inconceivable. We have supported workers in the factories who have grievances. It is said that the Communists are responsible for agitation in the factories and are behind the shop stewards. There was agitation in the factories in the last war, and there were shop stewards, and there was no Communist backing. The Home Secretary and the Minister of Labour were supporters of the shop stewards during the last war.

Men and women do not go out on strike because someone asks them to go, or agitates. It is a most serious question for a worker to go out on strike. Would any Member for any constituency say that if I and all the finest agitators in the Communist party went to their area, we could bring pits or factories out on strike? Workers come out on strike only when they have a grievance which they feel cannot be settled in any other way. In any strikes which have taken place since the war started the root cause has been the rotten organisation in the factories. One of the reasons for its suppression is that the " Daily Worker " has exposed day after day the rotten profiteering and the corruption in the ruling class, especially among the employers. It was so bad in some places that it had to be stopped. It was stopped in Rootes' factory, where there was every kind of wasted effort and delay—men doing nothing when they ought to have been employed. In a great aircraft factory in the Midlands during December 26,000 hours were lost through waiting time—men finishing a job and hanging about waiting for another. The " Daily Worker " day after day has exposed the disorganisation of the factories and the fact that it is the employers who are responsible for it and for the failure to get effective production.

The " Daily Worker " has exposed, and is entitled to expose, the financial corruption in this country and the game that financiers are playing. Read the financial papers and see what is going on. Did they come forward when there was an appeal for interest-free loans? Did they came forward in response to Sir Robert Kindersley's appeal for the 2½ per cent. loan? Was any conscription applied to them? Can the Home Secretary show me one instance where the rights and privileges of land and property have been interefered with? The " Daily Worker " has exposed that. It has carried on a consistent campaign for bomb-proof shelters, which was the policy of the Secretary of State before he became a Minister. When he became Secretary of State he took over the job and policy of his predecessor. The " Daily Worker " has carried on a campaign, all the time to unify the effort of the people and strengthen their morale. I will not ask the Tory representatives in the Government, but I will ask any Labour representative, what is the one mighty force that can maintain a stand against

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the advance of Fascism? It is a powerful, united, independent working-class movement. That is what the "Daily Worker" has always advocated.

Mention has been made of Norway. Before Norway was invaded, the Communist Press was closed down and the Communists were hounded by the Tories. Quisling was not a Communist; he was a friend of the Tory party and a Commander of the British Empire. While the Communists were being hounded and suppressed, Quisling was preparing the Nazi victory over Norway. In regard to France, I would like to quote what is familiar with most Members. Tom Clarke, writing in "Reynolds Newspaper" on 30th June, 1940, said:

> "Before Petain put out the light in France he put out the newspapers, and then, while the people were blind and deaf to what was going on, he signed away their independence."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George) said on 30th June:

> "I hear rumours that there is a disposition in high quarters to emulate the folly of the French Government in fettering the Press and persecuting the free expression of opinion. It is said that our Government contemplate a more rigid censorship and there are hints that those who indulge in criticism may be roughly handled. A policy of that kind would be sheer madness."

In France the suppression took place. I would remind the Home Secretary that at the Labour conference last year a gentleman named Blum justified the suppression of "Humanité" and the gaoling of the Communists, and declared, to the cheers of the assembled delegates, that France was united for victory. He went back to France with the cheers of the Labour delegates ringing in his ears, and walked into a concentration camp. The betrayal of France by the ruling class was being carried out while he was speaking at the Labour party conference.

The "Daily Worker" has fought consistently for a united, independent working-class on the question of shelters, and against conscription. It has fought on the question of wages and the cost of living. It has worked consistently on the lines set out by the hon. Member for Llanelly (Mr. J. Griffiths) when he spoke the other day in the House about the fact that the big monopolies were stepping in everywhere and getting a death-grip on the State and the people of this country. There is not a control of any kind in the country but is in the hands of representatives of the big monopolies. The "Daily Worker" has fought against that. It has fought for a clear policy in relation to food instead of the disorganised food control that is depriving the people of the necessaries of life. It has advocated the taking over of all food stocks and the taking of country houses and big hotels for use as rest homes for soldiers and evacuees. It has advocated the taking over of food stocks and the appointment of a real democratic committee to work out a policy to ensure that the masses of the people have adequate supplies. The "Daily Worker" has drawn attention to the grievances of soldiers and their dependants and put forward proposals on their behalf. On many of them, concessions have had to be made. There is not a grievance of any kind affecting workers, soldiers and their dependants, the aged and the impoverished which the "Daily Worker" has not ventilated and for the remedy of which it has not put forward concrete proposals. Because of this, the influence of the "Daily Worker" has been growing throughout the country. There is nothing subversive about it.

If two Tory Ministers had got up in the House, and one had put forward the conscription of labour and the other had put forward the suppression of the "Daily Worker," they could never have got those proposals through. It has taken two Labour Members, two representatives, presumably, of the working class, to carry through these measures of reaction. It cannot stop there. The policy of appeasement has always been a hopeless failure. The Tories have always been howling for blood and they do not stop howling when a concession is made to them, such as the suppression of the "Daily Worker." They howl the louder. The Minister cannot stop there. It is not just a question of the Communists. The hon. Member who spoke from the Liberal benches said that the Government might go to the "News Chronicle." I wonder whether Members are aware that there are certain strong forces in this country which believe that there should be only a very limited number of national newspapers. The "News Chronicle" is not one of them, nor is the "Daily Herald." Either the Minister goes back on what he

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[Mr. Gallacher.]

has done, or he will be driven more and more by the forces behind him towards the Nazification of this country. There has been talk about our attitude before the war and since. Before the war, when the Labour leaders put forward the policy of collective security, they were accused of being "out for war." They always repudiated this, and the present Secretary of State for Home Affairs said in a pamphlet:

> "Sometimes Members opposite have accused us wrongly and unjustly of desiring war with Germany and Italy. It is untrue, and they know it is untrue."

Now the Labour leaders pick up that Tory slander and use it against the Communists. The "Daily Worker" carried on campaign after campaign for a peace front in this country, for a union of the peace forces throughout Europe. It is true that at the outbreak of war we were affected by our intense hatred of Fascism, by our intense hatred of Hitlerism.

**Mr. Thurtle:** Not for long.

**Mr. Gallacher:** It is still true. We hate Hitlerism in whatever form it may manifest itself. On the editorial board of the "Daily Worker" are four lads who were fighting in Spain against Hitler and Mussolini when the Members of this House were supporting Hitler and Mussolini through the treacherous policy of non-intervention. And many more of our lads are lying dead there. Do you think we forget those lads? Do we forget our comrades in the concentration camps in Germany? [*Interruption.*] No. Do not raise these confusing issues. These are matters for political discussion. The Minister may have one opinion and I may have another. We may have deep differences politically on how a question of this character should be faced. Members here know that I hold strong views on some things and that they hold strong views on others. I have never been averse from discussing them, but what are we coming to if, when we disagree, some Members are in a position where they are able to bring in a policeman and say, "That is finished"?

Many times I have disagreed with the Minister. On many occasions, during the last war especially, I was in very close agreement with him, and at that time the Minister thought I was a nice little fellow. Not the Minister himself, but representatives of the group with which he was associated, came to see me in Glasgow to get the shop stewards together. J. R. MacDonald, who was Prime Minister on two occasions, came to Glasgow—the hon. Member for Seaham (Mr. Shinwell) knows this is true—to get me to bring the shop stewards together in order to discuss what we could do in order to strengthen the fight on behalf of the lads who were suffering as conscientious objectors. But that business has died away. That is only another digression. I say that differences in political outlook, and different interpretations of different issues, are subjects for political discussion and not for the policeman. I charge the Minister with having allowed political prejudice and the drive from the big millionaire Press and from big monopoly capitalists to affect his judgment. He has taken a step that can easily lead to disastrous consequences as regards the freedom of the Press in this country.

I always say that I will not allow any digressions to sidetrack me in my speeches, but sooner or later some crop up, and now I want to read a short statement which I have been authorised to read. It is a very short statement on behalf of the editorial board of the "Daily Worker." I am authorised to declare that the "Daily Worker" is prepared to face any trial and to answer any alleged charge of contravening the law. I ask the House to insist upon the removal of the ban upon the "Daily Worker," and express our readiness to discuss any questions of news presentation which it is alleged has led to the present suppression of the "Daily Worker." Last week I asked the Minister whether he would receive a deputation to discuss the question. I asked him to receive representatives of the "Daily Worker" board to put the cards on the table. Let us face the question whether it is or is not possible to run a small and independent working-class opposition paper. That is the all-important question at the moment.

**Mr. Erskine Hill** (Edinburgh, North): Some hon. Members seem to think that there is great prejudice here because there is no possibility of an appeal to a court of law. The point was taken up, I think, in the last Debate by the Attorney-General. It goes so far to the root of the matter, that I shall preface my few remarks by asking the House to consider for a moment the effect of Regulation

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94B. The House will remember that it gives the Home Secretary power to make an order for taking possession of the printing press under the control of any person and belonging to a newspaper. The Regulation says that when the Home Secretary is satisfied that the newspaper comes under 2D he may make such an order with respect to the printing press or presses, as the case may be, under the control of that person, as is authorised by paragraph (1) of 94A. That takes us back to the procedure under 2C, and gives an appeal to the court. If my hon. and learned Friend opposite will look at the Regulation——

**Mr. Pritt:** I have looked at it several times. Unless the press is owned by the newspaper, the person cannot go to the court.

**Mr. Erskine Hill:** Perhaps my hon. and learned Friend would like to see the passage from the OFFICIAL REPORT in which the Attorney-General, dealing with the matter, said:

"The right of appeal under 94A to the court, which is a limited right, will exist if action is taken under 94B."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 21st July, 1940; col. 1335, Vol. 363.]

If my learned Friend would do me the justice of looking at it for himself, he will see that 94B refers back to 94A, and that there is exactly the same right of appeal.

**Mr. Pritt:** I was making one very small point, which is that the only person who can go to the court is the owner of the press, and that if the newspaper does not own the press the newspaper cannot go into the court.

**Mr. Erskine Hill:** There is the same right of appeal as that which was raised in the last Debate, when the Home Secretary was asked to consider making the two rights the same. They are the same. There is a further point. It is clear that, in that Debate, the Home Secretary was given a discretion, and I cannot see what use it is to give the Home Secretary a discretion unless he is to be entitled to exercise it. I can find nothing in the Debate —and I have read it over several times— which would prevent the Home Secretary from exercising that discretion. What the House may be entitled to ask is, not whether he should have proceeded in that particular way at all, but whether he exercised his discretion properly when he did so. In other words, do the passages complained of make it a proper exercise by the Home Secretary of his discretion? That, I submit, is not a difficult question for the House. It is not only the most appropriate Regulation which specifically deals with the question of newspapers but it is the only one to do so.

There was precedent for it in Scotland in the last war, in the case of the suppression of the paper known as the "Vanguard," and I can give the House that information not because of my legal knowledge but because I was one of the soldiers sent to suppress the paper. I can therefore support the fact that there is nothing new in the action of the Home Secretary. But supposing I was wrong and supposing the Home Secretary had to choose between the slow action of 2C and the much more effective and quick action of 2D, in these times, which hon. Members have been saying are times when anything may happen quickly, surely we must all support the Home Secretary in taking effective action if he is to take action at all. I want to tell the House of the delays that happen. You give notice to a man that you are going to proceed against him under 2C if he persists. That man may mend his ways for a few weeks; he may delay indefinitely, and then at the most critical time of all, when you most want the support of the publication for the national war effort, he commits a crime when it is too late to deal with it. You then have to proceed with the comparatively slow methods of the law, which are meant for times of peace and not for times of war. You must proceed by indictment. It is some time before the case is heard. There may be an appeal from the decision. All these things take time, and when the nation is in danger there is no time for that sort of thing. I want briefly to run over the sort of things which have been said, in this case, in order to indicate how well advised the Home Secretary has been in the action which he has taken. On 24th September the leading article said:

'"The torpedoing of 85 children between the ages of 5 and 15 years last week is a horrible event. All these children and other innocent people are the victims of a bloody struggle which will go on as long as the people permit the rulers of the Empires, in Berlin, London and Washington to continue their desperate conflict for the mastery of the riches of the world at the expense of the working people of the world and even of their children"

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[Mr. Hill.]

That would only affect London, because I cannot imagine it being read throughout Germany. On 29th October, when Greece came into the war, this is what was said:

> "British workers are being asked to lay down their lives for poor little Greece. The Greek rulers are no more worth dying for than the rulers of Poland, Finland, Rumania, etc."

What could discourage the workers more from working for our cause than that sort of thing? Something has been said about men fighting to save this right of free speech. I wonder who is more the enemy of free speech in this country—Hitler, Stalin, the Communists or my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary?

There are many hon. Members who, like myself, have sons fighting in this war, and we should be appalled at the thought that this sort of talk—and if it were not for the shortage of time I could give innumerable other instances—might cause your children and mine, now in the active line, to have to face the danger of shortage of supplies. Could any action be more calculated to delay and impede the war effort? So, is it possible to think of a more suitable case for the Home Secretary to use every power he has in his hands? I support the Home Secretary in every way in the action he has taken. I would only say that he has acted none too soon, and I am sure he can count on the support of the great majority of this House if he has to take further action arising out of the action already taken—particularly, if, as a result of his action, efforts are made in the works to retaliate for what has been done, I hope he will proceed even further, because I am certain that, throughout the country, the people are counting on the Home Secretary and the Government to take action to see that the young men of this country who are fighting for us are not let down by talk which is subversive and dangerous, and to which in time of war an end must be put.

**Sir Percy Harris** (Bethnal Green, South-West): Though I have put my name to the Amendment now before the House, I am glad we have had this most interesting Debate. It would be a very bad day for Parliament and democracy if a paper could be closed down without discussion in the House of Commons. The liberty of the Press is the life blood of Parliamentary government. But unlike the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Fife (Mr. Gallacher), not even the Mover of the Motion could defend the recent policy of the "Daily Worker." He asked the House of Commons to express its destestation of the propaganda of the "Daily Worker" in relation to the war in words which were really stronger than the Amendment. The reason why hon. Members find fault with the Government, as I understand it, is in regard to the procedure followed. The hon. and learned Member who has just sat down has put up a very strong case for the use of the powers exercised by my right hon. Friend. As far as I am concerned, my prejudice is always in favour of the procedure of a court of law and, in my traditional conservatism, in favour of respect for tradition. If the other machinery had been followed it would have been slower, but there is every reason to believe that in the end the result would have been the same.

It is true that the powers under Regulation 2 (*d*) were given to the Home Secretary after very considerable discussion, and that there was a Division in the House when those powers were asked for. I do not think anybody in the House likes this kind of procedure. It savours much too much of the Gestapo and puts too much power in the hands of a Minister. Perhaps since the Minister has now exercised those powers, the Regulation might be amended. It would meet a good deal of the criticism, if the accused were brought before a court of law and given the opportunity to prove that they had no desire to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war.

**Mr. Silverman** (Nelson and Colne): That is precisely what the accused person could have done if the Home Secretary had proceeded under 2 (*c*) and 94 (*a*) instead of under 2 (*d*) and 94 (*b*).

**Sir P. Harris:** I appreciate that; but I am not prepared, at what is probably the most critical period of the war, to fall foul of the Government on a question of procedure. No doubt, the Home Secretary will show why he found it necessary to use this more autocratic but quicker procedure. It is a very poor consolation to the hon. Member for West Fife (Mr Gallacher), but surely we can assume that the other machinery might have been put into operation many weeks ago, and that

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the results by this time might have been the same. The nation is fighting for its existence, and for everything that makes life worth living. I have had to swallow during the last 18 months many unpleasant truths. I have had to swallow Regulation 18B, which is an attack on rights far more ancient even than the liberty of the Press. Those rights go back to Magna Charta and the principle of Habeas Corpus. There are few people who doubt that something of the kind is necessary in this war. We have had to swallow conscription, which was against the principles of most of us—certainly, against my principles—but nobody doubts that in the peculiar circumstances of this war it was necessary to mobilise all the man-power of the nation. Every soldier called up under the Military Service Act has to forfeit all his liberties and all his rights. It does not seem much in those circumstances, to submit to the use of this machinery, provided that the Home Secretary can make his case. He has already stated a case, when he was challenged the other day at question-time. I look to him now to explain why he has thought fit to use these quicker, but more autocratic, powers.

I think that the Debate has been a warning to the Home Secretary that the House is keeping a watchful eye upon him, and that he must be sparing in the use of these powers. The Government must expect to receive much Press criticism. It was criticism which brought down the last Government. Criticism is good for all Governments. After a time Governments without criticism begin to feel that they cannot do wrong. I think that the House is entitled to a specific guarantee from the Government that all these infringements of the liberties of the subject will be swept away with the armistice. After the last war D.O.R.A. lingered on for many years, although the need for it had expired. If the House is now to give a vote of confidence to the Home Secretary we have a right to ask, first, that these autocratic powers shall be used with discretion, and, secondly, that when the war is over, and the need for such powers is at an end, they shall be completely swept away.

**Mr. Pritt** (Hammersmith, North): I will not bother the right hon. Member for South-West Bethnal Green (Sir P. Harris) with an investigation of how much anti-Liberal stuff a Liberal can swallow. There seems to be no limit to what a Liberal can swallow nowadays. This is a Debate about the "Daily Worker" and the "Week." Nobody has said anything about the "Week." I do not want to take up much time with it; I want only to point out that it is a publication which has been suppressed, which has told the country a great many things from time to time which the country would not otherwise have known, and that the suppression is something which ought not to be wholly ignored. I want to say that naturally I am speaking mostly about the production of the "Daily Worker." I suppose it is really commonplace to say—and I hope that it is not an injustice—that at least 90 per cent. of the people who will go into the Government Lobby this evening have not seen a copy of the "Daily Worker" for months.

**Mr. Liddall** (Lincoln): And do not want to.

**Mr. Pritt:** And do not want to, so long as they can vote in complete and utter ignorance of anything that is involved. I will tell you a little about the "Daily Worker," and I will tell the truth, although it will no doubt lead to many laughs when I say that it has a circulation double that of the membership of the Communist party.

**Mr. Liddall:** Who pays for them?

**Mr. Pritt:** You will hear the facts one by one if you will keep your silly mouths shut. The actual number of people normally reading it is very much larger than its normal sale. I have had to investigate this very closely myself in circumstances which, while not political, are litigious, and it is very important for accuracy. It is financed entirely, as far as it is not financed by the sales of its copies, and the very modest amount of advertisement revenue, by bona fide subscriptions from innumerable members of the British public, who, incidentally, do not include myself. I have never given it a penny except what I have paid for my daily copy, nor the "Week." There is no doubt that for many years, indeed, I think, during the whole course of its career, it has not been subsidised by anybody or even had subscriptions from anybody, except possibly that hysterical

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[Mr. Pritt.]

fool Mr. Victor Gollancz, and for some strange reason the hon. Member for Barnstaple (Sir R. Acland) thought he could reinforce his views. I do not agree with everything in either the "Daily Worker" or the "Week," but I support the newspaper in general, and I certainly could not vote for a Motion which started by saying —[*Interruption*]. I do not want to take up time by making more than half the speech that I have prepared. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear."] I do not know whether that is a reason that appeals to the chatterboxes opposite, but I will try the one most likely to appeal to them, and if they do not keep quiet, I will make the whole of the speech. But for the moment I will proceed to my half.

The "Daily Worker" has very often been right, and very often it has been the only newspaper that has been right. Let me take one very remarkable illustration. Last summer there was an appeal to the workers of the country to work overtime for long hours for seven days every week, and to forgo holidays and so on. The whole Press supported it, and the Government supported it. The "Daily Worker," and the "Daily Worker" alone—never mind its motives, personally, I think they were good—said that if people were compelled to do so, it would reduce output. Every industrial psychologist in the world, and every factory manager in the world, knew perfectly well that the "Daily Worker" was right; and in due course all Ministers, as they always do, began saying, not that the "Daily Worker" was right, but that it would be wrong to ask the factory workers to do all that.

The hon. and learned Member for North Edinburgh (Mr. Erskine Hill) asserted that the "Daily Worker" by saying that the Greeks were indulging in an Imperialist war was leading to a diminution of the output of ammunition. The output of ammunition had been diminished ten times as much by the stupid mismanagement of the factories as it could ever be diminished by anything the "Daily Worker" says. That really is the picture of a very great deal of what is said in defence of the "Daily Worker" by people who agree, and by those who do not, that if you do not have criticism you will continue to have stupidity, waste and inefficiency in factories, thus actually diminishing output.

I want to say one other thing about the "Daily Worker." Professor Haldane is the chairman of the editorial board of the "Daily Worker." Some papers say that is by some strange chance and, of course, like to explain it away. But it is not by strange chance; it is by deliberate choice. Who is Professor Haldane? He is one of the two or three greatest scientists in the world and one of the most intelligent people in England. [*Interruption.*] You will get the whole speech if you are not careful. Professor Haldane, for many months during the war and before it, has almost daily risked his life in dangerous experiments for the benefit of this country, and when the Home Secretary sent somebody to serve a notice on him I should not have been a bit surprised to have been told that he had been taken out of some appallingly dangerous poisonous tank to have the notice served upon him. If Professor Haldane is a traitor, let us have a few more traitors. Not a single article by the "Daily Worker" has been picked out for condemnation. One of the strongest speakers against it was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Keighley (Mr. Lees-Smith), who said, I think, that there was no article which could be picked out——

**Mr. Lees-Smith:** I did not say that.

**Mr. Pritt:** Well, it does not matter what the right hon. Gentleman said anyhow. [*Interruption.*] I want to deal with this, because it is a significant fact——

**Mr. Logan:** Deal with it as the House wants it to be dealt with, not as if you were in a court of law.

**Mr. Pritt:** It is a very significant thing that no article can be picked out. The hon. and learned Member for North Edinburgh quoted articles in September and October, and one other Member quoted an article from an issue of September, 1939, and another on the same date in the summer of 1940. The Home Secretary will be the first person to tell us that he did not act on those in January, 1941, and the significance of no particular article being quoted is this, and here, if I may, I would like to speak as a lawyer for a moment. If you make any particular charge against a person or paper or anybody else, and you have to confess that

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you cannot adduce a single instance and merely say that there is a general tendency, you are regarded by lawyers as not having much of a case. If a statement of claim were made on those lines, it would be struck out on the ground that there was no case at all. That is a very significant condemnation of the Government's case.

I want now to say a few words about the various allegations that are in terms made against the "Daily Worker." It is said to be pro-Hitler. I have read it for a very long time, but I have never been able to find a single passage that could possibly be said to be pro-Hitler.

**Mr. Thurtle:** Those who are not for us are against us.

**Mr. Pritt:** The doctrine of the hon. Member who interrupted seems to be that the Government should suppress any newspaper unless it shouts nonsense all the time. Then, it is said that the "Daily Worker" advocates the immediate stoppage of the war. It does not, although there is a strong body of opinion in this country which does advocate the immedate stoppage of the war. It is to be found in the upper classes, and the main guarantee against that body is the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. But I would not trust that body for one moment unless there was somebody to look after it. It is then said that the "Daily Worker" advocates sabotage in the factories. A simple answer to that allegation is that it does not. Another answer is this: Do you not suppose that if it could be suggested at all plausibly that something in the "Daily Worker" advocated the deadly offence of sabotage, even this Government, which shuns the courts like the devil holy water, would immediately have to prosecute the "Daily Worker"? I suggest that to tell the public—I do not think the Home Secretary does so, but many people do—that this newspaper does these things is very foolish. It is calculated very much to impede the war effort if you tell the whole world, and incidentally tell the Germans, that a newspaper is following those serious lines when at the same time everybody knows that newspaper has a circulation very little smaller than that of the "Times," larger than the "Manchester Guardian," larger than the "Yorkshire Post" some time ago, although it may have gone up. To tell the world untruly at one and the same time that the newspaper is advocating sabotage and that it is having a large and increased sale is to impede the war effort. It was noticeable that the Press did much the same thing about the People's Convention. The Press started by saying that it was a wretched stop-the-war agitation, and then when it saw the very large support which the People's Convention was obtaining in the country, the Press told the truth and said quite plainly that the People's Convention was not advocating the stopping of the war but the obtaining of a majority in the country to put a People's Government, by legitimate means, in the place of other Governments.

I am anxious not to say anything that has been sufficiently said already. For that reason I can probably pass over some of the things I might have said about the "Daily Worker" exploiting the grievances of the public. If every newspaper in the country were exploiting grievances, the "Daily Worker," while not worthy of suppression because it was also doing so, would be a far less important newspaper. But when you have rallied the whole Press of the country on one side and left the "Daily Worker" alone on the other, the "Daily Worker" would be neglecting its duty if it did not give a legitimate voice to grievances. I think the Home Secretary said that the "Daily Worker" exaggerated those grievances. I do not know how he judges that, because it is not he who is suffering the grievances, but other people. The grievances should be voiced and public opinion should be left to work out whether they are fair and honest or not, and certainly a newspaper should not be suppressed because it is thought that the way in which it deals with the grievances is an exaggeration.

That brings me to a cardinal point. There are grievances in this country, but I do not want to discuss them at great length. The cardinal point, and the thing of the greatest importance to the House and country, and the thing in regard to which the suppression of the "Daily Worker," however carried out, has a very ill effect, is the question of how you are to deal with grievances. There are two ways and both of them are pretty old. The older and simpler one is to ignore

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[Mr. Pritt.]

the grievances and suppress statements on them, and, if you can manage it, ill-treat the people voicing them. It is the easiest way to win a quarrel and the easiest way to lose the world. If you can only suppress grievances you can carry on for a time, but we know some of the results from what has been done in France and in Germany. The other way to deal with grievances is to ventilate them, and, of course, remedy them. It is very nice to think that you might be able to remedy them without ventilating them, but unfortunately life does not work that way.

The moment your suppress criticism of any Government, whether it be because it is weak, or because it is an enemy of the working classes, or a friend, you diminish efficiency and diminish the chance of getting grievances remedied. In effect, you are doing exactly what has been often described as putting a plaster over a boil and pretending it has been cured. [An HON. MEMBER: "That is what they are doing in Russia."] If you get me on Russia goodness knows how long I shall take. I will keep off Russia and if possible off interruptions. The Home Secretary tells us as one of the reasons why the "Daily Worker" ought to be suppressed that it is because it was pretending that our hardships and sufferings are unnecessary and that our Government are callous and selfish. But people, who most fully and absolutely accept the war in all its implications, still think there are unnecessary hardships and sufferings which might be diminished or spread over the rich classes, that there ought to be greater efficiency, and that, for instance, shipping might be put to better use. Unless there is a right of criticism, you destroy your own efficiency and your own war effort. That, bluntly, is the position. The Home Secretary by suppressing the "Daily Worker" is to all intents and purposes wiping out the whole public expression of criticism in this country. I do not say that every newspaper will not offer criticism from time to time, but they can be cajoled, warned and knighted. There are a million ways of securing that a newspaper will not attack the Government, when everyone knows perfectly well that by allowing people to attack the Government immense improvements would be made in national efficiency and not the reverse.

There are many simple-minded people who take an almost Sunday-school view of the functions of the working classes in this war. They want the working classes to give up their wages, to give up their conditions, very often to give up their homes and abandon the whole of their rights, to submit patiently to industrial conscription, to suffer all the evils of inefficient air-raid protection, to see their shop stewards who might have protected them removed one by one from their work. They want the working classes to put up with profiteering and rising food prices, and the inefficiency, jobbery and waste that they see going on all round them in the factories, and to watch their employers carefully building up their own positions, carefully withholding their processes from their competitors so that their position after the war will be perfectly strong. They want the workers, simply and quietly, to submit to the whole of that in the name of patriotism, and the more widely we can persuade the workers to do that, the happier will Colonel Blimp be, and the more you can suppress the "Daily Worker" the easier it will be to cajole some of the working classes. To do that greatly diminishes the war effort, in which hon. Members opposite profess to be so interested. It leads to inefficiency and not efficiency. It leads to loss of spirit and not to courage.

People talk, rightly, about the vital necessity of building up and maintaining the spirit of the country. You cannot build up the spirit of the workers by getting them to submit to what I have described. You have to tell them what is to happen to them. They hate Hitler all right. They hated Hitler while people opposite were slobbering over him and building up his strength. But they also hate the oppression of themselves by the ruling class of this country. Many of them want to know what is to happen now and they all want to know what is to happen afterwards. They do not think it is a choice between submitting to Hitler and submitting to their own ruling class. Unless you give them something to fight for you will not have their spirit behind you. The Home Secretary once said that everything depends on victory. They say the "Daily Worker" is weakening the

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will to victory, but they are weakening the will to victory if they do not tell the country what is to come out of it. What is to come out of victory? They would like to know what their future is to be. The last time they were told it was a war to end war. They are suspicious of these phrases.

What does Lord Halifax tell them now? He says that at the end of the war we are to co-operate with others to reconstruct the world so as not to have another war. It is the same thing seven times as long. If you want the working classes behind you, you have to let them see that they can have a decent world, and you will not let them see that if you will not allow propaganda for Socialism and Communism to be carried on side by side with propaganda for everything else. There are many people inside the House, and among the Government's backers and supporters, who would rather have Hitler than Socialism. If you go on like that, you will destroy the moral of the country.

I have taken up a good deal of time—(Hon. Members: "Hear, hear")—and there seems to be some division of opinion in the House as to whether I should go on or not. I will, therefore, say only this one thing more. It is not a peroration and it is not very important, but it is something which I should have said earlier, and in cutting down my speech I missed it. Among the evils which will be caused by this suppression is the driving of this movement underground. I will not mention the place or the date, although no doubt the Home Secretary knows it, of an incident that has come to my direct personal knowledge in the reaction of the working-class to the suppression of the "Daily Worker." There is a factory somewhere, making something—unless the employers are too inefficient—which normally buys 501 copies of the "Daily Worker." On the morning after the suppression it bought 2,000 copies. To be frank, no doubt much of the purchase was due to curiosity, but the fact remains that 2,000 pence were paid for 2,000 copies. A meeting of protest was held and the workers protested, by 2,000 votes to one, against the suppression of the "Daily Worker." By its own decision the meeting added half-an-hour to the normal dinner-hour stoppage in order to make its protest. I hear somebody say "sabotage," but all the working-class in the world could not do as much sabotage in 12 months, as the profit system does in five minutes.

**The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Herbert Morrison)**: It is perfectly proper that this discussion should have taken place. I, as Home Secretary, am responsible for the suppression of a newspaper, and I never thought that I should "get away with it" without challenge or criticism in the House of Commons. I was glad that the Prime Minister agreed, although he knew that only a small minority of the House was making the challenge, to give facilities for the discussion. The Debate has been, with the exception of the speech of the hon. and learned Member for North Hammersmith (Mr. Pritt), one of speeches of democrats to democrats. The hon. and learned Member made no particular claim that way and did not argue that point. Apart from that, those who have supported the Motion have rather argued the case as democrats for democrats. I am bound to say, from what I know of them, that some of them are rather exceptional and peculiar democrats. My hon. Friend the Member for Ebbw Vale (Mr. Bevan) was very strong on the point of democracy. He and I, with great friendship, have often differed in the Labour party, and he and I enjoy an argument. At one Labour party conference he kept me arguing until 4 o'clock in the morning. My hon. Friend and I have had great experience of Labour party democracy. If I wanted to find one distinguished Member of the party who, more often than any other, has set aside the democratic decisions of the majority of his colleagues, I think I should choose my hon. Friend the Member for Ebbw Vale. Therefore, his democracy is rather skin-deep. He speaks of democracy for himself and not so much for the other fellow.

Then I come to the hon. Member for West Fife (Mr. Gallacher). He and I belong to different political parties, but, he is quite right in saying that we have never hated each other, although we have disagreed about many matters. My hon. Friend was eloquent in the cause of democracy, the cause of the liberty of the Press, and the liberty of the subject, and was very condemnatory of any action by the Home Secretary which invaded those

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[Mr. Morrison.]

principles—principles to which I certainly subscribe as heartily as he does. But I have looked up the records of this House, and I find that far away in the days of peace, on 5th November, 1936, the hon. Member for West Fife was not too much concerned about the liberty of the subject, or taking people or papers to the courts of law, or giving them the right to argue their case. This was not in a critical emergency; it was in the relatively palmy days of peace. On the date mentioned the hon. Member put this question to the then Prime Minister:

"whether he will allot a day of Parliamentary time to discuss the refusal of the Secretary of State for the Home Department to ban the recent attempted march of the British Union of Fascists in the East End of London, which ultimately had to be prohibited by the Commissioner of Police after the assembly of blackshirts in the area had already led to disturbances; and whether, in view of the fact that this organisation is of a semi-military character, the Government will order its immediate disbanding?"—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 5th November, 1936; col. 235, Vol. 317.]

**Mr. Gallacher** *rose*——

**Mr. Morrison:** I would readily give way were not my time very limited, and if my hon. Friend will take it from me, as from one debater to another, he will do no good whatever by intervening in view of what is there in black and white. Then I come to the hon. and learned Member for North Hammersmith (Mr. Pritt). I was very watchful, as he no doubt expected I should be, because he knew I was taking this point and I had warned him that I should refer to him in this Debate. He wanted to know what my reference would be; I kindly told him. I did not much like doing so, but I thought I had better. He did not plead the democratic case, nor plead that this matter ought to have gone to the courts of law, nor did he argue that it was wrong for Ministers to have these powers of administrative law which were very strongly—and I do not complain about it—condemned by the hon. Baronet the Member for Barnstaple (Sir R. Acland) and referred to with some apprehension by my right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Bethnal Green (Sir P. Harris).

The hon. and learned Member for Hammersmith, whatever else he can claim, cannot claim to be a reasonable opponent of Ministers acting by administrative law: he cannot reasonably complain that we have not gone to the courts of law; nor can he reasonably stand as an upholder of the purity and the fairness and the complete divorcement of the Executive and the British judicial system. The basis of the argument behind this Motion has been the view that the judicial machine is independent of the Executive, and that when the Executive wishes to fetter the rights of the individual or the rights of a newspaper it should go to the courts, which are independent of the Executive. That is a perfectly fair argument, which I well understand, but I was very pleased indeed to find that that argument was not used by the hon. and learned Gentleman. Remember, he speaks not only as a distinguished lawyer, but as, at any rate, a very close associate of the Communist party, on the whole a very warm supporter of its policy, on the whole a very warm supporter of its newspaper. Of course, he has been a close associate and a warm supporter of the Communist party for some time. The Communists argue that we ought to have gone to the court. They have written to hon. Members of this House to the effect that I ought to have taken the case to the court, but my hon. and learned Friend does not argue that case. I will tell the House why: because he knew that I knew what he had written in 1933—a very significant year. This is what he wrote, on page 173 of a book published, by the way, by Mr. Gollancz, who has been referred to.

**Mr. Pritt:** You, and he and I were all together then, were we not?

**Mr. Morrison:** He has been referred to in rather scathing terms by my hon. and learned Friend. This is what my hon. and learned Friend wrote:

"The experience of Russia should, of course, be neither ignored nor slavishly followed"—

this was in his more moderate days—

"but, in certain respects, it is of great value and on consideration of the whole available material, the following recommendations are made"—

These are made for British application—

"(1) Judges, under the new régime, should be appointed from year to year by the Executive."

Note, "From year to year."

"They should not necessarily be practising advocates but should possess a knowledge of law, sociology, criminology, and political

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economy, tested by examination. They should be civil servants, under a Ministry of Justice."

Then follow (2), (3) and (4) which are not particularly relevant. Then it goes on:

"(5) They—

that is to say, the judges—

"should be responsible like any other civil servants for any breach of their duties."

What is that but a glorified Home Office? Why should the Home Office be condemned in time of war——

**Mr. Bevan:** Does the right hon. Gentleman accept the recommendation?

**Mr. Morrison:** I do not.

**Mr. Bevan:** Then it is irrelevant.

**Mr. Pritt:** Let him have his bit of fun.

**Mr. H. Morrison:** It is good fun, and it happens to be legitimate and relevant, perfectly relevant. My hon. and learned Friend advocated in time of peace, policies and principles of judicial administration which are abhorrent to me, and which I would not accept. When we apply a kind of administrative law, under critical conditions, in times of war—not exactly what my hon. and learned Friend advocated in that book, but nevertheless, somewhat resembling it—why should he and his friends, or at any rate his friends, grumble about it? I am sure that my hon. and learned Friend would be perfectly willing, if he has not already done so, to give good constitutional and legal advice on these matters. I suggest that he start by giving it to the hon. and learned Member for West Fife (Mr. Gallacher).

**Mr. Gallacher:** The hon. Member for West Fife is quite able to look after himself.

**Mr. Morrison:** I do not need to make quotations from this newspaper although I have them here. It would take too long to do so—and we have all been in the same difficulty this afternoon. My right hon. Friend the Member for Keighley (Mr. Lees-Smith), who made an admirable speech, was also in that difficulty. It is unnecessary to give extracts. Everybodys knows, even the promoters of the Motion—with the exception of the hon. Member for West Fife and my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Hammersmith——

**Mr. Pritt:** We do not support the Motion.

**Mr. Morrison:** I quite agree. I am sorry. The supporters of the Motion have not argued that the "Daily Worker" is innocent nor have they admitted that it was a fit subject for suppression. They argued neither one way nor the other; but they condemned the action in stern language. Therefore, I will not make those quotations which it would be relevant and important that I should otherwise do. An hon. Member mentions the "Week." It was much less important and was circulated by a gentleman who has one name in the "Daily Worker" and another name in the "Week." The policy is the same. The whole thing is more or less identical. Let me put this as one of the most contemptible and dangerous things which the Communist party has done. After almost every air raid on the great cities of our land, air raids to which the working people of this country have stood up with magnificent courage which has evoked the eternal praise and admiration of everybody, when homes have been destroyed, when families have been killed—or part of them killed, when disaster and suffering has descended on the humble households of our cities—[HON. MEMBERS: "And others."].

**Earl Winterton:** It has happened to everybody, the whole country.

**Mr. Morrison:** Some hon. Members are a bit fidgety to-day. I am dealing with a particular matter and I am dealing with it in my own way. This is a paper which is arguing to a particular class of the country, and that is the relevance of my observations. Humble homes have gone and have been smashed up. What does this newspaper do? What do the soulless and cynical politicians behind it do? They go to these brave people who are suffering domestic disaster and family misery, and they say: "All of it was utterly unnecessary and need not be. It is because a cruel capitalist Government want to make profit for the profiteers and to further Imperialistic ends. All your suffering is without necessity and without purpose." Could there be anything more cruel and more cynical than deliberately to say that to the people at that time? And yet it has been done. The Communist party is the last party on earth to claim the privileges of democratic

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[Mr. Morrison.]

rights. They do not believe in democracy. The hon. Member for West Fife (Mr. Gallacher), as a Communist, cannot believe in democracy. For him and his political friends it is an outworn bourgeois creed of the nineteenth century.

**Mr. Gallacher:** That is a misrepresentation.

**Mr. Morrison:** It really is sheer nonsense and snivelling hypocrisy for the Communist party to talk of the rights of democracy and of judicial process. Heaven knows we have been patient, and a great many hon. Members, including the hon. Member for West Kensington (Sir W. Davison), have thought we have been too patient. This has been going on since September, 1939. They were warned by my right hon. Friend the Lord President when he was at the Home Office in July, 1940. No one could say that we were impatient. Indeed, the hon. Member for Barnstaple (Sir R. Acland) says that I did not act as soon as I might. He asked, why did I not act earlier under 2C? With that I will shortly deal. But we came to the conclusion, not out of political prejudice as my hon. Friend the Member for Ebbw Vale (Mr. A. Bevan) suggested——

**Mr. Bevan:** I did not say that.

**Mr. Morrison:** I am sorry, but that was the clear implication from my hon. Friend's words. He will be able to see it in the record.

**Mr. Bevan:** Indeed, my right hon. Friend and I are too much on terms of personal friendship for me to say that. I said that it was unfortunate that he did this because he has long been engaged in a vendetta against the Communist party.

**Mr. Morrison:** I ask the House to accept my assurance that, when I deal with these matters involving political parties, whether Communists or Fascists, I forget that I am a politician. I handle these matters judicially, and as impartially as I can.

Anyhow, we came to the conclusion that we must suppress. It was carried out with perfect courtesy. The police report says that there was great courtesy both on the side of the paper and on the side of the police. No animosity was shown, and everything went off smoothly.

There was, however, one incident. Hon. Members have been talking about what the workers think about this. I know as much about the workers as does the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down. Indeed, I flatter myself I know much more about them. But let me quote a real son of the proletariat, a real working-class man who was on the inside of this job, working in the machine room for the production of the "Daily Worker." He was there when the police arrived and suppressed it, and he had a friendly word with one of the police representatives who went on my behalf to stop the paper. This is what he said. There is a big bad word in it, but I am advised that if I quote it, it is all right. I would not have thought of using the word in the House otherwise. But it would be a pity to leave it out, because it is a real proletarian expression. This man said to the police—and this is the working class speaking:

> "I have been expecting you police for some time. I am just here to earn a living and do not agree with the politics of those bastards upstairs. Twice we went on strike down here to get them to alter something in the 'Daily Worker' we would not stand for, and we had the heads down here to settle the matter. They took out what we did not want."

That beats the Home Office hollow.

**Mr. Isaacs** (Southwark, North): Will the right hon. Gentleman permit me to say that as general secretary of the union to which these people belong I can endorse that. They have stopped publication many times.

**Mr. Morrison:** The hon. Member for West Fife (Mr. Gallacher) has often advocated the dictatorship of the proletariat. I hope he will not complain when the dictatorship of the proletariat arrives.

**Mr. Gallacher:** Is it not clear that there is a measure of toleration at the "Daily Worker" that you would not find anywhere else?

**Mr. Morrison:** I belong to this union too, and I can assure the hon. Member that if the "Daily Worker" tried to pick and choose their machine-room staff according to their political opinions, my hon. Friend the general secretary of the union would be called in; therefore, it is not virtue, but necessity. There was a perfectly fair point put to me by the hon. Member for Ebbw Vale (Mr. A. Bevan),

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namely, Why did I act at this moment and why did I not wait? My answer is this: I thought it highly probable that, sooner or later, there would be trouble with this newspaper. Is it, in those circumstances, wise to wait until the damage is done? They were trying to do the damage—proceeding to undermine morale. Is it wise to wait until they are partially successful—to wait until the horse is gone before you lock the stable door? Is it not best to act, subject to proper consideration, before that takes place? [*Interruption.*] My own restraint has been considerable, and so was that of my predecessor.

**Mr. Silverman:** You might have had the restraint of a court.

**Mr. Morrison:** I came to the conclusion that it was not fair to wait until actual damage to morale had been done, and that it was far better to anticipate the possibility of damage.

I suggest that that was a wise course. The other argument is that this is following in the footsteps of France. It is the exact opposite. I wonder that aspect has not been seen. France at the beginning of the war struck at the Left—if it is the Left, for I never admit that the Communist party is a party of the Left: I think it is a party of the Right, a party of reaction. In France they did not strike at the Right. If I may say so, with respect, I think that they ought to have done so.

In this country we struck neither way for months. It was not until May, 1940, that the Government struck at the Right. We were in a position of great danger. The Government struck at the Right, with the almost unanimous consent of the House of Commons, and of the country. Not until now has there been interference with what is pleased to call itself the Left. That interference takes the form of action against a newspaper. Therefore, the story of Great Britain is the opposite of the story of France. I do not say that by way of apology; I say it because I am proud of it. I believe our country to have been right in the way that it has handled these matters.

There is another point—the judicial point. The issue here is the speech of my right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council on 31st July. He based his defence of Regulation 2D, in part, on considerations of invasion. I think his argument has been mistaken. I think it was this—that Regulation 2C was passed in quieter times, and that in the new circumstances, when invasion was an imminent possibility, and a great danger, we must have a new regulation. It was the new circumstances which justified the new Regulation. He was not arguing that new circumstances would have to arise before the Regulation was used. My right hon. Friend has written this to me:

> "What I did was to emphasise the difference between conditions at the time of enactment of 2C, when the risk of invasion had not begun to materialise in people's minds, and the situation at the time of 2D. I emphasised the possibility of the more dilatory procedure of 2C under invasion conditions; and these conditions have certainly not passed away. Who can say with confidence that if we were now to embark on the long train of action contemplated in 2C the gravest emergency might not be upon us before the necessary action had been completed? And to use 2D after action under 2C had been started would obviously be open to great objection."

I think that that is a fair interpretation of what my right hon. Friend said, in a Debate of which he had only about an hour's notice. And I think that it is the justification of the action which has been taken. The warning that we gave has been mistaken in some quarters which have thought that it was a warning under 2C. It was not; indeed the warning specifically mentioned 2D, and not 2C.

**Mr. A. Bevan:** Does the Home Secretary realise that his argument means that, in all circumstances, he is bound to use the summary powers, because at any moment an invasion might take place after he had started proceedings?

**Mr. Morrison:** It must always depend upon the circumstances of the case, the nature of the publication, the person concerned, the outlook for a particular procedure, and so on. The Home Secretary must be free to take either procedure, and I ask from the House full authority to use either procedure according to what I consider expedient and in the national interest.

Let me summarise the procedure under 2C and consider how long it would take. I must first watch the paper for a systematic offence. That was done, and there is no doubt about that in anybody's mind. Secondly, I must issue a warning. Thirdly, I must watch again, because they might wish to put themselves

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[Mr. Morrison.]

right, and I must give three or four weeks to observe the behaviour. If the offences continue, I ask the Attorney-General for consent, and for him to institute proceedings. You go into court if you prosecute the individual or individuals but not the newspaper. There is legal argument. There is the case in the court of summary jurisdiction, very brief; then you go to the court of assize, or, in London, the Central Criminal Court. There could be, I understand, an appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal and, with the consent of the Attorney-General, an appeal on a point of law of public importance to the House of Lords. Somebody asked me to give the courts a time limit. I have no power to bring pressure on any court at all. The procedure might take two months, three months or four months.

**Mr. Silverman:** You have had 18.

**Mr. Morrison:** I know, but it is a curious argument for the hon. Member, of all people, to say that I ought to have started 18 months ago.

**Mr. Silverman** *rose*——

**Mr. Morrison:** That is not government in time of war. It is playing the fool with government in time of war. It might apply to the unfortunate German Republic under the Weimar Constitution, where decision in government was lacking and weak, and where, as a consequence there were unconstitutional bodies and revolutionary parties and disturbers of the peace. After all, people should learn from the lesson of Republican Germany. [An HON. MEMBER: "You should have learnt it!"] I have learnt it, and I am applying in this office, the lessons I have learnt. The fact has to be faced that in conditions of war or of crisis, there may have to be some check on the ordinary safeguards of liberty in time of peace, or liberty itself will be entirely destroyed. When all that is done, and if a conviction has been secured, what has been accomplished? Some person or persons may have got no more than seven years' penal servitude, or a £500 fine, or both; I want the evil to be got out of the way; mere imprisonment or fining does not do it. The Secretary of State has powers to stop the press, subject to appeal to the High Court. He can stop that press. But there is nothing to prevent the proprietors of a newspaper getting hold of another press next day, starting the thing all over again and leaving the Home Secretary to start all over again. That procedure, in these conditions, is childish. It really is inoperative in the sense of being an effective instrument for the purpose.

It is not that I have dodged a tribunal. I am on trial to-day; the House of Commons is hearing arguments. I quite agree that it is not a judicial authority and that if this was a point of law instead of what it really is—a point of public policy—I would prefer to go to a court of law. But nobody can say that I have dodged a tribunal. For reasons which I have indicated we have thought it right to act under 2C.

The paper has had its chance to state its case for months past. It has stated its case since its suppression with vigour. It has circularised Members of the House of Commons, written to me and has sent telegrams. Nevertheless, here we are, and in the light of its knowledge I suggest that the House of Commons will come to a conclusion. I want to assure the House that action was taken neither by me nor by His Majesty's Government with any alacrity. I do not like suppressing newspapers, but this publication had become a public scandal. It really was a disgrace to print it in time of war. We acted with amazing patience until we though it had to go. I can assure the House that I have no wish to suppress newspapers for the sake of doing so. This action was taken with great regret. We do not wish to stop the Press criticising the Government. Plenty of papers criticise the Government, and I want to say that I have been annoyed sometimes. People are sometimes annoyed when they are criticised, but we would never dream of using our powers to stop criticism. But I do say this: In the case of a newspaper —to take an extreme case even though it was supporting the war—if that paper was steadily and systematically engaged in such a policy that it was perfectly clear that it was trying to sabotage the war effort, and that all its activities were calculated to have that effect, I must retain the right to deal with such a case on its merits. Moreover, this imperfect procedure of C2 applies not only to papers but to leaflets, and I hope the House will permit me to consider whether these powers are reasonable and sufficient for

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the circumstances we are facing at the present time. I can with all earnestness and conscientiousness, add this: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State of Air said, in a broadcast which was reported in the "Listener" on 29th August—and this is my position, the position of the Prime Minister and His Majesty's Government:

> "It should be our common concern to ensure that our civic liberties are not put in jeopardy and the Prime Minister has authorised me to give you this message. It is the intention of His Majesty's Government to preserve in all essentials a free Parliament and a free Press, and that all these emergency measures which restrict the liberty of the subject shall disappear with the passing of the emergency and that the new offences created by the Regulations under the Emergency Powers Act and extraordinary powers entrusted to the executive will vanish with the advent of victory and peace."

That is the spirit of this administration. We have faced very critical times and invading bombers day after day and night after night. The only time we have really gone far in the exercise of these powers is in the case of the Fascists on the one hand and this newspaper on the other. I wonder whether there is another country in the world, whether there is any totalitarian country in the world, that could stand up and have a record like that in time of war. Therefore, I give the House all assurances. The duties arising from the great powers with which I am entrusted, the great office which I am proud to fill, I will discharge with care and with restraint, but with circumspection. However, having given thought, having discharged my duties with care and restraint, when I come to the conclusion that I must act, believe me I shall act with decision and with speed, believing that the House of Commons desires that to be the spirit of this administration.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided: Ayes, 6; Noes, 323.

**Division No. 3.]**

**AYES.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Acland, Sir R. T. D.** | **Rathbone, Eleanor (English Univ's.)** | **TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—** |
| **Davies, S. O. (Merthyr)** | **Silverman, S. S.** | **Mr. Aneurin Bevan and Mr. Horabin.** |
| **Pritt, D. N.** | **Strauss, G. R. (Lambeth, N.)** | |

**NOES.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Acland-Troyte, Lt.-Col. G. J.** | **Broadbridge, Sir G. T.** | **Denville, Alfred** |
| **Adams, D. (Consett)** | **Brocklebank, Sir C. E. R.** | **Doland, G. F.** |
| **Adamson, Jennie L. (Dartford)** | **Brooke, H.** | **Drewe, C.** |
| **Adamson, W. M. (Cannock)** | **Brown, Rt. Hon. E. (Leith)** | **Duckworth, W. R. (Moss Side)** |
| **Albery, Sir Irving** | **Brown, Brig.-Gen. H. C. (Newbury)** | **Duncan, Rt. Hon. Sir A. R. (C. Ldn.)** |
| **Alexander, Rt. Hon. A. V. (H'lsbr.)** | **Browne, A. C. (Belfast, W.)** | **Eden, Rt. Hon. A.** |
| **Allen, Lt.-Col. Sir W. J. (Armagh)** | **Bullock, Capt. M.** | **Edmondson, Major Sir J.** |
| **Amery, Rt. Hon. L. C. M. S.** | **Burke, W. A.** | **Edwards, Sir C. (Bedwelty)** |
| **Anderson, F. (Whitehaven)** | **Butcher, H. W.** | **Elliot, Rt. Hon. W. E.** |
| **Anderson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Sc'h. Univ.)** | **Butler, Rt. Hon. R. A.** | **Elliston, Captain G. S.** |
| **Assheton, R.** | **Cadogan, Sir E.** | **Emery, J. F.** |
| **Astor, Major Hon. J. J. (Dover)** | **Campbell, Sir E. T.** | **Emmott, C. E. G. C.** |
| **Astor, Viscountess (Plymouth, Sutton)** | **Cape, T.** | **Emrys-Evans, P. V.** |
| **Attlee, Rt. Hon. C. R.** | **Carver, Major W. H.** | **Entwistle, Sir C. F.** |
| **Baillie, Sir A. W. M.** | **Cary, R. A.** | **Errington, E.** |
| **Balfour, Capt. H. H. (Isle of Thanet)** | **Cazalet, Thelma (Islington, E.)** | **Erskine-Hill, A. G.** |
| **Barnes, A. J.** | **Cazalet, Major V. A. (Chippenham)** | **Etherton, Ralph** |
| **Batey, J.** | **Chapman, A. (Ruthergien)** | **Evans, Colonel A. (Cardiff, S.)** |
| **Baxter, A. Beverley** | **Chapman, Sir S. (Edinburgh, S.)** | **Evans, D. O. (Cardigan)** |
| **Beamish, Rear-Admiral T. P.** | **Charleton, H. C.** | **Evans, E. (Univ. of Wales)** |
| **Beauchamp, Sir B. C.** | **Churchill, Rt. Hn. Winston S. (Ep'ing)** | **Everard, Sir W. Lindsay** |
| **Beaumont, Hubert (Batley)** | **Cluse, W. S.** | **Fleming, E. L.** |
| **Beechman, N. A.** | **Collindridge, F.** | **Fletcher, Lt.-Comdr. R. T. H.** |
| **Bellenger, F. J.** | **Colman, N. C. D.** | **Foot, D. M.** |
| **Benn, Rt. Hon. W. W.** | **Conant, Capt. R. J. E.** | **Frankel, D.** |
| **Bennett, Sir E. N. (Cardiff, Central)** | **Cooper, Rt. Hn. A. Duff (W'st'rS.G'gs.)** | **Fremantle, Sir F. E.** |
| **Bennett, P. F. B. (Edgbaston)** | **Cooper, Rt. Hon. T. M. (Edin., W.)** | **Fyfe, D. P. M.** |
| **Benson, G.** | **Courthope, Col. Rt. Hon. Sir G. L.** | **Garro Jones, G. M.** |
| **Bernays, R. H.** | **Crookshank, Capt. Rt. Hon. H. F. C.** | **Gibbins, J.** |
| **Bevin, E.** | **Crowder, J. F. E.** | **Gluckstein, L. H.** |
| **Bird, Sir R. B** | **Culverwell, C. T.** | **Glyn, Major Sir R. G. C.** |
| **Blair, Sir R.** | **Dalton, H.** | **Gower, Sir R. V.** |
| **Bossom, A. C.** | **Davidson, Viscountess (H'm'l H'mst'd)** | **Graham, Captain A. C. (Wirral)** |
| **Bower, Comdr. R. T.** | **Davies, Major Sir G. F. (Yeovil)** | **Green, W. H. (Deptford)** |
| **Boyce, H. Leslie** | **Davison, Sir W. H.** | **Greenwood, Rt. Hon. A.** |
| **Brass, Sir W.** | **De la Bère, R.** | **Griffiths, G. A. (Hemsworth)** |
| **Broad, F. A.** | **Denman, Hon. R. D.** | **Griffiths, J. (Llanelly)** |

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Grigg, Sir E. W. M.
Grimston, R. V.
Gritten, W. G. Howard
Gunston, Capt. Sir D. W.
Hall, J. H. (Whitechapel)
Hall, W. G. (Colne Valley)
Hammersley, S. S.
Hannah, I. C.
Hannon, Sir P. J. H.
Harbord, Sir A.
Harland, H. P.
Harris, Sir P. A.
Haslam, Henry (Horncastle)
Headlam, Lt.-Col. Sir C. M.
Hely-Hutchinson, M. R.
Henderson, J. (Ardwick)
Henderson, T. (Tradeston)
Henderson, J. J. Craik (Leeds, N.E.)
Heneage, Lt.-Col. A. P.
Hepburn, P. G. T. Buchan
Hepworth, J.
Herbert, A. P. (Oxford U.)
Hewlett, T. H.
Hicks, E. G.
Hill, Dr. A. V. (Cambridge U.)
Holdsworth, H.
Hollins, A. (Hanley)
Hollins, J. H. (Silvertown)
Holmes, J. S.
Horsbrugh, Florence
Howitt, Dr. A. B.
Hudson, Capt. A. U. M. (H'ckn'y, N.)
Hudson, Rt. Hon. R. S. (Southport)
Hume, Sir G. H.
Hurd, Sir P. A.
Isaacs, G. A.
Jackson, W. F.
Jagger, J.
Jenkins, A. (Pontypool)
Jenkins, Sir W. (Neath)
John, W.
Johnstone, H.
Jones, L. (Swansea, W.)
Jowitt, Rt. Hon. Sir W. A.
Keeling, E. H.
Kennedy, Rt. Hon. T.
Key, C. W.
Lamb, Sir J. Q.
Latham, Sir P.
Law, R. K.
Lawson, J. J.
Leech, Dr. Sir J. W.
Lennox-Boyd, A. T. L.
Leslie, J. R.
Levy, T.
Liddall, W. S.
Lindsay, K. M.
Lipson, D. L.
Llewellin, Colonel J. J.
Lloyd, Major E. G. R.
Loftus, P. C.
Logan, D. G.
Lucas, Major Sir J. M.
Lyle, Sir C. E. Leonard
Lyttelton, Capt. Rt. Hon. O.
MacAndrew, Colonel Sir C. G.
Macdonald, G. (Ince)
MacDonald, Rt. Hon. M. (Ross)
McEntee, V. La T.
McEwen, Capt. J. H. F.
McKie, J. H.
Maclay, Hon. John S. (Montrose)
Macmillan, H. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Mainwaring, W. H.
Maitland, Sir A.
Makins, Brig.-Gen. Sir E.
Martin, J. H.
Mathers, G.
Mayhew, Lt.-Col. J.
Medlicott, Captain Frank
Milner, Major J.
Mitcheson, Sir G. G.
Montague, F.
Moore, Lieut.-Col. Sir T. C. R.
Moore-Brabazon, Lt.-Col. J. T. C.
Morgan, R. H. (Stourbridge)
Morris, O. T. (Cardiff, E.)
Morrison, Rt. Hon. H. (Hackney, S.)
Morrison, R. C. (Tottenham, N.)
Mort, D. L.
Nall, Sir J.
Naylor, T. E.
Neven-Spence, Major B. H. H.
Nicolson, Hon. H. G. (Leicester, W.)
Nield, B. E.
Noel-Baker, P. J.
Nunn, W.
Oliver, G. H.
O'Neill, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Owen, Major G.
Paling, W.
Parker, J.
Peake, O.
Pearson, A.
Peat, C. U.
Perkins, W. R. D.
Pethick-Lawrence, Rt. Hon. F. W.
Plugge, Capt. L. F.
Ponsonby, Col. C. E.
Power, Sir J. C.
Pownall, Lt.-Col. Sir Assheton
Procter, Major H. A.
Purbrick, R.
Pym, L. R.
Raikes, H. V. A. M.
Ramsbotham, Rt. Hon. H.
Ramsden, Sir E.
Rankin, Sir R.
Reed, Sir H. S. (Aylesbury)
Reid, Capt. A. Cunningham (St. M.)
Reid, W. Allan (Derby)
Rickards, G. W.
Riley, B.
Ritson, J.
Robertson, D.
Robertson, Rt. Hn. Sir M. A. (M'ham)
Ross Taylor, W. (Woodbridge)
Rowlands, G.
Royds, Admiral Sir P. M. R.
Ruggles-Brise, Col. Sir E. A.
Russell, Sir A. (Tynemouth)
Salmon, Sir I.
Salt, E. W.
Samuel, M. R. A.
Sanderson, Sir F. B.
Schuster, Sir G. E.
Scott, R. D. (Wansbeck)
Scott, Lord William
Selley, H. R.
Shaw, Capt. W. T. (Forfar)
Shute, Col. Sir J. J.
Silkin, L.
Simmonds, O. E.
Smiles, Lt.-Col. Sir W. D.
Smith, Bracewell (Dulwich)
Smith, Rt. Hon. H. B. Lees- (K'ly)
Smith, T. (Normanton)
Smithers, Sir W.
Somerset, T.
Somervell, Rt. Hon. Sir D. B. (Crewe)
Somerville, Sir A. A. (Windsor)
Southby, Comdr. Sir A. R. J.
Spears, Brig.-Gen. E. L.
Stewart, W. J. (Houghton-le-Spring)
Storey S.
Strauss, H. G. (Norwich)
Strickland, Capt. W. F.
Stuart, Rt. Hn. J. (Moray and Nairn)
Sueter, Rear-Admiral Sir M. F.
Summers, G. S.
Sutcliffe, H
Tate, Mavis C.
Taylor, R. J. (Morpeth)
Thomas, J. P. L.
Thomas, W. S. Russell
Thorne, W.
Thurtle, E.
Tinker, J. J.
Titchfield, Marquess of
Tomlinson, G.
Touche, G. C.
Train, Sir J.
Tree, A. R. L. F.
Tufnell, Lieut.-Comdr. R. L.
Wakefield, W. W.
Walkden, A. G.
Walker, J.
Walker-Smith, Sir J.
Ward, Lt.-Col. Sir A. L. (Hull)
Ward, Irene M. B. (Wallsend)
Wardlaw-Milne, Sir J. S.
Warrender, Sir V.
Waterhouse, Capt. C.
Watkins, F. C.
Watson, W. McL.
Wayland, Sir W. A.
Wedgwood, Rt. Hon. J. C.
Weston, W. Garfield
Westwood, J.
Whiteley, W. (Blaydon)
Wickham, Lt.-Col. E. T. R.
Wilkinson, Ellen
Williams, C. (Torquay)
Williams, Sir H. G. (Croydon, S.)
Williams, T. (Don Valley)
Willink, H. V.
Wilmot, John
Windsor, W.
Windsor-Clive, Lt.-Col. G.
Winterton, Rt. Hon. Earl
Womersley, Sir W. J.
Woodburn, A.
Woods, G. S. (Finsbury)
Woolley, W. E.
Wootton-Davies, J. H.
Wragg, H.
Young, A. S. L. (Partick)
Young, Sir R. (Newton)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—
Mr. Munro and Mr. Boulton.

Question put, "That the proposed words be there added."

The House divided: Ayes, 297; Noes, 11.

Division No. 4.]

AYES.

Acland-Troyte, Lt.-Col. G. J.
Adams, D. (Consett)
Adamson, Jennie L. (Dartford)
Adamson, W. M. (Cannock)
Albery, Sir Irving
Alexander, Rt. Hon. A. V. (H'lsbr.)
Allen, Lt.-Col. Sir W. J. (Armagh)
Amery, Rt. Hon. L. C. M. S.
Anderson, F. (Whitehaven)
Anderson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Sc'h. Univ.)
Assheton, R.
Astor, Major Hon. J. J. (Dover)
Astor, Viscountess (Plymouth, Sutton)
Attlee, Rt. Hon. C. R.
Baillie, Sir A. W. M.

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Barnes, A. J.
Batey, J.
Baxter, A. Beverley
Beamish, Rear-Admiral T. P.
Beaumont, Hubert (Batley)
Beechman, N. A.
Bellenger, F. J.
Benn, Rt. Hon. W. W.
Bennett, Sir E. N. (Cardiff, Central)
Bennett, P. F. B. (Edgbaston)
Benson, G.
Bevin, E.
Bird, Sir R. B.
Blair, Sir R.
Bossom, A. C.
Bower, Comdr. R. T.
Boyce, H. Leslie
Broad, F. A.
Broadbridge, Sir G. T.
Brocklebank, Sir C. E. R.
Brooke, H.
Brown, Rt. Hon. E. (Leith)
Browne, A. C. (Belfast, W.)
Bullock, Capt. M.
Burke, W. A.
Butcher, H. W.
Butler, Rt. Hon. R. A.
Cadogan, Sir E.
Campbell, Sir E. T.
Cape, T.
Carver, Major W. H.
Cary, R. A.
Cazalet, Thelma (Islington, E.)
Chapman, A. (Ruthergien)
Chapman, Sir S. (Edinburgh, S.)
Charleton, H. C.
Churchill, Rt. Hn. Winston S. (Ep'ing)
Collindridge, F.
Colman, N. C. D.
Conant, Capt. R. J. E.
Cooper, Rt. Hn. A. Duff (W'st'rS.G'gs.)
Cooper, Rt. Hon. T. M. (Edin., W.)
Courthope, Col. Rt. Hon. Sir G. L.
Crookshank, Capt. Rt. Hon. H. F. C.
Crowder, J. F. E.
Culverwell, C. T.
Dalton, H.
Davidson, Viscountess (H'm'l H'mst'd)
Davies, Major Sir G. F. (Yeovil)
Davison, Sir W. H.
Denman, Hon. R. D.
Denville, Alfred
Doland, G. F.
Drewe, C.
Duckworth, W. R. (Moss Side)
Duncan, Rt. Hon. Sir A. R. (C. Ldn.)
Eden, Rt. Hon. A.
Edmondson, Major Sir J.
Edwards, Sir C. (Bedwellty)
Elliot, Rt. Hon. W. E.
Elliston, Captain G. S.
Emery, J. F.
Emmott, C. E. G. C.
Emrys-Evans, P. V.
Entwistle, Sir C. F.
Errington, E.
Erskine-Hill, A. G.
Etherton, Ralph
Evans, Colonel A. (Cardiff, S.)
Evans, D. O. (Cardigan)
Evans, E. (Univ. of Wales)
Everard, Sir W. Lindsay
Fleming, E. L.
Fletcher, Lt.-Comdr. R. T. H.
Foot, D. M.
Frankel, D.
Fremantle, Sir F. E.
Fyfe, D. P. M.
Gibbins, J.
Gluckstein, L. H.
Gower, Sir R. V.
Graham, Captain A. C. (Wirral)
Green, W. H. (Deptford)
Greenwood, Rt. Hon. A.
Griffiths, G. A. (Hemsworth)
Griffiths, J. (Llanelly)
Grigg, Sir E. W. M.
Grimston, R. V.
Gritten, W. G. Howard
Gunston, Capt. Sir D. W.
Hall, J. H. (Whitechapel)
Hall, W. G. (Colne Valley)
Hammersley, S. S.
Hannah, I. C.
Hannon, Sir P. J. H.
Harland, H. P.
Harris, Sir P. A.
Haslam, Henry (Horncastle)
Hayday, A.
Headlam, Lt.-Col. Sir C. M.
Hely-Hutchinson, M. R.
Henderson, J. (Ardwick)
Henderson, J. J. Craik (Leeds, N.E.)
Heneage, Lt.-Col. A. P.
Hepburn, P. G. T. Buchan
Hepworth, J.
Herbert, A. P. (Oxford U.)
Hewlett, T. H.
Hicks, E. G.
Hill, Dr. A. V. (Cambridge U.)
Holdsworth, H.
Hollins, J. H. (Silvertown)
Holmes, J. S.
Horsbrugh, Florence
Howitt, Dr. A. B.
Hudson, Capt. A. U. M. (H'ckn'y, N.)
Hume, Sir G. H.
Isaacs, G. A.
Jagger, J.
Jenkins, A. (Pontypool)
Jenkins, Sir W. (Neath)
John, W.
Johnstone, H.
Jones, L. (Swansea, W.)
Jowitt, Rt. Hon. Sir W. A.
Keeling, E. H.
Kennedy, Rt. Hon. T.
Key, C. W.
Lamb, Sir J. Q.
Lathan. G.
Law, R. K.
Lawson, J. J.
Leach, W.
Lennox-Boyd, A. T. L.
Leslie, J. R.
Liddall, W. S.
Lindsay, K. M.
Lipson, D. L.
Llewellin, Colonel J. J.
Lloyd, Major E. G. R.
Loftus, P. C.
Logan, D. G
Lucas, Major Sir J. M.
Lyttelton, Capt. Rt. Hon. O.
MacAndrew, Colonel Sir C. G.
Macdonald, G. (Ince)
MacDonald, Rt. Hon. M. (Ross)
McEntee, V. La T.
McEwen, Capt. J. H. F.
McKie, J. H.
Mainwaring, W. H.
Maitland, Sir A.
Makins, Brig.-Gen. Sir E.
Martin, J. H.
Mathers, G.
Mayhew, Lt.-Col. J.
Medlicott, Captain Frank
Milner, Major J.
Mitchason, Sir G. G.
Montague, F.
Moore, Lieut.-Col. Sir T. C. R.
Morgan, H. B. W. (Rochdale)
Morgan, R. H. (Stourbridge)
Morris, O. T. (Cardiff, E.)
Morrison, Rt. Hon. H. (Hackney, S.)
Morrison, R. C. (Tottenham, N.)
Mort, D. L.
Nail, Sir J.
Naylor, T. E.
Neven-Spence, Major B. H. H.
Nicolson, Hon. H. G. (Leicester, W.)
Nield, B. E.
Noel-Baker, P. J.
Nunn, W.
Oliver, G. H.
O'Neill, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Owen, Major G.
Paling, W.
Parker, J.
Peake, O.
Pearson, A.
Peat, C. U.
Perkins, W. R. D.
Pethick-Lawrence, Rt. Hon. F. W.
Plugge, Capt. L. F.
Ponsonby, Col. C. E.
Power, Sir J. C.
Pownall, Lt.-Col. Sir Assheton
Procter, Major H. A.
Purbrick, R.
Raikes, H. V. A. M.
Ramsbotham, Rt. Hon. H.
Ramsden, Sir E.
Rankin, Sir R.
Reed, Sir H. S. (Aylesbury)
Reid, Capt. A. Cunningham (St. M.)
Reid, W. Allan (Derby)
Rickards, G. W.
Riley, B.
Ritson, J.
Robertson, D.
Robertson, Rt. Hn. Sir M. A. (M'ham)
Ross Taylor, W. (Woodbridge)
Rowlands, G.
Royds, Admiral Sir P. M. R.
Russell, Sir A. (Tynemouth)
Salmon, Sir I.
Salt, E. W.
Samuel, M. R. A.
Sanderson, Sir F. B.
Schuster, Sir G. E.
Scott, R. D. (Wansbeck)
Scott, Lord William
Selley, H. R.
Shaw, Capt. W. T. (Forfar)
Shute, Col. Sir J. J.
Silkin, L.
Smiles, Lt.-Col. Sir W. D.
Smith, Bracewell (Dulwich)
Smith, Rt. Hon. H. B. Lees- (K'ly)
Smith, T. (Normanton)
Smithers, Sir W.
Somervell, Rt. Hon. Sir D. B. (Crewe)
Somerville, Sir A. A. (Windsor)
Southby, Comdr. Sir A. R. J.
Spears, Brig.-Gen. E. L.
Stewart, W. J. (Houghton-le-Spring)
Storey S.
Strauss, H. G. (Norwich)
Strickland, Capt. W. F.
Stuart, Rt. Hn. J. (Moray and Nairn)
Summers, G. S.
Sutcliffe, H
Tate, Mavis C.
Taylor, R. J. (Morpeth)
Thomas, J. P. L.
Thomas, W. S. Russell
Thorne, W.
Thurtle, E.
Tinker, J. J.
Titchfield, Marquess of
Tomlinson, G.
Touche, G. C.
Train, Sir J.
Tree, A. R. L. F.
Tufnell, Lieut.-Comdr. R. L.
Wakefield, W. W.
Walkden, A. G.
Walker, J.
Walker-Smith, Sir J.
Ward, Lt.-Col. Sir A. L. (Hull)

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ward, Irene M. B. (Wallsend) | Wilkinson, Ellen | Womersley, Sir W. J. |
| Wardlaw-Milne, Sir J. S. | Williams, C. (Torquay) | Woodburn, A. |
| Warrender, Sir V. | Williams, E. J. (Ogmore) | Woods, G. S. (Finsbury) |
| Watkins, F. C. | Williams, Sir H. G. (Croydon, S.) | Woolley, W. E. |
| Watson, W. McL. | Williams, T. (Don Valley) | Wootton-Davies, J. H. |
| Wayland, Sir W. A. | Willink, H. V. | Wragg, H. |
| Weston, W. Garfield | Wilmot, John | Young, A. S. L. (Partick) |
| Westwood, J. | Windsor, W. | Young, Sir R. (Newton) |
| Whiteley, W. (Blaydon) | Windsor-Clive, Lt.-Col. G. | |
| Wickham, Lt.-Col. E. T. R. | Winterton, Rt. Hon. Earl | |

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—
Mr. Munro and Mr. Boulton.

NOES.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Acland, Sir R. T. D. | McGovern, J. | Strauss, G. R. (Lambeth, N.) |
| Bevan, A. | Pritt, D. N. | |
| Buchanan, G. | Salter, Dr. A. (Bermondsey, W.) | TELLERS FOR THE NOES.— |
| Davies, S. O. (Merthyr) | Silverman, S. S. | Mr. Maxton and Mr. Gallacher. |
| Kirkwood, D. | Stephen, C. | |

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved,

"That this House expresses its destestation of the propaganda of the 'Daily Worker' in relation to the war, as it is convinced that the future of democratic institutions and the expanding welfare of the people everywhere depend on the successful prosecution of the war till Fascism is finally defeated; and while anxious that the principle of freedom for the expression of minority opinions shall be maintained so far as possible and that the minimum use shall be made even in time of war of powers of repression, recognises that special and effective measures must be taken against the habitual and persistent publication of matter which is calculated to impede the national war effort and thus to assist the enemy, and approves the action of the Home Secretary in relation to the 'Daily Worker' and the 'Week'."

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*The Orders of the Day were read, and postponed.*

*It being the hour appointed for the Adjournment of the House,* Mr. SPEAKER *adjourned the House, without Question put.*

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***Saturday, 1st February, 1941***

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